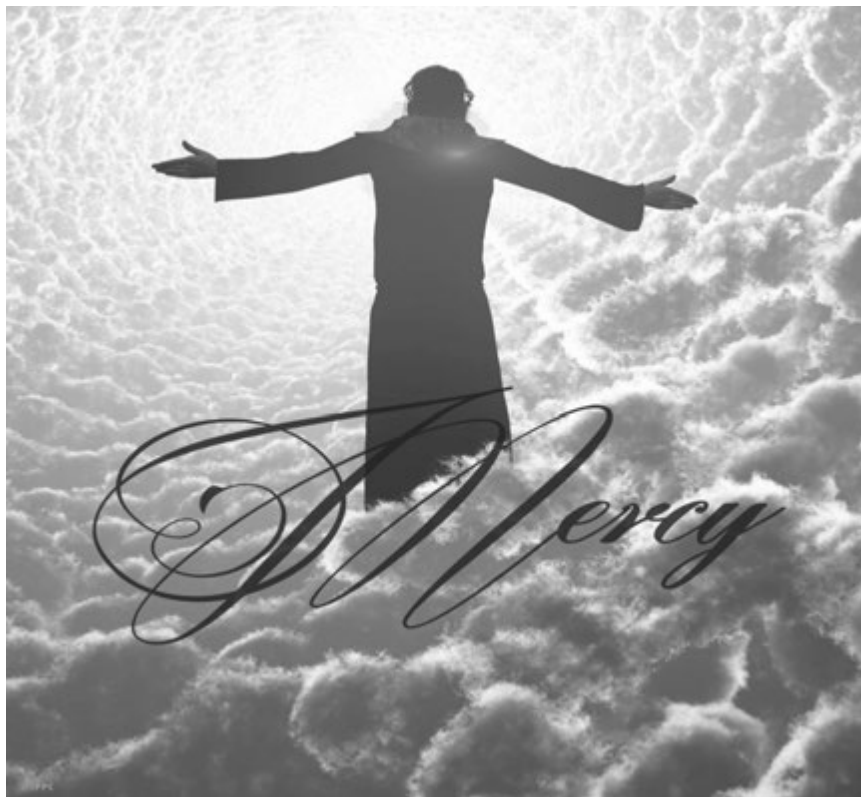


# The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann

[www.ccsjn.org](http://www.ccsjn.org)

November 26, 2017

Volume 35 Number 48



## Mission Statement

**Catholic Community of St. John Neumann**

*FOUNDED* on the teachings of Jesus Christ,  
*NOURISHED* by the hospitality of the Califon Christian  
Communities,

*FORMED* with a commitment to Social Ministry, and  
*STRENGTHENED* by the Holy Spirit

*The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann is  
a jubilant people on a continuing spiritual journey of hope:  
TO CELEBRATE and DEEPEN our faith  
TO SHARE our unique gifts, talents and treasures  
TO CHERISH all life  
TO LIVE in openness, acceptance and love.*

## Annual Parish Goal

*We, as ministers, will foster  
an inviting and spiritual Catholic community for all,  
especially to those away from the Church,  
by growing in and witnessing to our faith in the mercy of God.*

## *A Christian Community of the Catholic Tradition*

Diocese of Metuchen

Most Rev. James F. Checchio,  
JCD, MBA  
Bishop of Metuchen

Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, DD  
Bishop Emeritus

[www.diometuchen.org](http://www.diometuchen.org)

## *Our Parish*

Rev. Abraham Orapankal, PhD .....  
..... Pastor  
Rev. J William Mickiewicz.....  
..... Founding Pastor Emeritus  
Earl Roberts ..... Deacon  
Mary Cangelosi ..... Trustee  
Fred Heimall ..... Trustee

## *Mailing Address:*

PO Box 455  
Califon, NJ 07830

## *Office Center:*

398 County Route 513  
Califon, NJ  
908-832-2513  
908-832-7618 fax  
[www.ccsjn.org](http://www.ccsjn.org)

## *Worshipping at:*

398 County Road 513  
(Church Center)

Saturday Vigil Mass ..... 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday ..... 8:00 a.m.  
Sunday ..... 10:30 a.m.  
First Friday Holy Hour ..... 7:00 p.m.

## *Worshipping at:*

390 County Road 513  
(Neumann Residence)

\*Check the bulletin for any changes\*

## *Weekday Masses:*

Tuesday ..... 8:00 a.m.  
Friday ..... 7:00 a.m.

## *Reconciliation:*

Saturday ..... 5:00 p.m.  
Or anytime by appointment.

# This Week at Saint John's

## Mass Intentions

### Tuesday, November 28

8:00 a.m. George Sekela, req.  
Sharon Janks

### Friday, December 1

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

### Saturday, December 2

5:30 p.m. John Handy, req.  
Cathy and Tom Bennett

### Sunday, December 3

8:00 a.m. Immaculato Suriano, req.  
Baumann Family  
10:30 a.m. Kyle Hargadon, req.  
Erin Cookson & Gina Evans



## Parish Calendar

### Sunday, November 26 - Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)

### Monday, November 27 - Weekday

7:00 p.m. Fundraising Meeting (Office Center Kitchen)  
7:30 p.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word Meeting (Seton Room)  
7:30 p.m. Pastoral Council Meeting (Upper Room)

### Tuesday, November 28 - Giving Tuesday

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
7:00 p.m. Connxions Meeting (Office Center Kitchen)

### Wednesday, November 29 - Weekday

### Thursday, November 30 - Weekday

5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)  
6:30 p.m. Tai Chi (Church Center Loft)  
7:30 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)

### Friday, December 1 - Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
7:00 p.m. First Friday Holy Hour (Church Center)

### Saturday, December 2 - Weekday

11:00 a.m. First Reconciliation and Reception (Church Center)  
3:00 p.m. CPI Day of Discernment (Church Center)  
5:30 p.m. Mass - CPI Rite of Entrance Mass (Church Center)

### Sunday, December 3 - First Sunday of Advent

#### Yellow Brick Rd. Collection

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass with Bells (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)  
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Faith Formation (Church Center)

## Mass Schedule - December 2/3

### Saturday

5:30 p.m.

Celebrant..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader..... Anita Sawczuk  
Altar Server ..... Lowary Family  
Ministers of the Eucharist..... Eileen McCabe  
..... Jim Oelkers, Joan Eacovalle

### Sunday

8:00 a.m.

Celebrant..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader..... Chris Bitters  
Altar Server ..... Stanski Family  
Ministers of the Eucharist..... Joe Sima  
..... Diane Lehnert, Gail Battell

### Sunday

10:30 a.m.

Celebrant..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader..... Gary Porto  
Altar Server ..... Alligood Family  
Music Eucharistic Minister..... Debby Kelemen  
Ministers of the Eucharist..... Marlene Milko, Patti Rittman  
..... Bob Sobey, Jane Albert, Mark Brisson



*Giving Tuesday  
Donate !*

*November 28th at [www.ccsjn.org](http://www.ccsjn.org)*



### ST. JOHN'S LABYRINTH

Immortalize your family, friends, yourself - purchase a stone to honor those you love, mark a birthday, anniversary -- the possibilities are endless.

Thanksgiving or Christmas - such a perfect time to honor your family's Special Events with an engraved stone at the Labyrinth of the Catholic Community of St. John Neumann. The pavers measure 5"X9" and can have 3 lines of engraving, or an 11"X11" which can be engraved with 5 lines. See the brochure in the Narthex for prices. Commemorative pavers will serve as a permanent acknowledgement of your commitment to the Catholic Community of St. John Neumann.



### Remembered at Mass

We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered during the Holy Eucharist: **Marie Colabella**, and **Mary Lorraine Fraine**.

**Deceased:** **Marie Colabella**, mother of Joanne Fabiano, and **Mary Lorraine Fraine**, mother of Bob Fraine. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord and comfort and support from family and friends.

## **FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....**

Dear Friends,

Yes Thanksgiving Day is over, but not the Thanksgiving spirit! How do we keep the spirit of Thanksgiving round the year? It is easy to limit thanksgiving to major occasions or events. But we can be conscious of little things for which we can be grateful. Last Sunday was the "World Day of the Poor," a new annual celebration established by Pope Francis at the end of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. What is considered a luxury by the poor in underdeveloped countries is a very ordinary thing that we take for granted here. Even though I myself come from a well-to-do family in South India, we have no hot shower! So when I go home, I need to carry hot water in a big bucket from the kitchen to the bathroom for a hot shower! Thus each time I enjoy a hot shower here at the residence, it has become a habit for me to thank God for it. Similarly the poor in many parts of the world do not have running water at home, multiple pairs of shoes and sandals, dress for all occasions.

That's why I told our Junior High students two Sundays ago, as they were preparing the shoe box for the Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box program, that the things they are putting into that shoe box are very ordinary stuff (pencils, soap, bracelet, bandana, pencil sharpener, duct tape, glue sticks, deck of cards, etc.) that are unavailable to those poor children. All of us can say thank you to God for these everyday things. And if that sounds too mundane or boring, try this: at the end of the day before sleeping, make a mental list of what you are grateful to God for that day. It will be a very good practice for us to always keep a positive attitude of gratitude.

Today's Feast of the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (formerly known as Feast of Christ the King) is the signal that the Church's calendar year is coming to an end and that we are about to start the new year! Thus the First Sunday of the New Year in the Liturgical Calendar is next Sunday as we begin the season of Advent! It is good for us to know that today's feast was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925 as an antidote to secularism, a way of life which leaves God out of man's thinking and living and organizes his life as if God did not exist. The feast is intended to proclaim in a striking and effective manner Christ's royalty over individuals, families, society, governments, and nations. May we all recognize this truth and continue our efforts to honor Jesus by living his values in our lives.

Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

## **WHO ARE THE TERRORISTS OF GOD'S KINGDOM?**

Terrorism has affected the entire world. But there is a subtle terrorism that is affecting Christ's Kingdom on earth. These terrorists are people who slaughter the unborn; engage in a frontal attack on the modern family through provocative television shows, movies, music and pornography; eradicate any recognition of God from public display and public schools; they include those priests and the religious who abuse children. Hence, Jesus, the King, needs convinced apostles prepared and ready to fight against these enemies, first by prayer, then by accepting willingly the sufferings that come our way and offering them to God with Jesus, our King, in reparation for our sins and the sins of the world, and finally by living lives of loving humble service, using our gifts generously for all. The battlefield is the home, the school, the place of employment, the neighborhood, and the parish. These provide new and exciting challenges, new opportunities for us to do, ourselves, what is right and to live out the Truth of Jesus Christ our King, neither compromising with sin nor passing judgment on the motives or guilt of any of our brothers and sisters, but loving and praying for all of us. To ensure that Jesus is always the King of our hearts, we need to make a great commitment to Him and to back that commitment with the necessary sacrifices, conviction, hard work and daily, serious prayer.

## **HOW DOES THE BREAD AND WINE CHANGE INTO THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST?**

During the Eucharistic prayer, the priest asks God to send the Holy Spirit and transform the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. This is called transubstantiation. It is the conversion of the substance of the Eucharistic elements into the Body and Blood of Christ at consecration, with only the appearances of bread and wine still remaining.

## **OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE**

**November 26, 2017**

***"...whatever you did for one of the  
least of my brothers, you did for me"***

**MATTHEW 25:40**

Most of us are generous when it's convenient for us. We are generous when we have the time or the money. But, generosity is the opposite of that. It means giving of one's time, money, compassion, forgiveness or mercy when it's not convenient; when it's not on our schedule, but on the other person's schedule.

## **MASS WITH BELLS**



We will be celebrating the following Masses through this Holiday Season with the wonderful sound of the Bells.

December 3rd ..... 10:30 a.m.  
December 17th..... 10:30 a.m.  
December 24th..... 7:30 p.m.  
December 31st..... 10:30 a.m.

## **First Friday Holy Hour**



December 1st - 7:00 pm,  
Church Center

## **Parish Contact Information**

**Office Center ..... 908-832-2513**

Fax ..... 908-832-7618

Email ..... [sjn@ccsjn.org](mailto:sjn@ccsjn.org)

Rev. Abraham Orapankal ..... Pastor

Email ..... [abraham@ccsjn.org](mailto:abraham@ccsjn.org)

Earl Roberts ..... Deacon

Email ..... [earl1@verizon.net](mailto:earl1@verizon.net)

Sharon Janks ..... Pastoral Administrator

Email ..... [sjanks@ccsjn.org](mailto:sjanks@ccsjn.org)

France Kennedy ..... Pastoral Associate

Email ..... [fkennedy@ccsjn.org](mailto:fkennedy@ccsjn.org)

Kerri Caldaro ..... Financial Administrator

Email ..... [kcaldaro@ccsjn.org](mailto:kcaldaro@ccsjn.org)

Wayne Infusino ..... Maintenance

**Religious Education ..... 908-832-2162**

Renee Ciszewski Director of Religious Education

Email ..... [renee@ccsjn.org](mailto:renee@ccsjn.org)

Jo Ann Jarvis ..... Office of Catechesis

Email ..... [jjarvis@ccsjn.org](mailto:jjarvis@ccsjn.org)

Social Ministry ..... [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org)

Project Earth Garden... [projectearth@ccsjn.org](mailto:projectearth@ccsjn.org)

Bulletin..... [bulletin@ccsjn.org](mailto:bulletin@ccsjn.org)

Youth Ministry..... [sjnygroup@gmail.com](mailto:sjnygroup@gmail.com)

# Christian Formation

## FIRST RECONCILIATION



**Saturday, December 2nd**

The Holy Communion class will be celebrating the sacrament of First Reconciliation on Saturday, December 2, at 11:00 a.m., in the Church Center. A reception for the children and their families will follow.

## ADVENT APPS



It can be challenging to focus on the true meaning of Christmas amidst the endless shopping.

Let's do the same thing but in a different way this Christmas season! Look at some apps and websites that will help you keep "Christ" in Christmas.

**Xt3 Advent Calendar App** - An Australian Catholic media ministry that provides you with a digital Advent calendar- a countdown to Christmas. Visit [www.Xt3.com/Advent](http://www.Xt3.com/Advent)

**Naxos Musical Advent Calendar**- Seasonal classical music is featured each day. Visit [www.CAT.mag/2iL1jp9](http://www.CAT.mag/2iL1jp9)  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation**- This app helps parishioners with prayers of sacrament and a review of the examination of conscience. Visit [www.littleapps.com/confession](http://www.littleapps.com/confession)



## PARENTING TUNE-UP

Thanksgiving is over. Let the shopping begin! Or must it? The Friday after Thanksgiving is often called Black Friday - the day stores start to make a profit. Buying gifts isn't inherently bad, but giving an experience is often more memorable. Why not stay home and play a game! (Susan Vogt)

## MARRIAGE TUNE-UP

Ways to Turn Your Beloved Off - Let bargain hunting rob you of time - time to serve those who don't have the money even for a bargain. Let Matthew 25 ring in your ears: "I was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, ill, in prison..." Spend some time and money responding to this sales pitch from Christ the King as Christmas approaches.



## GIFT ADULT FORMATION- WHAT'S NEW?

Recent history bears witness that if adults are not well-formed in the Faith, the younger generations will lack formation as well. A solid and vibrant adult faith formation provides all adults an opportunity to learn about the church and develop a personal relationship with Christ. The Sacraments begin to take on more relevance to everyday life. Simply put, the benefits are incalculable!

Consider joining us for the adult formation session of the GIFT program. These sessions will be lead by Fr. Abraham and this year's sessions focus on: **What we celebrate-Sacraments and What we believe-beatitudes/moral life.** and meet monthly on Sunday mornings at 9AM in Valley View School and Monday evenings at 6:15PM in the Church Center. Next sessions are **Sunday December 17 and Monday, December 18.** Please contact Renee Ciszewski with any questions at [renee@ccsjn.org](mailto:renee@ccsjn.org). Hope to see you at our next session.

## Social Ministry

### CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

St. John's Christmas Giving Tree is set up in the Narthex. We need your help to make a difference in the lives of so many challenged by their circumstances. We are supporting six different organizations this year: Anderson House, Freedom House, Little Brook Nursing Home, Newton's Guest House, SHIP and St. John's individuals and families in need. Some tags have more than one gift listed, feel free to purchase one or more of the gifts on the tag.

Please: 1. Take a tag from the Tree, 2. Sign it out on the appropriate Log Sheet. 3. Purchase and wrap your gift, attaching the tag you took as the label. 4. Drop off your gift in the Narthex or the Seton Room by Sunday, December 10th.

If you have any questions, contact Karen Porto 908-832-9820 or [kporto@aol.com](mailto:kporto@aol.com).

### YOUR AMAZON SHOPPING ALREADY GAVE US \$328

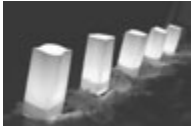


Our Finance Council has been keeping themselves busy not only with the judicious management of our money but also with reflections and discussions on generating income for our Church. One bright idea they have come up with is shopping through Amazon's Associate program, with. It is a very easy way to help St. John with no additional cost to you at all! You just buy the things you'd buy anyway, but buy them through Amazon. When you click on this link it takes you to the Amazon home page, and the only clue that St. John's is getting a commission on your purchase is the small phrase "ccsjn-20" that you will see in the middle of the Amazon URL address - everything else is transparent to the user. [https://www.amazon.com/?tag=ccsjn-20&camp=0&creative=0&link\\_code=ur1&adid=15TJKAQ2QN89EK2VDBZA&](https://www.amazon.com/?tag=ccsjn-20&camp=0&creative=0&link_code=ur1&adid=15TJKAQ2QN89EK2VDBZA&)

Once you land on the Amazon site - simply bookmark it for future use. The members of the Finance Committee, Pastoral Council and our Parish Staff have already tested it and found it easy. Thanks to our Finance Council for this initiative about which they will familiarize us more next weekend.

### GANDHI'S STRENGTH

In the published diaries of Joseph Goebbels, the infamous Nazi Propagandist, there are two or three references to Mahatma Gandhi. Goebbels believed that Gandhi was a fool and a fanatic. If Gandhi had the sense to organize militarily, Goebbels thought, he might hope to win the freedom of India. He was certain that Gandhi couldn't succeed by following a path of non-resistance and peaceful revolution. ***Yet as history played itself out, India peacefully won her independence while the Nazi military machine was destroyed. What Goebbels regarded as weakness actually turned out to be strength. What he thought of as strength turned out to be weakness. Jesus the King won freedom for mankind and won the hearts of mankind by his death on the cross.***



## IT'S TIME TO PASS THE TORCH

*(actually the Christmas Luminaries)*

We are seeking a family who would like to begin their own Christmas Eve tradition. What began as a service project when our boys were young, grew into family tradition lasting into their college years. Our family has enjoyed preparing the luminaries and placing them out on the church driveway for the Christmas Eve Masses. The boys are grown and starting out on their own and we have decided to pass the torch to an interested family. You will find it's a fun and meaningful family tradition that you will all share in to help ready the Church for the celebration of Christmas. If you are interested in this experience with your family for Christmas or would like more information, please contact us now or the parish office. We are happy to lend you a hand if needed! Linda and Hunt Patterson @ 537-9488 or the parish office @ 832-2513.



## SPIRITUALITY BREAKFAST AND SPEAKER

**December 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 a.m. – Church Center**

The Men's and Women's Spirituality groups are combining for breakfast on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 a.m. We will be hosting speaker Ray Zolnowski, as he discusses his "Journey to Rome." Ray has a doctorate in theology and was an Anglican priest for 14 years before converting to Catholicism. We're looking forward to a wonderful morning sharing prayer, good food and warm conversation. Feel free to invite your spouse, friend or neighbor – all are welcome!

## IS JESUS A KING? YES, BUT A UNIQUE KING!

**The New Testament tells us that Jesus is the long-awaited king of the Jews.** In the Annunciation, recorded in Lk.1:32-33, we read: *"The Lord God will make him a King, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the King of the descendants of Jacob forever and his Kingdom will never end."* The Magi from the Far East came to Jerusalem and asked the question: (Mt 2:2) *"Where is the baby born to be the King of the Jews? We saw his star... and we have come to worship him."* During the royal reception given to Jesus on Palm Sunday, the Jews shouted: (Lk 19:38) *"Blessed is the King, who comes in the name of the Lord."* When Pilate asked the question: (Jn 18:33) *"Are you the King of the Jews?"* Jesus, in the course of their conversation, made his assertion, *"You say that I am a King. For this was I born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the Truth. Everyone who belongs to the Truth listens to My Voice"* (John 18:37).

**A unique King with a unique Kingdom:** Jesus Christ still lives as King, in thousands of human hearts all over the world. The cross is his throne and the Sermon on the Mount is his rule of law. His citizens need obey only one law: *"Love others as I have loved you"* (John 15:12). His love is selfless, sacrificial, kind, compassionate, forgiving and unconditional. That is why the preface in today's Mass describes Jesus' Kingdom as *"a Kingdom of truth and life, a Kingdom of holiness and grace, a Kingdom of justice, love and peace."* He is a King with a saving and liberating mission: to free mankind from all types of bondage so that we may live peacefully and happily on earth and inherit Eternal Life in Heaven. His rule consists in seeking the lost, offering salvation to those who call out to him and making friends of enemies.

## KING WHO CONQUERED DEATH!

Worldly kings do not have this power. Their last enemy is death, which ends their power, wealth, and prestige. In Vienna there is a crypt under a Capuchin church. In this crypt are buried 140 Kings, Queens, Princes and Princesses. Each sarcophagus is sculptured in steel. The largest is a double tomb for Maria Theresa and her husband. On each sarcophagus was carved a cross and the Royal crown. On each corner of one sarcophagus was a skull wearing a crown. **The message was clear: Death was king! Even kings are conquered by death. But the King of God's realm lives in spite of death. And so we, as Christians belonging to Him, have no fear of death, for by the power of His cross, death was defeated for us all.**

## HIGH WAY SUPER SAVIOR !

A Church in Ohio did it with a large icon--a 62-foot-tall statue of Jesus with upraised arms, installed in a cornfield just north of Monroe, Ohio on Interstate 75. The statue--dubbed "Super Savior"-- was erected by the Solid Rock Church, in Middletown. Here is what is interesting. Traffic fatalities on this notorious stretch of road have dropped dramatically since the Super Savior statue was raised. Is that pure coincidence or has the Styrofoam and fiberglass Christ really aided road safety? Nobody knows. [Dr. John Bardsley. Source: *National Catholic Reporter* (10-28-2005), p. 3.] ***Certainly a giant statue of Christ does no harm, and if it improves traffic, that's fine. But do not be confused. This is not the best way to express our allegiance to Christ. The best way to express our allegiance to Christ is to make our lives worthy of the name Christian.***



## WRAP PRESENTS AND BE PRESENT!

Advent is the season we prepare for Christmas. We shop, bake, decorate, shop, cook, and visit till we are ready to drop. This is all part of the season, but at its heart, Advent is about getting ready to encounter Jesus. A free email program from Dynamic Catholic will help you slow down and focus on what really matters during this busy season. Sign up at: [BestAdventEver.com](http://BestAdventEver.com)

## I AM THANKFUL FOR OUR SMALL GROUPS!

I have heard this from many parishioners who have participated in the small group sessions we have had over the last five years. This year's Fall Small Group sessions have just concluded. There were eight groups with over 80 people gathering over seven weeks to explore Mary, scripture and faith in our personal lives. Our Lent Small Groups will start around Valentines' Day. It is an experience worth trying. We hope you will consider giving it a try.

## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Donna Angeline  
Joseph Angeline  
Pete Cangelosi  
Joan Cardierre  
Jean Crickenberger  
John D'Almeida  
Barbara DelPiano  
Sophia DeVita  
Jennifer Bennett Duckworth  
Paul Ferri  
Sophie Geist  
Father Luigi Hargen  
Liz Harmon  
Jay Heyman  
Fred Holub  
Manuel Jimenez, Sr.  
Miriam Jiminian  
Bonnie Lieberwirth  
Lou Livoti  
Dick McCall  
Maggie McKeon  
Jan McLeavey  
Christine Meyer  
Fran Miceli  
Joan & Megan Myers  
Mary Lou O'Brien  
Nilsa Perez Parsons  
John Pfeufer  
Tommy Rack  
Ali Redling  
Roy Rittman  
Anne & Joe Sacco  
Richard Sepe  
Noah Skinner  
Michael Slivka  
Dick Slusher  
Pam Stewart  
Nicholas Troiano  
Don Velli  
William Weimer  
Josh Wilkes  
Dana & Greg Wilson  
Mari Wilson  
Caden & Jill Zane  
Joey Zieba

## MILITARY PERSONNEL

**Please remember the following in your prayers:**

Captain Baumann, Katherine, U.S. Army  
HM Bullis, Christopher, U.S. Navy  
Cavallo, Chris, USMC  
C2C, Geerinck, Joshua, U.S. Air Force  
Seaman, Jenkinson, Devin, U.S. Air Force  
Spec. Jablonski, Jon Tyler, U.S. Army  
Private, Linzer, Matthew, U.S. Army  
Seaman, Linzer, Stephanie, U.S. Navy  
SR O'Leary, Thomas, U.S. Navy  
Lieutenant JG Simila, Nicole, U.S. Navy  
Airman, Vardian, Justin, U.S. Air Force  
Ensign, Webster, Justine, U.S. Navy

## SUNDAY REFLECTION: Putting a Price Tag on Life

**The parable of the sheep and the goats: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25: 31-46**

Attorney Kenneth Feinberg served as special master of the Federal September 11 Victim Compensation Fund. He was charged with dispensing money to the families of each person who died in the 9/11 terror attacks. It was, to say the least, a daunting job. Feinberg began administering the funds using a formula based on legal precedent that considered the individual victim's age, dependents, financial assets - and earning potential. The value assigned to those lost lives varied dramatically: as little as \$250,000 for blue-collar workers to as much as \$7 million for CEOs. The process had a dramatic effect on Feinberg himself. He found his personal convictions coming into conflict with the law. In an essay on NPR [May 25, 2008], he said of the work:

"The law required that I give more money to the stockbroker, the bond trader and the banker than to the waiter, the policeman, the fireman, and the soldier at the Pentagon. This is what happens every day in courtrooms throughout the nation. Our system of justice has always been based on this idea: that compensation should be directly related to the financial circumstances of each victim. "But as I met with the 9/11 families and wrestled with the issues surrounding the valuation of lives lost, I began to question this basic premise. Trained in the law, I had always accepted that no two lives were worth the same in financial terms. But now I found the law in conflict with my growing belief in the quality of all life. "Mr. Feinberg, my husband was a fireman and died a hero at the World Trade Center. Why are you giving me less money than the banker who represented Enron? Why are you demeaning the memory of my husband?"

Attorney Feinberg realizes that his response was unconvincing. He was following the law, just as juries did every day. But grieving families couldn't hear it - and, Feinberg said, "I didn't believe it myself." Two years later, Kenneth Feinberg was asked again to design and administer a compensation program: a privately-funded compensation system established for the families and victims of the Virginia Tech shootings. This time citizen Feingold trumped lawyer Feingold: All victims - students and faculty - received the same compensation. "I have resolved my personal conflict and have learned a valuable lesson at the same time," Kenneth Feingold says. "I believe that public compensation should avoid financial distinctions which only fuel the hurt and grief of the survivors. I believe that all lives should be treated the same."

**The true value of every human life is the light of the divine that each one of us possesses; our worth is found in the love of God that our lives reveal to the world. Before God, we stand as brothers and sisters; before God, the distinctions of class and culture that separate us disappear; before God, we are all loved without condition and limit. Attorney Feingold, in the difficult role of administering the two compensation funds, realizes that a legal standard cannot measure a true person's "worth," that a life well-lived and faithful has little to do with assets and earning potential. Jesus' parable of the sheep and the goats challenges us to see the world in the light of God's compassion: as a community that is centered in the holiness of God that dwells within every man, woman and child; a community that sees deeper than the externals of race, nationality, culture and language in order to behold the love of God animating the lives of all who draw breath; a community that reflects the compassion and mercy of God in our care for one another.**



## SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



A pedestrian steps off the curb and into the road without looking and promptly gets knocked flat by a passing cyclist. "You were really lucky there," says the cyclist. "What on earth are you talking about! That really hurt!" says the pedestrian, still on the pavement, rubbing his head. The cyclist replies, "Well, usually I drive a bus!"

A mother got a funny piece of advice from her little son. When she was tired of struggling with her strong-willed little son, Thomas, she looked him in the eye and asked a question she felt sure would bring him in line: "Thomas, who is in charge here?" Not missing a beat, he replied, "Jesus is, and not you Mom."

Catholic Community of St. John Neumann  
December 2017

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