



## 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

## *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

### *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, March 27

8:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

### Thursday, March 29

8:00 p.m. John Handy, req.  
Eileen McCabe

### Saturday, March 31

8:00 p.m. John McCabe, req.  
Eileen McCabe

### Sunday, April 1

8:00 a.m. Linnea Janks, req.  
Alan and Sharon Janks  
10:30 a.m. Genevieve Nowatkowski, req.  
Jim and Roni Durham

## Parish Calendar

### Sunday, March 25 - Palm/Passion Sunday of Lent / Easter Flower Offering

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
9:00 a.m. Small Group (Seton Room)  
10:30 a.m. Mass with Bells (Church Center)  
11:30 a.m. Bell Choir Practice (Church Center)  
11:30 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt (Church Grounds)  
12:00 p.m. GIFT Make up Session (Church Center)

### Monday, March 26 - Monday of Holy Week

7:00 p.m. Fund Raising Meeting (Office Center Kitchen)  
7:30 p.m. Pastoral Council Meeting (Seton Room)  
7:30 p.m. Chrism Mass (Cathedral)

### Tuesday, March 27 - Tuesday of Holy Week

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
7:00 p.m. Connxions Meeting (Office Center Kitchen)  
7:30 p.m. Bell Choir Practice (Church Center)

### Wednesday, March 28 - Wednesday of Holy Week

5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)  
6:00 p.m. Living Stations Practice (Drexel Room)

### Thursday, March 29 - Holy Thursday / Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

6:00 p.m. Confirmandi Seder Meal (Church Center)  
8:00 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper (Church Center)  
9:00 p.m. Keeping Vigil (Seton Room)

### Friday, March 30 - Good Friday / Friday of the Passion of the Lord / Holy Land Collection

12:00 p.m. Office Closed  
1:00 p.m. Living Stations of the Cross (Church Grounds)  
8:00 p.m. Good Friday Service (Church Center)

### Saturday, March 31 - Holy Saturday (No 5:30 Mass)

8:00 a.m. Easter Environment Decorating (Church Center)  
9:00 a.m. R.C.I.A Retreat (Neumann Residence)  
8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil Mass (Church Center)

### Sunday, April 1 - Easter Sunday of the the Resurrection of the Lord

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass with Bells (Church Center)

## Mass Schedule - March 29/30/31 and April 1

### Holy Thursday 8:00 p.m.

Celebrant ..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader ..... Anita Sawczuk  
Altar Server ..... Patterson Family  
Music Eucharistic Minister ..... Mary D'Avella  
Ministers of the Eucharist ..... Gloria Cucchiara  
..... Diane Lehnert, Debby Kelemen, 2 Needed

### Good Friday 8:00 p.m.

Celebrant ..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader (1) ..... Kate Knight  
Reader (2) ..... Jim Murray

### Holy Saturday 8:00 p.m.

Celebrant ..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader (1) ..... Joann McNamara  
Reader (2) ..... Needed  
Reader (3) ..... Music Cantor  
Altar Server ..... Heimall/Kennedy  
Music Eucharistic Minister ..... Gloria Cucchiara  
Ministers of the Eucharist ..... Mary D'Avella, Patti Rittman  
..... 3 Needed

### Easter Sunday 8:00 a.m.

Celebrant ..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader ..... Allan Piechowski  
Altar Server ..... Needed  
Ministers of the Eucharist ..... Barbara Martalus  
..... Bob Martalus, Sharon Janks

### Easter Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Celebrant ..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader ..... Steve Carroll  
Altar Server ..... Needed  
Music Eucharistic Minister ..... Needed  
Ministers of the Eucharist ... Anthony DeStefano, Jim DeVito  
..... Debby Kelemen, Sheena Carew, Jane Albert

## PRAY FOR OUR PARISHIONERS IN RCIA

RCIA is going through the period of Purification and Enlightenment in the process of Christian Initiation. Please pray for our parishioners Jennifer Anderson, Chris Sepe, Shannon Heimall, Michelle Regan, Tanya Schineller and Michelle Snyder as they prepare to receive the Easter Sacraments.

## Remembered at Mass



We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered during the Holy Eucharist: **Robert Cassidy, Charlie Olsson, Helen Boybo, and Bill Hackett.**

**Deceased:** **Robert Cassidy**, brother of Cookie DeVito, **Charlie Olsson**, uncle of Joann Fabiano, **Helen Boybo**, grandmother of Sheena Carew and **Bill Hackett**, friend of the Janks/Angeline family. 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,

Is today "Palm Sunday" or "Passion Sunday?" The answer is: both. The first name comes from the fact that it commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the crowd had palm branches (John 12:13). The second name comes from the fact that the narrative of the Passion is read on this Sunday (it otherwise wouldn't be read on a Sunday, since next Sunday is about the Resurrection).

Why do we use palms today? In biblical times, the palm tree was considered a "kingly" tree because of its lofty height and majestic appearance. The palm tree became a sign and symbol of royalty and victory. "The Jewish people carried palm branches in their processions on festive holy days. Roman soldiers carried palms in their victory parades in Rome. Holding palms in our hands, we too join the crowds who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem as their King and Messiah. We have thus entered today into the Holy Week, the most important week of the Liturgical Year. Keep these palms in a prominent place in our home and thus we will be reminded of the significance of what we have begun on Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday.

The Lenten season of sacrifice and self-denial is about to come to an end, but this week is extremely important for all Christians. The greatest focus of the week is the Passion (suffering) and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the events that led up to it. The "Chrism Mass" will be on Monday in the Cathedral where the Bishop, together with all the priests, will commemorate one important event of the Holy Thursday – the institution of the Priesthood. It is during this Mass that the sacred oils used for the Sacraments will be blessed by the Bishop. Our parish will be represented by Gloria & Gary Cucchiara who will bring some of these oils back to our parish.

"Easter Triduum" is another term we hear this week. It simply means "a three day festival" of prayer and worship, beginning on the evening of Holy Thursday and ending on Easter Sunday. A short note on each of these days is given on other pages inside. My earnest request to you in this column, dear brothers and sisters, is that you make every effort this week to attend these sacred events. Can we consider this week as a time of grace for all of us as a family and so make sure that we participate in these worship services even by making some sacrifice this week, by rescheduling other activities, by rearranging other plans and thus giving priority to this week? You will see the grace of God flowing into your lives and into your homes.

Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

## ARE FAST AND ABSTINENCE REQUIRED ON GOOD FRIDAY?

Yes. Good Friday is a day of penance to be observed as of obligation in the whole Church, and indeed through abstinence and fasting. The obligation to fast applies only to Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59. To fast in the Catholic tradition means to limit oneself to one full meal during the day so as to experience hunger. The obligation of abstinence affects all Catholics who have reached the age of 14. Abstinence in the Catholic tradition means to abstain from meat.

The obligation of fast and abstinence, as a whole, is a serious obligation. While failure to observe any penitential day in itself may not be considered serious, the failure to observe any penitential days at all, or a substantial number of them without good cause, would be considered a grave matter. Those unable to abstain for a valid reason on any given Friday of Lent are asked to perform some other penitential act, or to abstain on another day.



## ST JOHN'S ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

*Sunday, March 25th after the 10:30 Mass*

Join the fun at our Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday after the 10:30 Mass! There will be 'hidden' Eggs for ages 1 – 10. Bring your baskets if you have them – but we will have bags available if you forget. Be prepared for weather - dress for outside temperature and wet grass! We have separate hunting grounds to accommodate the ages. Thank you to the members of the High School Youth Group for hosting this for St. John's younger parishioners!

## PALM SUNDAY

*March 25, 2018*

*"Pilate again said to them, 'Then what shall I do with the man whom you call the King of the Jews?' And they cried out again, 'Crucify him.'" MARK 15:12-13*

Jesus told us "whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do for me." Every day we are presented opportunities to help someone. Every day we have the opportunity to see the face of Jesus in others and be the face of Jesus to others. Pray for the strength and courage to stand up for those in need of our help.

## SMALL GROUP CONCLUDING CELEBRATION

*April 11 - 7pm Church Center*

Everyone is invited for a BIG "Small Group" Concluding Session and Celebration! On Wednesday April 11, we have prepared an interesting conclusion to the Lent Small Groups to be led by Father Abraham including abbreviated small group discussions. Even if you have not participated in a small group you are welcome to this general session. Anyone who enjoys sharing food, you are welcome to donate to our refreshments for socializing.



## BAPTISM

If you have a child you want to baptize before August contact France Kennedy at 908-832-2513 to register for our Baptism Preparation Program in April.

## 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 ..... [earlr1@verizon.net](mailto:earlr1@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)

Susanne Erz ..... Financial Administrator

Email ..... [serz@ccsjn.org](mailto:serz@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

## **1ST EUCHARIST CLASSES**

**Sat., April 14, 2:30 p.m.**



The next First Eucharist session will be held on Saturday, April 14, at 2:30 p.m. in the Church Center. Please note this class will start one hour earlier than previous sessions.

## **LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS**



Please join our Confirmation class as they enact the Living Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 p.m., on the Church grounds. St. John's is happy to host this ecumenical event each year.



## **Make-up Session for March GIFT Monday & Sunday Programs**

The make-up session for March GIFT Family Faith Formation Program is **Sunday March 25, 2018 at 12:00 after the Easter Egg Hunt in the church center.** A light lunch will be provided. This is a make-up session for the Monday session too, since Fr. Abraham will be attending the Chrism Mass at St. Francis in Metuchen on Monday evening. So kindly attend Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup> instead of Monday.

**Please contact me with any question and to confirm attendance [renee@ccsjn.org](mailto:renee@ccsjn.org) this will help with food preparation.**

## **THE SPRING GIVING TREE**

We are looking for volunteers to operate our Spring Giving Tree this year. The tree will be set-up for Easter weekend. We typically support three agencies, which you will contact and then make a list of items required, make tags, hang on the tree, sort, pack and then deliver the items to the agencies. There are plenty of people who can offer you guidance and we also have many notes available from past drives. If you are interested to take on the Giving Tree Project or just a part of it e.g. delivering the donated items, helping sort out or contacting the agencies, please contact Social Ministry at [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org)

## **ADULTS INVITED TO GIFT SESSIONS WITH FR. ABRAHAM**



Each month during the Adult segment of the GIFT program, Fr. Abraham gives a presentation on a topic of interest. Recently he reflected on Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love) – the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis. It was well attended and well appreciated as it gave a greater understanding of the efforts of Pope Francis to bring about Pastoral changes for the good for the whole church. The next session will focus on the Catholic Social Teaching which is known as the “best kept secret” of the

Catholic Church! We will have a discussion of:

**The Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching. These are:**

- Life and Dignity of the Human Person. ...
- Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities. ...
- Option for the Poor and Vulnerable. ...
- The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers. ...
- Solidarity. ...
- Care for God's Creation.

As our Parish is on the forefront of Social Ministry and outreach to the less fortunate, please consider joining this session which, as usual, will be interesting and engaging. The make-up session will be Sunday March 25, 2018 after the Easter Egg Hunt at 12PM. Light lunch will be provided. Please contact Renee Ciszewski [renee@ccsjn.org](mailto:renee@ccsjn.org) with any questions and R.S.V.P. for food count.

## **LENTEN RICE BOWLS FOR CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES**



Thanks to all who participated in CRS Rice Bowl this Lent to benefit Catholic Relief Services. You may leave your Rice Bowl boxes or checks in the CRS Rice Bowl donation box in the narthex or drop off at the Office Center anytime now through Easter. Thank you!

# Social Ministry

## **INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK**

Lent is upon us...and we should all be looking for ways to “pay it forward.” An easy way to do this, either individually or as a family, would be to sign up to help homeless families in Hunterdon through the Interfaith Hospitality Network. Our next chance to assist Spruce Run Lutheran Church with this will be from April 1-8. Your help is needed in many different ways – supplying a meal, staying overnight, or just being present, whatever you are most comfortable with. It requires just a few hours of your time; there is no long term commitment, and a great way to help those less fortunate right here in Hunterdon County. Since this is Easter break for some, it might be a good opportunity for Scout groups or other service clubs to assist and earn community service hours.

To see when & how you can help, check out Sign Up Genius at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e054eafad22a20-family6>, or contact Debbie Hunt at [dhuntfam1@comcast.net](mailto:dhuntfam1@comcast.net) for further info.

## **RETREAT TO THE SETON SHRINE**

**Saturday, April 28, 2018**

Please join Saint Catherine of Siena Parish on a retreat to the Seton Shrine in Emmitsburg, MD on Saturday, April 28. We have an exciting day planned including a guided tour of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's Historic Homes and Cemetery. We will also tour the Basilica and attend mass with Father Chester as the celebrant. Cost is \$60 per person. For more information visit <https://setonshrine.org/> or contact Denise Botto at [denisebotto@gmail.com](mailto:denisebotto@gmail.com) or 908-996-6760.

## **BELONGING - TIME AND TALENT RENEWAL**

Being a member of a parish is not the same as belonging to a parish. Being a member is filling out a registration card. Belonging is being actively involved in the life and spirit of a community. We invite YOU to be BELONG.

We have a new "Every Member a Minister" Booklet that describes the many ministries and activities of the parish in which you can participate. Use this resource as an aid to help you discern how your talents are best utilized for others and the parish community. We ask that each adult complete the Stewardship Talent form and return to the basket in the Narthex. If you have any questions on areas of service, you can use the email for each specific service to get detailed information on individual activities and ministries. Youth are also welcome to respond with a volunteer form.

### **2018 EASTER & HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE**

- Sat. Mar. 24 - **Blessing of Palms** Procession (Portico)  
5:30pm Mass - Palm Distribution (Church Center)
- Sun. Mar. 25 - **Passion/Palm Sunday**  
8:00am Mass - Palm Distribution (Church Center)  
10:30am Mass - Palm Distribution (Church Center)
- Mon. Mar. 26 - 7:30pm Chrism Mass (Cathedral-Metuchen)
- Tues. Mar. 27 - 8:00am Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
- SACRED TRIDUUM**
- Thurs. Mar. 29 - **Holy Thursday**  
8:00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper (Church Center)  
9:30pm-12:00am "**Keeping Watch**" (Seton Room)
- Fri. Mar. 30 - **Good Friday** Passion and Death of the Lord  
1:00pm Living Stations of the Cross (Grounds)  
8:00pm Service (Church Center)
- Sat. Mar. 31 - **Holy Saturday - NO 5:30pm MASS**  
8:00pm Easter Vigil and Mass - (Church Center)
- Sun. April 1 - **Easter Sunday**  
8:00am Mass (Church Center)  
10:30am Mass (Church Center)

## **THE SCAR ON HARRY POTTER'S FOREHEAD!**

There is, a villain in the Harry Potter series of magic novels, an evil wizard named Lord Voldemort. At the end of the first book, Harry Potter learns that Voldemort murdered both Harry's parents when Harry was only a baby. He first murdered Harry's father and then tried to murder Harry, to be sure that Harry, as his father's heir, would not be a threat to Voldemort as he grew to maturity. But, of course, he did not succeed in murdering Harry. When he tried to do so, Harry's mother threw herself in the way, taking the blow and dying in Harry's place. When Voldemort then tried to kill Harry, he could not. In fact, the curse that he hurled at Harry rebounded onto Voldemort and drained him of his powers. All he could do was leave a lightning-bolt scar across Harry's forehead. Because of his mother's sacrificial love, Harry lived and Voldemort's powers were greatly diminished. Throughout the Harry Potter novels, others immediately recognize young Harry because of his scar. Throughout the series Voldemort makes repeated attempts to capture and kill Harry Potter, but each time he fails. At last Harry asks the wise Headmaster of his school, Dumbledore, why Voldemort could not kill him. This is what Dumbledore tells him: "Your mother died to save you. If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark . . . To have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin . . . [Voldemort] could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good." [J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Scholastic: 1998), p. 216.] **The reason Harry could not be killed was his mother's sacrificial love for him. The reason you and I can be victorious over sin and death is Christ's sacrificial love for us. That's the reason Palm Sunday is so important to us. That is the reason Holy Week is so important to us. It is not a scar on our forehead but the cross on our altar that tells us that Someone died on our behalf. We are the recipients of an everlasting love.**

## **THANK YOU FOR THE SOUP!**

Thank you for all those who made those delicious soups and served us during lent..

## **FINANCE OFFICE CHANGE**

Welcome to Susanne Erz who has assumed the position of bookkeeper in our Finance Office. We are grateful to Kerri Caldaro who has served in this role for several years. Our prayers and best wishes are with her and her family and we hope to see them at future parish events. You can reach the Finance Office by contacting Susanne at [serz@ccsjn.org](mailto:serz@ccsjn.org).

## **CONGRATULATIONS ABELES AND CONNERY FAMILIES**



The parish family celebrated two baptisms recently. On Feb 18, Dave and Kristen baptized Peter Auden Abeles the younger brother of Suzie and Teddy. On March 17, the youngest Connery, Griffin Patrick was baptized by his uncle Rev. Tom Connery. Griffin's siblings are Karlie, Juli, Elly, Molly, Madielyn, Hudson and Declan. The parish celebrates with these families. Their photos are in the narthex for you to recognize them, congratulate and bless them on their journey of sharing their faith with their children.

## **MARRIAGE TUNE-UP**

Palm Sunday is such a baffling feast. Everybody is rejoicing in the glory of Jesus' arrival. But, we who know the end of the story. We know that a lot of pain quickly follows. Presumably your wedding was joyous. Presumably some dark days have followed. Contemplate the ups and downs of your relationship and remember that Good Friday is not the end.

## **PARENTING TUNE-UP**

As your child matures it's often hard to know when to help or give advice and when to hold your tongue, Ask yourself: Will this action empower my child to become more independent, or will it foster continuing dependence on me? (*Parenting Your Adult Child*) <http://susanvoqt.net/BooksbyVoqt.htm>

## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Joseph Angeline  
 George Bernard  
 Linda Caprio  
 Joan Cardierre  
 Jean Crickenberger  
 John D'Almeida  
 Barbara DelPiano  
 Sophia DeVita  
 Jennifer Bennett Duckworth  
 Cindy Feighan  
 Paul Ferri  
 Father Luigi Hargen  
 Liz Harmon  
 Jay Heyman  
 Fred Holub  
 Eleanor Horan  
 Manuel Jimenez, Sr.  
 Miriam Jiminian  
 Bonnie Lieberwirth  
 Lou Livoti  
 Dick McCall  
 Maggie McKeon  
 Jan McLeavey  
 Christine Meyer  
 Joan & Megan Myers  
 Mary Lou O'Brien  
 Nancy Patterson  
 Nilsa Perez Parsons  
 John Pfeufer  
 Ali Redling  
 Joel Rivera  
 Carmen Ruscetta  
 Anne Sacco  
 Richard Sepe  
 Noah Skinner  
 Michael Slivka  
 Dick Slusher  
 Nicholas Troiano  
 Don Velli  
 William Weimer  
 Josh Wilkes  
 Dana & Greg Wilson  
 Caden & Jill Zane  
 Joey Zieba

## MILITARY PERSONNEL

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

Captain Baumann, Katherine, U.S. Army  
 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: "Christ the Clown!"

*... [Christ Jesus] emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness.*

*Philippians 2: 6-11.*  
**When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"**

*Mark 14: 1 - 15: 47*

When he was in his early thirties, the French painter Georges Rouault was walking through town when he passed a circus caravan. An old clown sitting in a corner of the caravan mending his sparkling and gaudy costume caught his attention. Watching the clown, Rouault began to think about the contrast between the clown's eye-catching costume and props, all designed to amuse, and the clown's own marginal place in society: the man underneath the silly, gaudy costume was a poor, itinerant wayfarer.

"I saw quite clearly that the 'Clown' was me, was us, nearly all of us," wrote Rouault in a letter to a friend. "This rich and glittering costume, it is given to us by life itself; we are all more or less clowns, we all wear a glittering costume." Rouault began to paint clowns - yellow clowns, wounded clowns, a clown with a drum, young clowns and old clowns. Rouault's contemporaries noticed resonances between his paintings of clowns and his paintings of Jesus; Rouault's depictions of costumed harlequins and of the Savior of the world began to resemble each other.

Rouault was taking up a long-standing, if quiet, tradition in the church: the idea of Jesus as clown. Arguably, the tradition goes back all the way back to Paul, who reminded the Corinthians that the world deemed "foolish" the things of Christ and that disciples were to indeed be fools for Christ. Rouault's "clowning" Christs expressed two dimensions of the life of the Gospel Jesus: Jesus is the marginal wayfarer, and Jesus specializes, as clowns do, in interruptions, in behavior that violates etiquette and social norms, in impropriety, surprises, and mockery of conventions. In his crucifixion, Christ the clown is unmasked; he is the object of humiliation and mockery. But humankind is revealed to be the fools.

**The events of Holy Week reveal as much about us as about Jesus. In the sacrifice of Jesus the "clown," we realize the foolishness of our own selfishness, the absurdity of our greed, the senselessness of the injustice and hurt we countenanced to maintain the illusion of our "circuses." May we see in the cross of Holy Week the very worst we fail to see in ourselves: that part of us we deftly justify in order to rationalize the crucifixions we execute. As we journey with Jesus this Holy Week, may we seek to wipe away the deceptive "greasepaint" from our faces and take off the fakery of our "glittery costumes" to put on the spirit of humble servanthood of the Christ of compassion and mercy.**

## PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES

The meeting of 2/26/18 began with the Lectio Divina reflection on the gospel. Among the discussion, deliberation and sharing, these were the major points:

- The Movie night was a success and hoped another one will be held soon.
- Stewardship survey was taken by over 100 parishioners and it has been extended for the time being to enable more people to take it.
- Town hall meeting date, based on the survey result so far, can be held on a Friday evening in April; It was suggested to offer soup & food as well as child care to attract more people.
- The Connxions Committee reps presented their Five Year Plans that focused on a variety of activities and events that will help the whole parish to be spiritually enriched as well as socially connected in true fellowship.
- A booklet describing all the various ministries of St. Johns is in preparation to familiarize old-timers and newcomers about the many opportunities we have to get involved in a ministry of their choice and liking.
- Community Coffee was offered by the Council and pulpit invitation was given to the parishioners to consider joining the Pastoral Council to fill in the spots of retiring members. We concluded the meeting with a short prayer.



## SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



The six-year-old came home from Palm Sunday services proudly carrying his palm. Mom and Dad quizzed him on his Sunday school lesson for the day. He responded enthusiastically, "Jesus came to Jerusalem on a donkey. And the happy people waved their palm branches and sang, "O Susanna..."

# Parish and Community News

## **2018 SPRING BEREAVEMENT GROUP TO MEET AT ST. JOHN'S** **TUESDAY EVENINGS FROM APRIL 10 THROUGH MAY 22**

There will be a series of interrelated bereavement seminars at St. John Neumann, Califon, NJ, beginning April 10th. John Cole, transition professional, will facilitate the sessions. This short-term program has been highly rated as helpful by past participants. The conversations will take us from understanding loss and normal reactions to steps, guided by faith, towards acceptance and the recreation of hopeful lives. While a primary focus is the death of a significant other, those who have experienced severe loss because of divorce, separation, or other substantial life altering events are welcomed. All sessions are on Tuesdays and start at 7 p.m. The dates of the seminars will be April 10, 17; May 1, 8, 15, and 22. Please note that each session builds on the prior one. Attendance at all six sessions would be best to derive optimal benefit. All sessions are in the upper floor of the parish office building, unless participant mobility issues arise.

Registration can be made with France at the parish office by calling her at 908-832-2513 on or before April 6th. If anyone has any questions about the seminars or participation, please call John Cole directly at 908-399-4234. This series is open to individuals from all faiths and religious communities. If you are aware of anyone who may benefit from attendance, no matter their affiliation, please suggest that he or she call France or John.

## **WHAT IS EASTER TRIDUUM?**

*"Triduum" is a Latin word referring to a three-day period of prayer, usually in preparation for an important feast or in celebration of that feast. Easter Triduum is the liturgical name for the last three days of Holy Week: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday with Easter Vigil whereby we enter the joy of Easter Sunday. Here's a preview of how it is celebrated here at St. John's, as narrated by our parishioners Joann Gardner and Barbara Gates:*

**Holy Thursday:** Our Sacred Triduum starts with the traditional Seder Meal on Holy Thursday, celebrated by the Confirmandi. These students enjoy the ritual meal that has been prepared by their parents. They are taught the meaning of the Seder meal (with bitter herbs, egg, lamb shank, salt and Elijah's Cup) according to the Hebrew custom.

If you have not attended a Holy Thursday Mass, you should try to be there. It is the time when the Oils of Chrism are presented to the Priest and Congregation after our representative has attended the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral in Metuchen and brings them to St. John's. During this Mass the priest performs the washing of the feet, a very humbling experience. As an extension of this act and to remind us that we all are Christ to one another, those whose feet were washed then wash the hands of the rest of the community. This practice, that is unique to St. John's, really makes us all participants in this sacred rite. At the conclusion of the Mass, the Blessed Sacrament is taken to the beautifully flower-decorated Seton Room where parishioners come in turns to "watch and pray" with Our Lord until midnight.

**Good Friday:** In the afternoon our Confirmation students present the Living Stations of the Cross outside. This presentation is quite moving as parishioners follow the path of Jesus on the road to His death on the cross. The students enact vignettes at each station and the congregation join in prayer, song, and meditation along the way. The students always do a splendid job.

At night, there is a solemn service in the church. The atmosphere is somber with low lighting and music. We hear readings from the Old Testament and the Gospel (the Passion Narrative), and there is time for reflection during the intercessions. After the intercessions, we each venerate the cross with a bow or a kiss. This service is not a Mass because there is no consecration of hosts, but communion is received with the extra Eucharist from the Mass on Holy Thursday. At the end of the service, we depart the church in prayerful silence.

**Holy Saturday:** This is the day of prayer and waiting. The Easter Vigil begins at 8 pm when it is still dark. The congregation moves outside to the unique Easter Bonfire. We then process into the Church with the Paschal Candle lit. We use candles lit from the Paschal Candle and as the vigil progresses, the Church is flooded with light representing new life. It is at the Easter Vigil that the Catechumen and the Elect receive the sacraments of initiation as full members of the Catholic Church. It is a spiritually uplifting experience. Consider being a part of this most holy and inspirational time at St. John's.

## **WEEKLY COLLECTION**

### **March 18, 2018**

82 Donors Weekly .....	\$5,474.00
50 Diocesan Retirement....	\$1,126.00
5 Yellow Brick Road .....	\$200.00
2 Snow & Heat.....	\$45.00
1 Development of Peoples ...	\$20.00
1 Catholic Relief Service .....	\$20.00

### **March 19, 2017**

70 Donors Weekly .....	\$4,841.13
6 Yellow Brick Road .....	\$495.00
6 Diocesan Retirement.....	\$170.00

## **AUCTION NEWS**

Save the Date! Saturday, June 2nd for our 32nd annual auction. Our theme this year is "Garden Party". Needs: 1.) People to make phone calls; 2.) Donations now; 3.) Someone to shadow our 3 co-chairs to learn the event process. Restaurant donations are coming in already!



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CHRISTMAS!**  
**ONLY 268 DAYS TO OUR  
DECORATING PARTY!**  
**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**  
**PLEASE MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS!**  
**DECEMBER 18, 2018**

## **VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES**

### **Office Angels**

Tues., March 28 M. D'Avella

### **Store Cards**

#### **March 24 and 25**

5:30 p.m.	B. Cestone
8:00 a.m.	G. Battel
10:30 a.m.	S. Pojedinec

#### **March 31 and April 1**

5:30 p.m.	C. Crescenti
8:00 a.m.	P. Nanna
10:30 a.m.	G. Cucchiara

### **Church Center Plant Watering**

Week of March 25 L. Livoti

Week of April 1 M. Cangelosi

### **Church Center Cleaning**

March 29 Team C

April 5 Team D

### **Counting**

March 26 Malone/McCabe

April 4 Kucharski/Kosakowski

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