

**SS. PHILIP
& JAMES**

CATHOLIC PARISH

1 Carow Place, St. James, NY 11780

(631) 584-5454

June 22, 2025

**The Solemnity of the Most Holy
Body and Blood of Christ**



A Miracle of the Eucharist, Stefano di Giovanni, 1423/1426. The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, United Kingdom.

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 1:30 – 7 PM

The Parish Directory

Parish Information



GENERAL INFORMATION

Phone Number (631) 584-5454
 Parish Fax (631) 862-9675
 Website 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. Joe Lobo
 Associate Pastor Rev. Dennis Gannon
 Deacon John Keenan

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Sr. Theresita Donach, CSFN

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 Diane M. Anderson
 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 Cavooris

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

Weekly Collection - Sunday, June 15, 2025:

Collections from Weekend masses: \$7,992.00
 Faith Direct
 (126 Participants Weekly): \$ 3,374.00
Total Collection: \$11,366.00

Addl. Catholic Communications: \$120.00
 Air Conditioning: \$3,678.00

*Faith Direct:
 Visit 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, email Sister Theresita at srtheresita@sspj.org to ask about our OCIA program.



BAPTISM

Celebrated twice per month. Parents are asked to contact Sister Theresita at srtheresita@sspj.org 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 | Michael Hionidis -USMC | PFC Charles Christopher Howell
 Hank Moloney -USAF | Steven Cava -USN | Emmett Moloney -USN | CW2 Natasha Wortman
 LTJG Kyle Melvin -USN | LTJG 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 | Captain Paul Willms
 Kevin Jones -USCG | Sgt Connor F. Scott -USMC | Elizabeth C. Oliver -QM 2ND 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 -2ND 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 -2ND Class USN | Erin Morpheo -2ND Class USN | Richard Wulforst, III -USA ANG

The Pastoral Letter from Rev. Sean Magaldi

My Dear Friends in Jesus Christ and Our Blessed Mother,

Scripture tells us, "There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens" (Ecc 3:1). We're currently in a time to say goodbye. We say goodbye to Miss Anderson, Sr. T, Fr. Joe, and Fr. Maurizio. All of whom have had an impact in different ways in our community. I want to thank each one of them.

Miss Anderson, thank you for all you have done for our excellent Catholic School. I appreciate your hard work and dedication to promote and support Catholic Education. Your love for our school is palpable, and your passion for the students is evident to all who know you. May God bless you as you move to Maryland. I hope all the parents, teachers, and students learn how lucky they are to have you.

Sr. T, you have done a tremendous amount of work helping the people of SSPJ grow in their faith and prepare for sacraments. I have heard from many parents who loved your baptism classes. Additionally, you have worked to help people enter into our beautiful Catholic faith, which is a tremendous accomplishment. Finally, thank you for your witness to religious life. I pray for a rich harvest of women religious from this wonderful parish. May God bless your retreat ministry.

Fr. Joe, I appreciate all the guidance you provided when I first arrived. You helped get Fr. Gannon and me acclimated. You also were a great sounding board over the past year. It is clear that you are familiar with this parish and that you care deeply for the people of SSPJ. Also, thank you for cooking for us. For those who don't know, Fr. Joe is an excellent cook, and BBQ is his specialty. I know the people of St. Joseph's in Garden City will quickly embrace you. Bishop Andrzej is lucky to have you.

Fr. Maurizio, you have been with us for a short time, but you have already made a significant impact. You were always willing to do whatever anyone asked of you, and I appreciate that. You have had to adapt quickly and jump in without hesitation. I know the Rosary group that meets after the 7:30 weekday Mass appreciates your dedication. May God bless you in your next stage.

Although you won't be with us in the parish anymore, may we all be together in the Eucharist. May God continue to bless each one of you, and may you always know that you have a home at SSPJ. Thank you!

In Christ,
Fr. Sean

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

<i>Saturday, June 21st</i>	Reconciliation 4:00-5:00pm	9:15am	<i>Father's Day Novena</i>
	Cantor: McCulloh Lector: Halluska/Kollmer EMs: Rapp/Urce/Taurassi/Mantia/Sisti	5:00pm	<i>Angie Carpenter</i>
<i>Sunday, June 22nd</i>	Cantor: Meringolo Lector: Dervan/White EMs: Dunn/Diaz/McGrath/Ramos/Portanova	8:00am	<i>For the People of the Parish</i>
	Cantor: Hill Lector: Hoffman/Dias EMs: Lombardi/Licari/McKie/Rizzo/Mulhall/Amen	10:00am	<i>Father's Day Novena</i>
	Cantor: Stefanowski Lector: Kieran/Latino EMs: Kalcita/Samson/Stack/Bleggi	12:00pm	<u>Collective Mass</u> Maria Fazio, Michael Colletta, Kathleen Newill, Tina Cafaro Mary DiCarlo, and Michael Hurtado (Living)
	Adoration 1:30-7:00pm In the Church		
<i>Monday, June 23rd</i>		7:30am	<i>Father's Day Novena</i>
		9:15am	<i>Martin Rizzo</i>
<i>Tuesday, June 24th</i>		7:30am	<i>Claire Illicete and Angela Liotta</i>
		9:15am	<i>Geore R. Fabian</i>
<i>Wednesday, June 25th</i>		7:30am	<i>Frank DelVicario</i>
		9:15am	<i>Ettore Orlando</i>
<i>Thursday, June 26th</i>		7:30am	<i>Linda Hudson</i>
		9:15am	<i>John Tortora and Gregory Mattia</i>
<i>Friday, June 27th</i>		7:30am	<i>Anthony Hurtado</i>
		9:15am	<i>Sue Capo</i>
<i>Saturday, June 28th</i>	Reconciliation 4:00-5:00pm	9:15am	<i>Maria DiNicola</i>
	Cantor: Feeney Lector: Cullen/Dreschler EMs: Byrne/Drechsler/Ruggieri/Toto/Anderson	5:00pm	<i>Patricia S. Ryan</i>
<i>Sunday, June 29th</i>	Cantor: Lohmann Lector: Carey/Marino EMs: Dervan/Koke/Portanova/Sehne/Sica	8:00am	<i>For the People of the Parish</i>
	Cantor: Meringolo Lector: Gibbia/Luna EMs: Napolitano/Conti/Parish/Consenz/Calderone/Rapp	10:00am	<i>Jerry Linder</i>
	Cantor: Hill Lector: Waldmann/Gcier EMs: Latino/Rubano/Rubano/Kalcita	12:00pm	<u>Collective Mass</u> Charles Ruf, Michael Colletta, Vincent P. Ward, James & Dorothy Davis



A Weekly Reflection from
SR. THERESITA DONACH, CSFN

Dear Friends,

This past Sunday I became one of those 'SUNDAY DRIVERS' on my way home from church. I took a side drive to find Hope House Ministries, Little Portion Friary in Mt. Sinai. It was a great adventure, and I was happy to have found another faith-filled place. They also have delicious baked goods!

I have been thinking about this week's reflection since last Wednesday and the sign at their entrance made the whole thing come together. The picture here says it all "Abraham was an immigrant, Moses was a fugitive and Jesus was a protestor. Judge less, love more, all are welcome here"



You see I was thinking about a homily I heard during the week that spoke of how we are to be commas and not periods. What do I mean? Well, the reading was about St. Paul and Barnabas while they were in Antioch. Paul was not trusted there because of what he had done in the past. Barnabas became a comma for Paul. Yes, Paul had changed and so had the period at the end of his previous story. It became a comma. There was more to Paul than his past.

Barnabas teaches us to read the next chapter about someone. We need to see them for who they are at the present moment. Paul was in a different place than in his early days of persecuting Christians. How many times do we put a period after someone's story and don't leave room for conversion or growth? How often do we judge others based on their past history? Do we add commas to people's stories or just end with a period?

This week, see if you tend to put a period on someone's life or a comma. The name Barnabas means 'son of encouragement.' Encouragement means adding a comma to someone's life!

**Till next week,
 Sister Theresita**



**STS. PHILIP & JAMES COUNCIL KNIGHTS OF
COLUMBUS PRESENTS THE MID-SUMMER GOLF**

MID-SUMMER GOLF CLASSIC

JULY 9, 2025

CRAB MEADOW GOLF COURSE. NORTHPORT

REGISTRATION 12:00PM-SHOTGUN START 1:30PM

LUNCH, DINNER, BEER, WINE, *RAFFLE PRIZES*



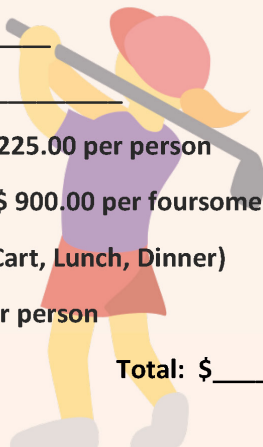
Honoree Father Sean Magaldi



**Proceeds to benefit Sts. Philip
& James Knights of Columbus
Charity Outreach Efforts.**



Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E-Mail: _____
Number of Players: ____\$225.00 per person
____\$ 900.00 per foursome
(includes Driving Range, Cart, Lunch, Dinner)
Dinner only: ____ \$100 per person
Number attending: ____ Total: \$ _____



SPONSORSHIPS

__ Prizes @ \$2,500
__ Dinner @ \$2,000
__ Lunch @ \$1,000
__ Driving Range @ \$500
__ Tee Signs @ \$100 each
__ Putting Green @ \$500
__ Golf Cart @ \$300

Sponsor Information:



Please Make Checks Out To:

**Sts. Philip & James K of C Council
#12839**

PO Box 201 St. James, NY 11780

Credit Card & More Info: Scan QR Code



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**CONTACT: Stephen Yazulla (631)806-5534
syazulla@gmail.com**

Parish Social Ministry

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

Elizabeth Kozlowski
Brian Stewart



PRAYER BLANKETS

Prayer Blankets will be blessed on July 6, 2025 at the 8AM Mass. If you have a family member or friend in need of the support of our SSPJ family, please take one for them.

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.

The Medical Aid in Dying bill is on Gov. Kathy Hockul's desk for signature. The NYS Bishops have urged all to get involved by calling the Governor's office @ **518-474-8390**. **Leave the message: DO NOT SIGN.**

Take Action!



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



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:

Children's snacks



LAUDATO SI

The human family is called to challenge the injustices creating the ecological crises threatening life on Earth by proclaiming the burning prophetic word of God for these times. Jesus challenges us to think as God thinks, face the suffering before us, and take up our cross and follow Him.

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

"FOR MY FLESH IS TRUE FOOD,
AND MY BLOOD IS TRUE DRINK."



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.

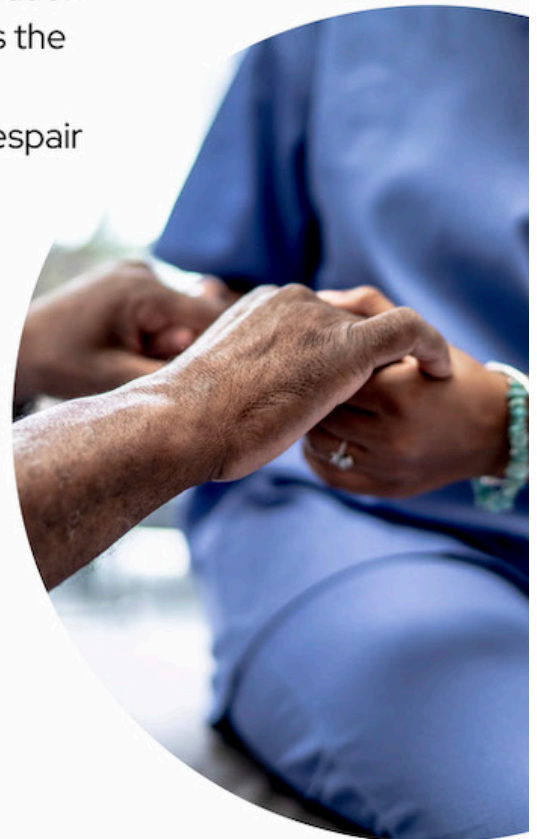
This bill would allow doctors to prescribe lethal medication with the sole purpose of ending a patient's life. It puts the most vulnerable among us – the elderly, people with disabilities, and those facing emotional or financial despair – at even greater risk. **Suicide is not healthcare.**

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.

Take Action!



Contact the Governor's office now to oppose this deadly practice! Visit 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



Experience the Catholic School Difference!



**Now registering for
the 2025-26 school year!**

Discover the vibrant faith and academic excellence of our school communities on Long Island. Learn more about our programs and find the school closest to you by scanning the QR code below!



Take the next step!
www.drvcschools.org

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: _____

Music Ministry

WEEKLY REFLECTION FROM MUSIC DIRECTOR MARGARET ADAMS

This weekend is the Body and Blood of Christ. The hymns reflect, in some way, a feast or a connection with Christ's Body and Blood. In our Gathering hymn, "Gather the People", we are invited to enter God's feast.

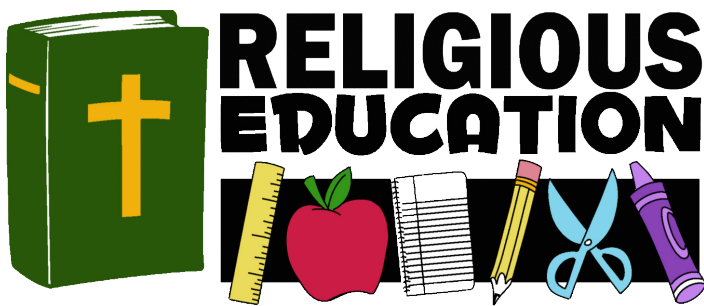
The choirs are coming to a close. A much-needed rest is waiting. Please take time this summer to think about joining the Music Ministry. Our numbers are very low and I am asking for just singers at this time. Please consider joining.

A special thank you to our cantors, teen and adult. They will continue to sing during the summer. We thank them for their continued commitment and dedication to this ministry.

If anyone is interested in becoming a cantor, please reach out to me, Margaret Adams, after Mass or at the parish center.

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/msgrmcnamara/jubilee.



PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!!

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

In order to register please go to our website – 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.

A Summer Vocal Concert



Gina Haver
Soprano

FEATURING



Laura Lupinacci
Mezzo-Soprano

Daniel Ragone - Piano

FROM THE SECULAR TO THE DIVINE

Singing glorious musical selections from Vivaldi to Broadway.
Come celebrate summer with sonorous selections sure to uplift your soul!

Sunday, June 29, 2025
2:00pm

First Presbyterian Church of Port Jefferson
Main and 107 South Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777

Voluntary Donation - \$20

For more information call the church office at 631.473.0147



SACRED VOICES CONCERT

ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EXPERIENCE WITH THE SISTINE CHAPEL CHOIR REPERTOIRE AND THE POPE'S ORGANIST



JOIN US AS WE CAPTIVATE NEW YORK WITH THE EXQUISITE REPERTOIRE OF THE SISTINE CHAPEL CHOIR. DON'T MISS OUT!

WHERE ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY
175 WOLF HILL RD
MELVILLE, NY 11747

WHEN SATURDAY, AUGUST 9TH
TIME 7PM



FEATURING
JOSEP SOLÉ COLL
FIRST ORGANIST
OF THE PAPAL
BASILICA OF ST.
PETER'S (VATICAN)



ADRIANO CAROLETTI
CONDUCTOR OF
SACRED VOICES WITH
H.E. CARDINAL
DOMINIQUE MAMBERTI

TO PURCHASE TICKETS AND LEARN MORE VISIT
[RECLAIMINGCHRISTENDOM.COM](https://reclaimingchristendom.com) OR SCAN QR CODE



ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY PRESENTS,
"SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX
*on the Night of Faith
and Dawn of Hope*"

AUGUST 1, 5:00 pm to
AUGUST 3, 2:00 pm

**SEMINARY
OF THE IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION**

LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK

For more information and sponsorship opportunities,
contact 914-367-8201 or SJS.Events@dunwoodie.edu

www.dominicanhouseofprayer.com or
www.dunwoodie.edu.

GUESTROOMS AVAILABLE - SPACE IS LIMITED



Bishop John
O. Barres



Cardinal Anders
Arborelius, OCD



Bishop James
Massa



Sr. Talitha, OCD



Fr. Donald
Haggerty



Fr. Ignatius John
Schweitzer, OP



Dr. Anthony
Lilles



Fr. Boniface
Hicks, OSB



Sr. Armelle
Fauvette



SAINT JOSEPH'S
— SEMINARY AND COLLEGE —



AVILA INSTITUTE
FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION



*Pursue a lasting love ...
Create hope for the future!*

*Natural Family Planning...supporting God's
gifts of love and life in marriage*

What Does it Mean to Pursue a Lasting Love?

As men and women caught in the responsibilities of daily life, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that we are destined for eternity. The thought that God's love *endures forever* is something difficult for our time-bound selves to comprehend. It's a lofty claim that can be easy to leave on the shelf as an "ideal"—rather than a truth we intentionally integrate into our marriage, here and now.

Because of the consequences of original sin, we do not come into this world knowing how to love as God loves. Instead, we receive and experience God's love for us throughout our lives, even as we learn to model that love in how we treat others. As Pope Francis says:

When a person discovers God, the true treasure, he abandons a selfish lifestyle and seeks to share with others the charity which comes from God. He who becomes a friend of God, loves his brothers and sisters, commits himself to safeguarding their life and their health....
(Pope Francis, Homily, 2014)*

Learning from the Trinity

A key way we can learn more about God's love is by examining the Trinitarian relationship between God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is three distinct persons united in one Godhead. The inner life of the Trinity is interpersonal, self-giving, and communicative.

As Christians, we are challenged to have faith that is "the confidence of what we hope for and the assurance of what we do not see" (Heb. 11:1). The first step in pursuing a lasting love, with the Trinity as our example,

is the belief that a lasting love is possible—that we truly can and do daily participate in a divine reality that is beyond what can be seen on the surface.

Love is Free, Total, faithful, and Fruitful!

Church teaching maintains that married love must be free, total, faithful, and fruitful. This is exactly how the Trinity loves!

In the Trinity, love is freely given between the three persons. The persons of the Trinity willingly place themselves at the service of their communion. There is no coercion or ulterior motive.

The total gift of each person to the other allows for the one-ness of the Trinitarian relationship.

Secondly, the persons of the Trinity give themselves totally to one another. Though each person of the Trinity retains their unique personhood, they hold nothing back from the participation in Trinitarian love. The total gift of each person to the other allows for the one-ness of the Trinitarian relationship.

Third, Trinitarian love is faithful. The steadfastness of the Trinity is an indispensable part of a love which endures for all eternity. And finally, love is fruitful. The love of the Trinity is life-giving. All of creation, all of mankind, all goodness, all beauty results and flows from the love of the Trinitarian relationship.

The Human Person as Gift

It is only from the foundational understanding of love that we can come to know what a person is. The human person is made by love and for love. St. John Paul II phrases it beautifully in what is known as his personalistic norm. He states that human beings are subjects and not objects. Objects are meant to be used. Subjects are meant to be received as a gift. When we see our spouse and our children as gifts, the way that we relate to them shows just how much we value them.

Our families are especially called to be an icon of Trinity—where our hearts are stretched by loving one another and we are prepared to participate in eternal love. Then, spouses are called in a unique and intimate way to enter into a lasting love through the reception of one another as a gift in the sexual embrace. Spouses are called to open their hearts to God in marital intimacy such that each marital act be oriented towards the openness to life and the good of one another.

Natural Family Planning, an Expression of Love

With this end in mind, it is also important to note that there are times when, for serious reasons, it may not be prudent for a couple to have a child. In keeping with the vision of a lasting love that is free, total, faithful, and fruitful, the Church proposes Natural Family Planning (NFP) as a practical and morally permissible method for married couples to avoid or achieve pregnancy.

According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, practicing NFP allows spouses to be responsible parents and at the same time “respect God’s design for life and love.” NFP is based on the natural times of fertility and infertility experienced throughout the course of a woman’s menstrual cycle. In seasons where it may be imprudent for a couple to have a child due to psychological, financial, physical, or other serious reasons, the couple abstains from intercourse during the woman’s fertile time. At the same time, NFP can also be used to achieve pregnancy.

NFP is not contraception because it does nothing to alter or block the body’s natural rhythms of fertility. Instead, NFP relies on scientifically proven methods of tracking a woman’s menstrual cycle so that a couple can make an informed decision guided by faith and reason.

NFP depends on the couples’ free choice to abstain or engage in intercourse based on the good of the spouses and the good of the family as a whole.

When spouses engage their free will to communicate in this way, they are choosing to see each other and future children as gifts and saying yes to a love that is free, total, faithful, and fruitful—answering the call to be an image of lasting Trinitarian love.

Learn More

Visit the US Bishops’ NFP Program at www.usccb.org/nfp.

To learn more about Catholic teaching on marriage, married love and responsible parenthood, see www.usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning/church-teaching.

Read the US bishop’s document *Married Love and the Gift of Life* at www.usccb.org/resources/Married%20Love%20Final%20Text%20Nov06%20for%20Website%20-%20Copy.pdf

To learn more about NFP see www.usccb.org/topics/naturalfamily-planning/what-natural-family-planning.

Want to learn a method of NFP? Visit www.usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning/nfp-national-providers.

*Quote from Pope Francis’ homily during Mass on the occasion of the Feast day of St Ann, Patron Saint of Caserta (26 July 2014).

www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140726_omelia-caserta.html.

Questions?

Write to nfp@usccb.org

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Gospel Reflection

Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles - Year C

June 29, 2025

Gospel - Matthew 16: 13-19

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi
he asked his disciples,
"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah,
still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."
He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Simon Peter said in reply,
"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah.
For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.
And so I say to you, you are Peter,
and upon this rock I will build my Church,
and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.
I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven.
Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;
and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

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.