St. John the Evangelist R.C. Church

546 St. John's Place Riverhead, NY 11901 (631) 727-2030 Fax: (631) 369-5228
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Facebook: John Church You Tube: stjohnriverhead

Welcome to our Parish Family!

We joyfully welcome all who have joined our community for worship and praise to God. We are grateful to our faithful parishioners who pray with us every week and ask you to consider officially registering to be a part of the parish as well. You, our neighbors and guests are always welcome; and, we hope you find a peaceful home here with us when visiting the area.

Parish Staff:

Pastor: Fr. Gonzalo Oajaca Lopez
Associate: Fr. Thomas Tuite
Visitors: Msgr. John Cervini; Rev. William Brisotti

Deacons:

Peter Schultz Dan Waloski William Austin

Parish Office: 631-727-2030

Office hours:
Monday – Thursday: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Friday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Religious Formation: 631-727-6774

MaryAnn O'Connor, DRE and Liz Perez Cardenas
Ashlee Boland, Youth Minister
Email: stjohnrelformation@gmail.com

Social Parish Ministry & Food Pantry

Jessica Ruiz – Director 631-369-4601
Monday 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Tuesday-Wednesday 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Thursday 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday Closed

Cemetery Office:

Managed by the Catholic Cemeteries of Long Island
(631) 732-3460 / Email: info@CClongisland.org



First Sunday of Lent
February 22, 2026

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights.
-Mt 4:1-2



MASS SCHEDULE - EUCHARIST
Saturday: 4:30 PM
Sunday: 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 AM;
6:00 PM in Spanish
Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday 8:00 AM
Tuesday & Friday 12:10 PM
Holy Days of Obligation: Please check bulletin

DEVOTIONAL LIFE:

Eucharistic Adoration: First Friday: 12:30 - 1:30 PM
Last Friday: 7:30 – 9:00 PM
Miraculous Medal Novena: Monday 8:30AM
Rosary: After Weekday Masses in the Church
Spanish Charismatic Service: Thursday at 7:30 PM

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM: The parish rejoices with you in the birth of your child! Baptisms are celebrated on scheduled Sundays at 12:30 PM. Parents planning to have their child baptized are asked to contact the rectory to arrange an interview.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: Tuesdays at 12:35 PM. Saturday: 3:45 – 4:15 PM. *Anytime by appointment.*

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY: Congratulations! Please make arrangements at the parish approximately 6 months – 1 year before the desired date so we can work with you to prepare for your marriage.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK: Every Second Friday of the month after the 12:10 PM Mass. *Anytime in an emergency, by calling the rectory.*

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS If interested in becoming a Catholic or completing the Sacraments of Initiation, please call the Rectory Office.

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS:
February 23 – March 1, 2026

Monday: 8:00 AM – Jane Wafler
Tuesday: 12:10 PM – David Friedrich
Wednesday: 8:00 AM – Dec'd mbrs of McCartin & Miligan Families
Thursday: 8:00 AM – Edward Reilly Jr.
Friday: 12:10 PM – Dorothy Smith
Saturday: (February 28)
4:30 PM – Declan Boland
Sunday: (March 1)
7:00 AM – People of St. John's Parish
9:00 AM – Michele Bowes, Herbert Weber, Patricia Loomis
11:00 AM – Ted Gulde
6:00 PM - Misa en Español

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK:
Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18: Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11: Mt 6:7-15
Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10: Lk 11:29-32
Thursday: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25: Mt 7:7-12
Friday: Ez 18:21-28: Mt 5:20-26
Saturday: Dt 26:16-19: Mt 5:43-48
Sunday: Gn 12:1-4a: Mt 17:1-9

Weekend Mass Celebrants Feb 28/Mar 1
These are the priests scheduled to celebrate the Masses; however, due to unforeseen circumstances they may change. Saturday 4:30 PM – Fr. Gonzalo
Sunday 7:00 AM – Fr. Tom 9:00 AM – Fr. Tom
11:00 AM – Fr. Bill 6:00 PM – Fr. Gonzalo



The Bread and Wine for the week are offered in loving memory of
Thomas Serpico
From: His Loving Family



We wish to welcome into our midst all who have joined the family of God through the waters of baptism and ask your prayers for them and their families: ***Leah Bolanos, Joseph Gamez Trinidad, Adin Sebastian, Angelina Sebastian Diego, Genesis Perez lopez, Angel Perez Penado***



We ask your prayers for those of our community who have gone before us into the fullness of life and also those they have left behind especially ***Helen Elak***

We ask your prayers for the health and wholeness of all the sick and all who give them care, especially Michael Carver, Susan Frohnhoefer, Peter Wigger, Timothy Lohr, Dorothy Piscitelli, Joan Emanuel, Joseph Edler, Joseph Lagner, Bonnie Boyd, Debra Peterson, Mary Jane Higgins, Harry Carver, Cesar Camey, Ovidio Sequen, Gabriella Ceppieri, Diane Rasch, Baby John Krepps, Jannine Jankowski, Ellen Kramer, Randolfo Carbajal, Michael Houlihan, Eileen Mattausch, Theresa Cecile Wren, Ernie Gerrard, Kathleen Mullen, Eric Lopez, Terri Thomas, Marie Calandra, Joel Wetterstein, Valerie Fontana, Susan Esposito, Thomas Tobin, Daleyza Estrada, Rose Velazquez, Carlos Franco, Liam Edler, Liam Flynn, Kelly Mullooly, Jennifer Dominguez and also their families and all who care for them. *We also ask you to continue praying for peace in the world- especially for the situation in the Middle East, Ukraine and Nigeria. We especially pray for those serving in our uniformed services throughout the country and world. We ask that you also keep missionaries who bring the Gospel to foreign lands and in areas that are not always safe.*



Stewardship Thought for the Week:
During Lent, we are called to practice prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Your parish and Diocese have many opportunities for you to grow in your Faith this season. Also consider making a gift to the Catholic Ministries Appeal as one way to practice almsgiving.

Living Stewardship:
We thank God for his providential care and express our gratitude to you for your support for the work of the parish last week in the amount of $11,833.00
Mass Attendance: 1352

CONSIDER THIS!

Outside of Eden

If food is good for you, what could be wrong with eating it? If something is pleasing to behold, what could be wrong with looking at it? If doing something will give me experience, what could be wrong with learning?

According to the Book of Genesis, that is how Eve rationalized biting into forbidden fruit. She did not intend to do evil. She looked for what was good. She saw nutrition, beauty, and wisdom. But she turned away from the voice of God. And Adam did the same.

The sin we commit often comes disguised as something good. We eat what is good for us, but too much. We look at beauty, but in its pornographic forms. We want to learn, but through experiences we later regret.

The First Sunday of Lent points an accusing finger at all the children of Eve and Adam. We have sinned because we fooled ourselves into thinking it was the right thing to do.

However, Lent is not done with us. It is only beginning. We face this painful story with honesty so that this season can bring healing.

What did you eat? What did you look at? What did you experience? What did it cost you?

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WHAT'S UP!



The Bread and Wine for the week ($30) or ***Flowers*** for the main altar ($60) or lighting of the ***Sanctuary Lamp*** ($25) may be donated in memory of a deceased family member or in honor of an anniversary. Please visit or call the rectory to make arrangements.

Altar Servers… Anyone from grade 3 to adult who wishes to become an altar server, please call Mrs. June Cybulski at 631-727-8523 for training or further information.





RESPECT LIFE …

"Abortion, the deliberate killing of a human being before birth, is never morally acceptable and must always be opposed." Living the Gospel of Life, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, USCCB

"El aborto, que es el asesinato deliberado de un ser humano antes de su nacimiento, nunca es moralmente acceptable y siempre debe ser opuesto." Viviendo el Evangelio de la Vida, Formando Conciencias para un ciudadanía fiel, USCCB



Office Hours: Monday-11:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Tuesday and Wednesday-1:00 PM - 8:00 PM

All classes resume this week on Tuesday, February 24 and Wednesday, February 25. Our family gathering will take place on Sunday, March 1 after the 9:00 AM Mass in the cafeteria. It will be hosted by our Level 4 classes. Our Lenten season has begun, so let us pray that the Lord will guide us on our Lenten journey that culminates on Easter Sunday!

Todas las clases se reanudan esta semana el martes 24 y miércoles 25 de febrero. Nuestra reunión familiar tendrá lugar el domingo 1 de marzo, después de la misa de las 9:00 a. m. en la cafetería. Será organizada por nuestras clases de Nivel 4. ¡Nuestra Cuaresma ha comenzado, así que oremos para que el Señor nos guíe en nuestro camino cuaresmal que culmina el Domingo de Pascua!



ADULT FORMATION

Living God's Word This Week

First Week of Lent: The Need for Desert Time

Imagine Jesus in the desert, alone, spending time in prayer. Remember, it was the Holy Spirit that drove Jesus into the desert right after His Baptism. Jesus needed this time with His Father in order to hear His voice, to depend only on Him to direct him about how to minister to His people. Jesus was hungry, thirsty and experiencing the harshness of the desert environment. Along comes Satan and he knows exactly how to tempt and offers the comfort of food, safety and power. Notice how Jesus responds? It is with Scripture! The Word of God is a powerful weapon against evil. That is why reading the Bible and memorizing passages are a way to keep us centered on God and protected from the Evil One, as the devil is sometimes called.

Just as Jesus needed time with His Father, we need space and time to deepen our relationship with God. Lent provides an opportunity to fast from those things that distracts from focusing on God. It's not about the candy or other food you give up. Fasting is to provide a spiritual "replacement" such as prayer, spiritual reading or time with relationships that require nurturing. Forty days can seem endless when we think about what we're "giving up". It can be more inspiring when we choose to get to know Jesus in a new way.

This Week: the desert is not just a barren place. There is always new life but not as noticeable, there is water, though hidden and there is also beauty. The vegetation and flowers are unique to that environment. The sky and landscape are open and wide revealing the immenseness of space. As challenging as we may think a desert is, it is an example of the need to rely on God for strength, protection, resistance to evil and renewal. Embrace this "desert" season of Lent and imagine Jesus with you.

SURVEY SAYS!

Here are the results of our Lent Survey:

- **Lenten series based on the Sunday Readings?** Gospel with discussion, prayer and meditation. Open to all. Cost: $5 materials fee. Mondays, 11am or Thursdays, 9:00am (please note earlier time)
- **Bagel Breakfast: To be determined**
- **Adoration:** Wednesday mornings after the 8:00 AM Mass
- **Stations of the Cross:** 4:00 PM Fridays led by one of our deacons

Parish Presentation for All: *The Prodigal Son: Looking at the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a New Way*: After the 8am Mass and again at 7pm

LENT PARISH SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK

Faith Sharing Group Gatherings: 1 hour, Rm. 1 of Parish Center (school building)

Monday, Feb 23rd at 11am Theme: The Desert - Total Reliance on God

Thursday, Feb. 26th 9:00am Theme: What Am I Called to Do?

Adoration: after the Wednesday 8am Mass

Stations of the Cross: 4pm Friday

~ Winter Party ~

We had a very successful Winter Party last week! Over 50 people participated! There were 21 raffle baskets to win, the winner of our 50/50 earned $110, over 19 youth helped to set up on Saturday decorating classrooms, preparing for crafts and games and then they returned on Sunday to greet guests, serve pizza, scoop out ice cream, entertain a few children and take everything down and clean up. We have the most wonderful teens who are cheerful, helpful, funny and generous. The day ended with all Bingo followed by a magic act by Mr. Twisty and raffle winnings!

We are very grateful to Carlos' Pizza for the delicious pizzas, garlic knots and salad AND the very quick response when we need extra pies. Always reliable!

Additional "thank you's": Joan Fabian, a very talented artist, for 2 donations from her art collection; Sean Fountaine with 4 tickets to the

Aquarium; Helen Halloran's donations of 2 beautiful crystal bowls and activity bag; Tara and Chris who donated a pair of UGG's and warm blankets and pillow; Susan Doyle for 2 baskets, 1 for children and a kitchen utensil; Ashlee Boland donated a Bible cover, children's Bible search and Bible Guess Who?. These are so appreciated and helped create an enjoyable day! **A donation will be made to our Food Pantry and we will let you know the amount.**

Children's Corner: Hey kids! Each week you'll find something fun here just for you, like coloring pages, games, or puzzles that help you learn about God's love in a cool way. Come back every week to see what's new in the Children's Corner!



PASTOR'S CORNER *Written by the Faithful Disciple*

Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7 | Rom 5:12-19 | Mt 4:1-11

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Although we're at the very beginning of Lent, today's first reading from Genesis prepares us for words we will hear on the night of the Easter Vigil: "O truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed completely by the Death of Christ! O happy fault that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!" (Exsultet) *O truly necessary sin?! O happy fault?!* What could these words actually *mean?* I think the Exsultet is drawing us to see that sin is not the end of the story. In the mysterious working of grace, being in a state of needing God's forgiveness (sin) opens us up to the possibility of experiencing and receiving his endless love and mercy. As we take on practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving this Lent, may we not grow discouraged when we inevitably fall short, but may we recognize that our very weakness presents us with an opportunity to rejoice in his merciful love.

GO EVANGELIZE…PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

At the heart of evangelization is announcing the good news that our sin doesn't have the last word. St. Paul puts it this way: While death came through Adam's sin, "the gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one, the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one man Jesus Christ overflow for the many." While sin certainly wreaks havoc by bringing suffering and death into our world, the conviction of the Church is that the restoration God brings about through the death and resurrection of Jesus elevates humanity to a state far better than what we lost in the fall. What might it look like to witness to this great hope we have in Jesus in our own lives? How can we offer encouragement to those who feel they have fallen too far from grace that God's mercy is far more powerful than any transgression they may have committed?

REFLECT

Throughout the Gospels, we hear story after story of sinners ending up closer to God than those who think themselves to be perfectly obedient (The Prodigal Son [Lk 15:11-32]; the Pharisee and the Tax Collector [Lk 18:9-14]). As you contemplate which Lenten practices to adopt in these next few weeks, keep in mind that holiness isn't found in perfect adherence to these practices, but by humbling yourself to recognize the God who loves you even when you fall.

WHAT, WHEN, AND WHERE

LENT IS HERE

Private Prayer in Church

The church is open **Monday to Friday** from **7:30 AM until 2:00 PM**. **Consider Daily Mass. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 8:00 AM. Tuesday & Friday at 12:10 PM. You can also pray anytime at the grotto behind the church.**

Lenten Regulations. ***Fast & Abstinence****: Catholics, 14 years or older,* ***may not eat meat*** *on* ***any Friday*** *in Lent. Catholics between the ages of 18 – 60 are* ***required to fast*** *on* ***Good Friday,*** *which means one full meal and not eating between meals. Two other light meals, which do not equal a full meal, may be taken during the day.* ***Remember, if you are sick, or under a doctor's diet you are not required to follow this.*** *In a spirit of penance one may fast throughout all of Lent, health permitting, especially on the Fridays of Lent, which has been set-aside as days of prayer and fasting for world peace.*

Bereavement Support Group

Bereavement Support Group for Widows and Widowers continues once a month on Tuesdays, at 12:45pm, in Room 1 of the Parish Center (School Building). **Our next meeting will be on March 10th** This is our program of 6 monthly sessions navigating through grief for spouses only. Coffee, tea, and refreshments will be served. These meetings are recommended for those who are at least 3 months past their loss or have previously participated in a bereavement group or process (not mandatory just a suggestion) This will be the same program as we presented last year.

From the Desk of the Director of Social Ministry

Dear Parish Family,

As we enter the sacred season of Lent, the Church calls us to deeper prayer, meaningful sacrifice, and generous almsgiving. Lent invites us not only to give something up, but to give of ourselves for the sake of others. Our Parish Food Pantry continues to serve individuals and families who are struggling with food insecurity and financial hardship. For many in our community, this ministry is a vital source of hope and dignity. I invite you this Lent to participate in our "40 Days of Giving." Consider donating non-perishable food items, hygiene products, or grocery gift cards. You may also choose to contribute financially, perhaps by offering the money saved from a Lenten sacrifice. In living out the Corporal Works of Mercy especially feeding the hungry and caring for those in need we encounter Christ Himself. Your generosity makes a real and lasting difference. Thank you for your continued compassion and faithful stewardship. May this Lenten season draw us closer to the Heart of Christ and to one another. Peace in Christ, Jessica Ruiz Director of Social Ministry



Lenten Outreach: 40 Days of Giving

During this holy season of Lent, we are called to pray, fast, and give. One meaningful way to practice almsgiving is by supporting our Parish Food Pantry and outreach ministry. "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." – Matthew 25:40

How You Can Help

Each week of Lent, please consider donating:

- Canned fruit
- Rice, pasta, or dry beans
- Peanut butter & grape jelly
- Assorted cereal & snacks (think about children)
- Hygiene items (soap, toothpaste, deodorant)
- Diapers and baby wipes
- Grocery gift cards

Donations may be taken to the PSM Outreach office on Mondays and Thursdays between the hours of 10am-3pm.

Give from What You Give Up

If you are sacrificing something this Lent, consider donating the money saved to support:

- Emergency food assistance
- Rent and utility help
- Care for the homebound

Thank you for living the Corporal Works of Mercy and sharing Christ's love with those in need this Lenten season.

The Catholic Faith Network (CFN) Teleon **Saturday, February 28th from 2 PM through Monday, March 2nd at 8:30 AM**. Please join the excitement and consider pledging! The process is easy, you can pledge securely online by visiting www.CFNtv.org CFN is available throughout the Tri-State Area on Optimum, channel 29/137; Verizon FiOS TV channel 296; Spectrum, channel 162/471. Additionally, you can tune in nationwide on the following streaming services – Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Roku, Android TV, and Apple TV.





Bishop Barres Lent 2026 Letter can be found on the Diocese of Rockville Centre website at DRVC.ORG

St. Isidore Church, 22 Pulaski Street. is having a Lenten Retreat on Sunday, March 1 and Monday, March 2nd at 7:00 PM presented by Dr. Vince Manzell. Sunday topic is "Who do you say I am" Does new scientific evidence point the presence of Jesus on the Shroud of Turin? Monday topic is "I am the Bread of Life" A scriptural journey of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

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