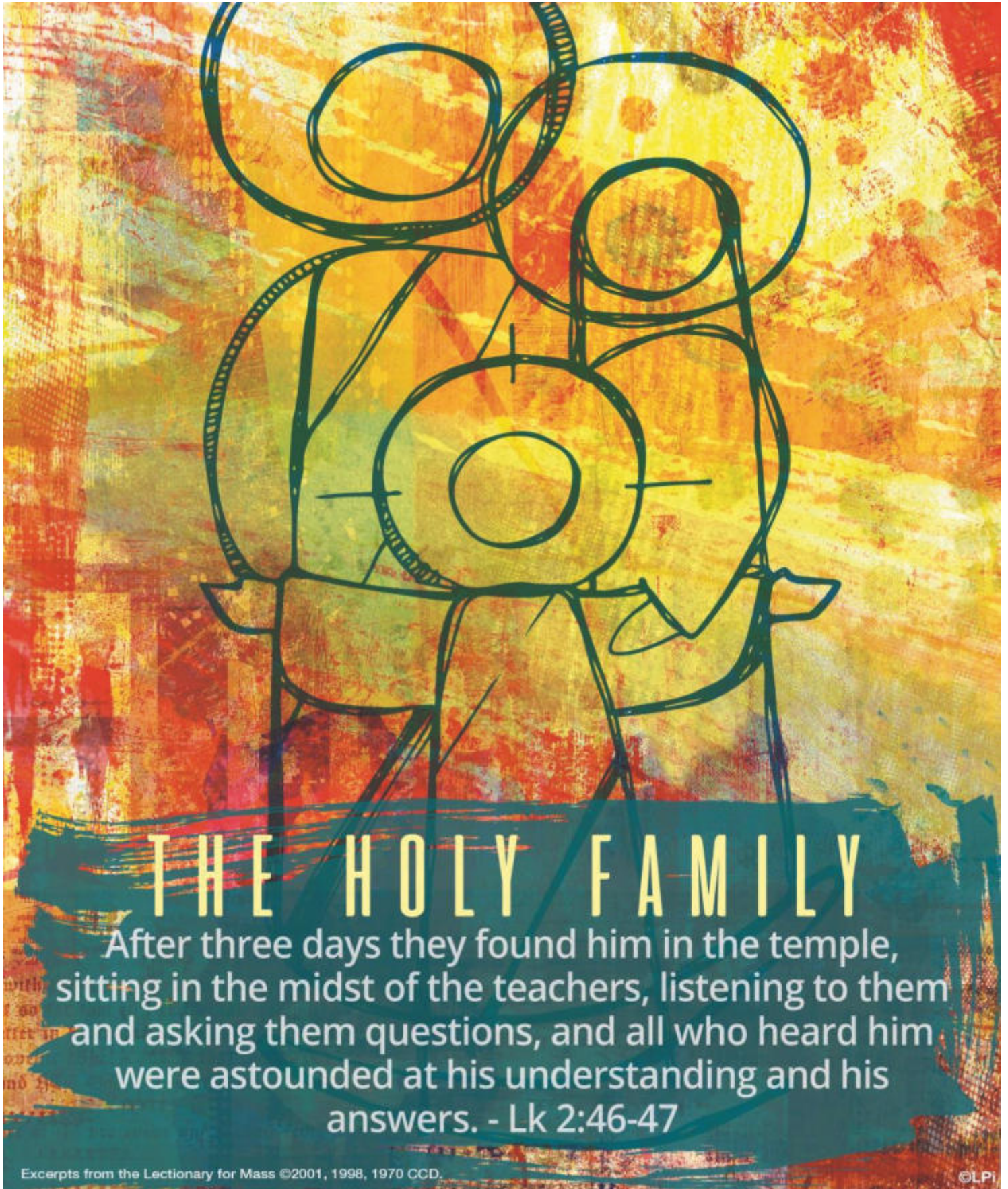


SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH

BROOKFIELD, CT DECEMBER 26, 2021



THE HOLY FAMILY

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. - Lk 2:46-47



PARISH STAFF

Rev. George F. O’Neill, Pastor
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 Brookfield, CT 06804
 Office Open 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Monday thru Friday
 Emergencies: (203)209-4908

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday – 8:00am
 Saturday Vigil – 5:00 PM
 Sunday - 7:30, 9:00 and 11:00 AM
 Monday-Friday - 7:45 AM

All Masses live-streamed on the Parish Website

CONFESSIONS:

Tuesday: 7:00-8:00 PM (With Eucharistic Adoration)
 Saturday: 4:00-4:45 PM

THOSE FOR WHOM WE PRAY

FOR THOSE IN NEED OF GOD’S HEALING, STRENGTH, AND COMFORT: Catherine Conlon, John Donohue, Maureen Marlowe, Mike Doré, Cyril Tomascak, Peter Tomascak, Albert Tomascak, Mary Ann Kendall, Mary Beth Smith, Pat and Kelly Jennings, Joseph Buzcek, Sandra Cramer, Theresa Fuller, Frank Bonacci, Theresa Van Thaden, Katheen Travis, John Rooney and Alberta Gregus .

FOR THE PROTECTION AND SAFE RETURN OF THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES: Joshua Hanley, Joshua Jugler, Michael Ayala Lopez, Kurt Mann and Michael Moreira.

PRAYING FOR PEACE AND REPARATION

We invite you to stay at the end of Sunday Mass – following the closing hymn – and join us in praying three “Hail Mary’s” for Peace: in our World, in our Families and in our Hearts. We also pray the Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, for healing and reparation in our Church.

SACRAMENTS

Baptism – The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on Sundays at 12:30 PM. A Pre-Baptism class is required for both parents prior to the Baptism of their first child. Register with the Parish Office: 203.775.1035.

Marriage – Weddings generally are celebrated on Friday evening or Saturday afternoons and must be scheduled at least six months in advance. **Please do not make final arrangements for your reception prior to contacting the Parish Office.**

The Diocese of Bridgeport offers formation for couples who wish to be married in the Catholic Church. Formation is available online in English and in person in Spanish. For more information, please visit <https://formationreimagined.org/marriage-prep-reimagined/>.

R.C.I.A. – Interested in becoming a Catholic? Call the Parish Office.

Parish Office Holiday Hours
 The Parish Office is closed
 Friday, December 31st.



Sunday, Dec 26, 2021

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH
Bless the children

Holy families aren't necessarily picture-perfect. But they are faithful and consistent in their values and goals. Like Mary and Joseph and biblical parents before them, holy families consecrate their children early and often to the care of God. They do this by baptizing them and seeing to their sacramental preparation. They do this by praying for and with their little ones. They provide them a religious education and share faith-filled practices of compassion and charity. All the children in our lives look to us for love and acceptance, guidance and Christian example. Teach the children well.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Colossians 3:12-21; Luke 2:41-52 (17A); or 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28; 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24; Luke 2:41-52 (17C).* "Once the child is weaned, I will take him to appear before the LORD and to remain there forever."

Monday, Dec 27, 2021

FEAST OF JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST
He lived to tell the tale

John the Apostle is credited with being the author of the Gospel of John. He is also believed to have been the "Beloved Disciple" of Jesus mentioned in that gospel and is presumed to have outlived the other apostles, perhaps being the only one to die of natural causes rather than martyrdom. Imagine being the last survivor, and the heartache he endured on losing his peers to violent deaths for their faith. Perhaps it was John's job to live to tell the story—"that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name"—as he says in his final line. Take John's mission to heart and embrace his good word today.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 1:1-4; John 20:1a, 2-8 (697).* "Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed."

Tuesday, Dec 28, 2021

FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS
Children deserve protection

Nowadays when we think of Christmas pageants, we envision adorable children in bathrobes dressed as shepherds. But in the Middle Ages, religious pageants were a serious business. The whole community gathered to enact mystery plays that told the stories of birth, death, resurrection, and the lives of the saints. It's from such a mystery play that we get the haunting words and melody of "The Coventry Carol"—a song about King Herod's slaughter of the Holy Innocents that asks plaintively, "What may we do to preserve . . . this poor youngling for whom we sing?" Pray today for children who continue to suffer and face certain death without our help.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 1:5-2:2; Matthew 2:13-18 (698).* "A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children."

Wednesday, Dec 29, 2021

FIFTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF NATIVITY OF THE LORD; MEMORIAL OF THOMAS BECKET, BISHOP, MARTYR

Everyone must at times make the choice of serving God or something less. Today we remember Saint Thomas Becket, bishop of Canterbury. Thomas was faced with such a dilemma when his friend the king, Henry II, continuously tried to interfere with church matters. Allowing the king to interfere with the church would have allowed Thomas to be in the king's good graces. Instead, Thomas chose to serve God above anything and anyone else, even at the cost of martyrdom. "When is constancy required," Thomas writes, "except under persecution. Are not friends then proved? If they always yield, how can they ever succeed? They must, one time or other, make a stand."

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:3-11; Luke 2:22-35 (202).* "And you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Thursday, Dec 30, 2021

SIXTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
Take your time to absorb Christmas

Today we continue as a church to honor the feast of our Savior's birth. It is day six in the octave of Christmas—the eight-day liturgical focus on the birth of Christ. The entrance of the Christ into human history is such a significant event that the church notes its magnitude by keeping our gaze on it through the specified readings, psalms, and prayers during these eight days. Take a moment today to allow the wonder of God-among-us to continue to sink in.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:12-17; Luke 2:36-40 (203).* "She gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem."

Friday, Dec 31, 2021

SEVENTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
Out with the new, in with the old

The end of the year gives us pause to reflect on the past and change for the future. Typically, we find something new to embrace or resolve to do. But if it's true that there's really nothing new under the sun, then perhaps we should look to the old! This is exactly what the church does, as it moves into the new year, not with any newfound epiphany, but instead with a commitment to the very old-school value of peace. As we anticipate the World Day of Peace tomorrow, January 1, what are some deeply held and long-standing values that you would like to deepen during the coming year? How might you go old school?

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:18-21; John 1:1-18 (204).* "In the beginning was the Word."

Saturday, Jan 01, 2022

OCTAVE DAY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD; SOLEMNITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD; WORLD DAY OF PEACE

Rocking with Mother Mary

People in every age have their particular way to celebrate the new year. These days we might change old eating habits to be healthier; get on track financially; spend more time with family. But maybe this year it could be about what young Catholics refer to as "rocking with Mary," that is, getting to know the mother of Jesus on a deeper level. Understanding her courage, strength, and faithfulness can help us realize our own potential as bearers of the Good News. On her feast day and in the days ahead, reflect on Mary and strive to imitate her in bringing Good News to the world.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21 (18).* "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."

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 of St. Rose unless otherwise noted.



December 26, 2021 | Feast of the Holy Family

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 | Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 | Lk 2:41-52

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE**GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE**

Some of my fondest childhood memories are of my dad leading my three sisters and me in song as we made the hour-long drive to visit my grandparents every other weekend. Granted, our silly car songs don't qualify as "singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," as Paul advised the Colossians, but I do think they reveal that my dad took to heart Paul's advice about family and faith. Paul writes that in putting on holiness, kindness, gentleness, and forgiving one another, we "put on love, that is, the bond of perfection." Whatever we do, in word or deed, we ought to do in the name of the Lord Jesus. Fathers, mothers, and children are to love one another, seeking and choosing the good for one another, and helping each other along life's journey – on long car trips as well as in a lifetime of situations. On this feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, we honor their perfect holiness and love, and pray that God may continue to perfect us in holiness and love within our own families, that we may bear good fruit for the Kingdom.

SERVE/STUDY Perhaps you have some down time in this coming week between Christmas and New Year's. As a family, choose an activity that allows you to think outside yourselves and serve others. Or make a plan to read the Scripture for each day of the upcoming week; everyone can choose a favorite verse to memorize each day. You may be surprised how often these verses enter your mind throughout the week.



NEW PROGRAMS BEING OFFERED THIS WINTER, ONLINE AND IN PERSON!

LIVING IN THE FATHER'S LOVE and RECLAIMING FRIENDSHIP

Do you desire to grow in your Catholic faith? Would you like to connect with other women in our parish community? Then consider joining St. Joseph's Women's Reflection and Prayer group for one of our six-week *Walking with Purpose* (WWP) programs this winter. No previous Bible study experience is necessary. Our group welcomes women of all ages and at all stages of their faith journey.

- Tuesday nights, 7:15-9:00, beginning on January 4:
Reclaiming Friendship: Encounter God personally through Scripture, letting Him reshape how you see and experience true friendship.
- Wednesday mornings, 9:30-11:15, beginning January 5:
Living in the Father's Love: Discover just how much God loves you and how the Gospels are deeply relevant to your relationship with God and with those you love.

Register via email to wwpstjosbrookfield@gmail.com, by December 28. Tell us whether you will be joining us on Tuesday evenings or Wednesday mornings, and, if on Tuesdays, whether you plan to join the in-person group or the Zoom (online) group. In case of inclement weather the in-person group will also meet on Zoom. (The Wednesday group will meet exclusively on Zoom).

Order your book now! Go to www.walkingwithpurpose.com > Bible Studies > Adult Women, scroll down and select the study you are interested in. If you have any questions about our program, contact Barb Roeder at (203) 740-9428.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Three Days? Mary and Joseph couldn't find Jesus for three days! Any parent who has had a child missing for a few seconds understands the anxiety Mary and Joseph experienced in three long days of searching for Jesus. In the end, though, all is well – they find him, and the peace of Christ casts out their fears. It is a remarkable scene: Jesus' parents are *astonished* to see him teaching in the temple, and Jesus is curious as to why they were looking for him – did they not know where he would be? This event marks a sort of milestone in their lives together, as Jesus has hinted at his future public ministry, and his parents have experienced that first bit of soul-piercing that Mary will later fully undergo. For each of them, love is what directed their actions. Joseph and Mary put aside everything to search for their son; Jesus put aside everything to serve his Father; and they joined together in humble obedience to God's will for them. The Holy Family models a way of living for us to imitate, and to witness to others in that imitation.

**A Prayer For the New Year****Come, Holy Spirit,**

Spirit of the Risen Christ, be with us today and always.
Be our Light, our Guide, and our Comforter.
Be our Strength, our Courage, and our Sanctifier.
May this new year be a time of deep spiritual growth for us,
A time of welcoming your graces and gifts,
A time for forgiving freely and unconditionally,
A time for growing in virtue and goodness.

Come, Holy Spirit,

Be with us today and always.
Amen.





Due to an early publisher deadline, offertory figures were not available for this week's publication. They will be reported in the next bulletin issue.

THE 2021 ST. JOSEPH ANNUAL COLLECTION

\$133,049.33 (102% of goal)
collected as of December 13



We are very grateful for the generosity shown by so many to our **Annual Collection**. If you have not yet had an opportunity to return your gift card, please do so as soon as possible. Every gift is welcome and sincerely appreciated. Thank you!

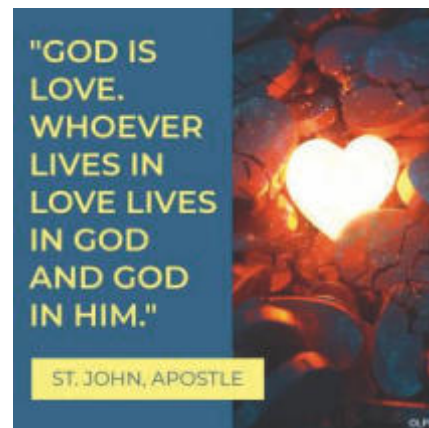


Curiosity Corner

Q: I have been away from the Church for a few years and really want to get active again, not so much for me, but for my children. Is this a bad reason to come back to Church?

A: If you are on your way to the supermarket, and you are forced to detour from your usual route because of road work, does the food you buy taste different? Is the meal less filling? Are the vegetables less tasty? Of course not. In our faith journey, there are many detours called sin. Some are greater than others, some are even a bit longer. But God's grace comes to us in ways we understand and recognize and need. Your children leading you back to the Church is not as important as the fact that you are back.

This is an opportunity for you to renew, strengthen, and deepen your faith. Regardless of how we get to Church, or what draws us closer to God, the fact is we are there. Do what you need to do to get right with God and the Church. Go to confession, begin good family religious practices, and be involved in the ministries your parish offers. Be more than a lukewarm parishioner. Be the kind of Catholic you want your children to be. ©LPI



"...Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark." James 3:5

Now's the time...the time to start anew. Many confusing things are going on in the world today. Now's the time to prioritize sowing seeds into our younger congregants so that they can blossom into *confident, faith-filled, and productive* members of society. With the right tools, they will be able to face any challenge with peace and wisdom knowing the Lord can handle any "Goliath" that comes their way.

Ignite, our tailor-made program for 7th & 8th graders, is here to help spark the Holy Spirit within them to lead them to a deeper, more personalized relationship with the Lord. They'll be leveling up their faith along with a community of their peers where they'll establish meaningful friendships, and have a lot of fun doing it!

We invite you to check out our fledgling Facebook page, and our page on the SJC website for more details on what your child can expect when they become an Igniter.



The time is now. The commitment is small. The reward is huge.
Enrollment is free, simply fill out a registration form which is available on the SJC website → Parish Life → Ignite





Monday, December 27 - St. John the Apostle & Evangelist

7:45 AM - Intentions of All Our Parishioners

Tuesday, December 28 - The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

7:45 AM - Joaquin Uribe, req. by Gloria Patricia Sanchez

Wednesday, December 29

7:45 AM - Hannah Gilleran, req. by Joann Magner

Thursday, December 30

7:45 AM - Frank Smith Jr., req. by John & Beata Wirth

Friday, December 31

7:45 AM - Marian Baumgarten, req. by Jim & Pat Tharrington

Saturday, January 1- Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

8:00 AM - Edward T. Spirko, req. by The McCabe Family

5:00 PM - Joseph DiMartini, req. by The Ketterl Family

Sunday, January 2 - Epiphany of the Lord

7:30 AM - Edwin Fernand, req. by Matt & Maureen Farrell

9:00 AM - Mary Skelly, req. by Paul & Suzanne Holko

11:00 AM - Judy Cullen, req. by Margaret McCabe

PARISH MINISTRIES

Liturgy

Altar Servers203.775.1035

Choir Director - Arianna Carlo203.775.1035

Faith Formation and Sacraments

Religious Education Coord. - Ms. Pat Smith 203.775.1035, ext. 107

RCIA 203.775.1035

Scheduling Baptisms - Mrs. Rita Golaszewski. . . 203.775.1035, ext. 101

Marriage Scheduling/Prep203.775.1035

Prayer & Devotion

Men's Retreat - Mr. Peter Brady 203.740.1243

Women's Retreat - Mrs. Barb Roeder203.470.3832

Men of St. Joseph

Jim Steffen203.775.8676

George Lauri 203.775-1531

Parish Councils and Administration

Parish Council - Mr. Andy Pacuk, Chairman.917.514.5974

Finance Council - Mr. Frank Cavalea, Chairman.203.482.5563

Other Ministries & Organizations

8th Station Bereavement Ministry

Mrs. Mary Shaughnessy. 203-775-9138

Mr. Pat Tharrington.203-775-4836

Knights of Columbus - Mr. Patrick Jennings203.240.2425

Mary-Martha Ministry - Mrs. Pat Font 203.775.2335

Women's Reflection & Prayer Group - Mrs. Barb Roeder . 203.470.3832

Outreach to Sick/Shut-In - Sr. Mary Ann Socha, CMGT .. 203.794.1486



The St. Joseph Giving Tree in our vestibule is decorated with requests for gift cards from ShopRite and Walmart.

Our prayer is that you will purchase one or more cards at either store and return your gift to the collection box next to the tree before Christmas.

St. Joseph's uses the cards at Christmas and throughout the year to assist parish families and others in the Brookfield community who are temporarily in need.

Thank you and God bless you.

The Lighter Side

You Can't Take It with You

There was a very rich man who was just about to die, and he wanted to take some of his wealth with him. So, he started negotiations with God about the matter. God was not sure as it had never been done before and He did not want to set a precedent. Finally, after long talks, God reluctantly agreed to allow him to bring his wealth to heaven.

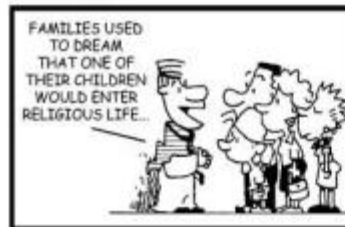
Just a few days before he died, the rich man converted all his money into gold bullion. He died and the funeral home made sure that the suitcases containing the gold bullion went with him. He arrived at the Pearly Gates with his suitcases and there was Peter. Peter told him he could not bring the suitcases into heaven. But the man said he had already spoken to God, and He had said it was OK. So, Peter got on the God phone, and sure enough it was true. Peter was curious as to what was so valuable that the man wanted to bring it into heaven. So he asked, "Could I look in the suitcases?"

The man opened the suitcases and Peter exclaimed, "Why are you bringing pavement to heaven!"

Sermon

"The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible."
— George Burns ©LPi

HOLY FAMILY



EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS
All in the Family

At first glance, we can often find the image of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and the Christ Child intimidating — who are we to aspire to that level of discipleship? How could we ever hope to conform ourselves to that mold? Sometimes, it can even be painful — perhaps we hail from a broken family or struggle with a broken relationship within our family, or perhaps we long to be a mother or a father ourselves and that state in life has eluded us.

But the image of the Holy Family is, in reality, a beautiful invitation to us all, no matter our vocation or our state in life, and the example of Mary, Joseph and Jesus is rich with the symbolism of stewardship.

You need not be a biological mother who has carried a child in her womb to be a mother in spirit. Who in your world needs you to love them with the heart of a mother?

The same goes for fatherhood. The Church and the world are crying out for the courageous witness of Christian men like St. Joseph. Who can you love with the steadfast, selfless protection of a father?

Who in your life needs you to love them with the faithful, unconditional love of a son? Who needs your gentle and constant love as a daughter?

We are the Body of Christ, friends. Those of us rejoicing in heaven, those of us suffering in purgatory, and those of us struggling here on earth. We are the great family. Let us love each other well.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MT

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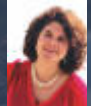


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