

St. Joseph of Stratford National Catholic Church



January 28-29, 2023 – Fourth Sunday In Ordinary Time

Parish Contacts

PASTOR
Fr. Tom Walsh

CHAIRPERSON
Jeanine May

VICE
CHAIRPERSON
Dee Smith

Financial
Secretary
Barbara
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Office
Administrator
Lisa Vasas

Dear Parishioners,

“When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him.”

This verse from today’s Gospel passage (Mt 5:1-12) is meant to call to mind Moses receiving the Law on Mt Sinai. The Law was given to delineate the separation between God and man after the Fall, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.”* (Isaiah 55:8) The beatitudes were taught to underscore the relationship that now existed between God and man, made real in the person of Jesus Christ. To live the beatitudes is to participate in Divinity.

Grace and peace,
Fr. Tom

Mass Times

Vigil Mass – Saturday 4:00pm Sunday morning Mass – 9:30am.

1300 Stratford Road, Stratford, CT 06615 / (203) 377-9901
www.saintjosephsofstratford.org / sjosparishpncc@outlook.com



TODAY’S READINGS: SEE CENTER INSERT

SUNDAY MASS INTENTION: For the repose of the soul of †Paul McGuinness, given by John & Cheryl Hewitt

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We remember in our prayers Jane Pelland, Joe Pelland, Wanda Copple, Nancy Anzalone, Jean Macionus, Fr. Henry Smolinski & Margo, Rich Lasecki, Joyce Bresh, Edmond Bresh, Helen Reynolds, Helen Popp, Florence Rasmussen, Robin Lupinski, Judy DiLorenzo, Frank Bonitatebus, Lizzie Mast, Carol Murdzia, Dom Zumbo, Tom Nuckowski, Greg Baktis, Martha Lesnick, Bill Homa, Jesse Matthews, Chip & Patrice Matthews, Ron Simmons

For those new to our church (and even those who aren’t!)



To follow along with the Mass, begin on **page 63** in the Mass booklet. Father will announce which page to turn to for the Canon at the appropriate time and where to pick up the service following the Canon.

And please remember – there is no eating or drinking inside the church proper (small bottles of water excepted).

SPECIAL MASS INTENTIONS

If you would like to sponsor a Mass to memorialize a loved one or celebrate a special occasion, please contact the office at 203-377-9901 or email sjosparishpncc@outlook.com. Intentions will be listed in the “What’s Happening” section of the bulletin, marked with a †. If you do not see it listed there, please contact the office.

Music Scholarship Sunday

The last Sunday of January is regularly set aside by the PNCC as Music Scholarship Sunday – a day to recognize all those in the music ministry of the church for their contributions throughout the year, especially aspiring youth musicians. A second collection is taken, earmarked for the National United Choirs' Music Scholarship program.



The NUC Music Scholarship program has a number of endowments and awards available for singers and musicians of all ages and levels of ability. See the bulletin board for more information on this program and where to get an application if you are interested in applying.

Winter Clothing Drive – last day!

Your response to Blessed Sacrament's request for gently used, clean coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, jackets, and hoodies last week was even more generous than the previous week! This week we will collect children's clothing.



Thank you to all those who donated clothing these last two weeks. As you can see from the picture above, your contributions last week alone were numerous. Many people will be warmer because of you. Keep up the good work!

Coffee & Catechism – Postponed to next week

The next Coffee & Catechism session will take place on **Sunday, 5 February 2023**, after Mass. Please note the change in date! The topic will be: "The Last Four Things – Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell."



Prayer Blanket Project Update More blankets to work on this week!

Last Sunday at the beginning of Mass, Father blessed the six blankets you have already helped complete so far this year, including four that were made from kits donated by Mercy Tabernacle. Due to the annual meeting, no blankets were completed last week after Mass, but there are extra this week to compensate. Stop by the tables in the hall after Mass today to work on them! It doesn't take long and is easy to do.



If you don't understand the impact these blankets have had, listen to the stories Father passes on during Mass of those who've received them. At the moment, we are the **ONLY** group providing these items of comfort to the entire hospital. Your participation is absolutely appreciated by not only the recipients, but all those in the hospital who try to comfort those in need.

Of course, **we are still collecting donations toward more fabric.**



The fabric costs approximately \$40 per blanket. There is a donation box at the back of the church, on the table near the bulletins. **If you would like to donate in memory of a loved one, please contact the office** so we can try to tailor the fabric purchased for that blanket to your loved one's interests (e.g. making a blanket with airplanes or clouds on it in memory of someone who adored flying or choosing fabric of a specific color for the loved one's favorite color).

Thank you so much for your continued support of this worthwhile project!

READINGS FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading

Zep 2: 3, 3: 12-13

A Reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the earth, who have observed his law; seek justice, seek humility; perhaps you may be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger.

But I will leave as a remnant in your midst a people humble and lowly, who shall take refuge in the name of the LORD: the remnant of Israel. They shall do no wrong and speak no lies; nor shall there be found in their mouths a deceitful tongue; they shall pasture and couch their flocks with none to disturb them.

This is the Word of the Lord

R: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

PS. 146: 6-7, 8-9, 9-10

R: Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

The LORD keeps faith forever,
secures justice for the oppressed,
gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets captives free.

R: Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

The LORD gives sight to the blind;
the LORD raises up those who were bowed down.

The LORD loves the just;
the LORD protects strangers.

R: Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

The fatherless and the widow the LORD sustains,
but the way of the wicked he thwarts.

The LORD shall reign forever;
your God, O Zion, through all generations. Alleluia.

R: Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Second Reading

1 Cor 1: 26-31

A Reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were

powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God.

It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord."

This is the Word of the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.

C. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

R: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

C. Rejoice and be glad;
your reward will be great in heaven.

R: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

THE GOSPEL

Mt 5: 1-12

C: The Lord be with you.

R: And also with you.

C: A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

R: Glory be to You, O Lord.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for
righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of
righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute
you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because
of me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in
heaven."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

R: Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Altar Flowers



A wonderful way to remember a special person or occasion as well as beautify the church. Contact Fr. Tom or Dee Smith if you wish to donate flowers for a particular week. Also, please let them know if the flowers will be in memory or celebration of someone so the donation can be acknowledged. There are vases in the cabinets in the right side altar room if you want to donate flowers for the side altars.

Please note: Flowers are not permitted on the altar during **Lent** or **Advent**.

Bible Study – next session announced



With the current Bible study session ending, we are excited to announce the next session. Entitled "**Traversing the Narrative Arc of Scripture**", it will begin on 7 March 2023 and continue for six weeks. The group meets at 6:30 p.m. in the classrooms and begins with a potluck meal, so both mind and body are fortified. All are welcome to join!

Items for the bulletin

Deadline for submitting items for the bulletin is Thursday. Items turned in after Thursday are not guaranteed inclusion in that Sunday's bulletin.

Food pantry in need of restocking



According to Father Skip – the person in charge of the food pantry at Blessed Sacrament – prior to COVID the food pantry regularly served 150 – 200 people each week. Since the pandemic, that number has risen drastically to over **500 people per week**. Please consider donating additional non-perishable food items, leaving them in the collection bins in the foyer, to help stock the shelves.

Help feed needy children



No Child Should Be Hungry

The collection of single-serving food items for the children Sterling House helps was so successful, we are going to continue it on a monthly basis. On the last Sunday of the month, there will be a special container designated for Sterling House and the children experiencing food insecurity in our community. Your participation, no matter how small, will be greatly appreciated!

Want to make prayer shawls?

Do you crochet or knit? Do you want to learn? Learn a new skill or resurrect an old one! We're looking at starting a group to meet in the morning on a Tuesday or Thursday for about an hour to work on simple prayer shawls and lap blankets for the hospital. Experience not necessary, enthusiasm is! Anyone can participate, men or women. If you are interested, please contact the office.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT YOUR CHURCH

‡**Sunday, 29 January 2023** – Memorial Mass for †Paul McGuinness, given by John & Cheryl Hewitt

‡**Sunday, 5 February 2023** – Memorial Mass for †Michael Chernesky, given by daughter Barbara

Sunday, 5 February 2023 – Scout Sunday

Sunday, 5 February 2023 – Coffee & Catechism – **POSTPONED from 29 January**

Wednesday, 15 February 2023 – Serving at the Lord's Kitchen, 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, 4 March 2023 – Polish Dinner. See article for details.

Saturday, 13 May 2023 – Confirmation of parish youth at 2:00 p.m.

Local school open house next week

If you have (or know of someone who has) children going into pre-K to eighth grade next year and are looking to enroll them in a Catholic school, this announcement is for you. It will also be posted on the bulletin board.



St. Mark School PreK-Grade 8 OPEN HOUSE – Sunday January 29 10A-12N
500 Wigwam Lane, Stratford

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE!

On Sunday, January 29, 2023, St. Mark School will host private school tours for prospective families. Visit our classrooms, meet our teachers and school community, and hear about our exceptional learning environment that promotes positive character and growth. Tuition assistance available.

Limited school tours are available by reservation only. Visit www.stmarkschool.org to reserve your tour today!

St. Mark is proud to be a 2009 Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School and a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accredited school. For more information, contact us at (203) 375-4291 or contactus@stmarkschool.org.

Wanted – sturdy cardboard boxes

Sterling House has agreed to take the old china dishes from the church kitchen, but we need to transport it to them. To that end, we need sturdy cardboard boxes, capable of holding a good amount of weight. If you have any to get rid of, please bring them to the church and drop them off with the office. We have received a few so far, but there is a lot of china to pack up and we need some more boxes.



Thank you to those who have already brought boxes in!

Calendars – grab one!

A local funeral home has donated 2023 calendars with our church information on them. They are located on the table in the foyer. Please take one or two (or a bunch!) and give them to your friends who might need a calendar.

Polish Dinner – make plans now!



On Saturday, 4 March 2023, the church will be holding a Polish Dinner in the hall after Mass. Food will be available to eat in or order for take out.



The menu will consist of stuffed cabbage, pierogi, kielbasa, green beans, and a dessert. Take out orders will be ready to pick up between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. Sit down meals will be available at 6:00 p.m.



Dinner is by reservation only – both eat-in and take out. Please contact the office to make reservations so that we know how much to prepare. Remember to specify if you are eating in or taking out. Deadline for reservations is 22 February 2023. No walk-ins or last minute take out orders (except for those who've already reserved who require the meal to be taken out instead).