

St. Joseph of Stratford National Catholic Church



July 30, 2023 – 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners,

Parish Contacts

PASTOR
Fr. Tom Walsh

CHAIRPERSON
Jeanine May

VICE
CHAIRPERSON
Dee Smith

Financial
Secretary
Barbara
Chernesky

Office
Administrator
Lisa Vasas

In today's Gospel passage (Matthew 13:44-52) Jesus speaks to the disciples about the kingdom of heaven. In the passage Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to several things meant to convey some understanding about heaven. First Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a treasure buried in a field. Something of great value. Then Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a merchant searching for fine pearls, someone looking for something of great value. And finally, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a net thrown into the sea, collecting fish of every kind, both good and bad. In each case heaven is not depicted as a place. Rather, Jesus speaks of heaven in terms of value. Which leads us to think about what we value, because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Grace and peace,
Fr. Tom

Mass Times

Vigil Mass – Suspended for July and August, to resume in September 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

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We remember in our prayers Jane Pelland, Joe Pelland, 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, Carol Murdzia, Martha Lesnick, Bill Homa, Ray Morrison, Meghan Castelot.

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).

Looking to have a Mass for a loved one?

To reserve a date for a memorial/commemorative Mass, contact the office at 203-377-9901, email sjosparishpncc@outlook.com or use the Mass intention cards on the table in the foyer. Intentions will be listed in the "What's Happening" section of the bulletin, marked with a $\frac{1}{11}$. If you do not see it listed there, please contact the office.

Donor Leaf Information

For those interested in adding a leaf to the tree in the foyer in memory of a loved one or commemoration of an event, please contact the office.



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.

Sympathy card and collection extended to this week



On Thursday, 13 July 2023, the PNCC was saddened by the unexpected passing of †Rt. Rev. Jaroslaw (Jerry) Rufalko, Bishop of the Western Diocese and pastor of All Saints Cathedral in Chicago. He was, according to Father Tom, “a gentle man and respected leader in our church” and will be greatly missed. Our prayers are with his wife, Leslie.

Because of the change of time of last week's Mass, the sympathy card set out last week is again available for signing this week, next to the collection basket for those who wish to donate to the memorial scholarship fund. The card and proceeds will be forwarded on to the family this week.

Eternal Rest grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.

School supplies for children



The Eastern Diocese Mission and Evangelism Commission is sponsoring an outreach this summer. For the remainder of July and August, each parish is encouraged to collect school supplies to be distributed to less fortunate children in their community.

A flyer is on the bulletin board and on the table in the foyer of various items that would be helpful, like pencils & pens, notebooks, and backpacks. Please consider participating in this drive – especially now when many of the stores are having back-to-school sales!

A box labeled with the same icon as this article is in the foyer for the collection of these items as you bring them in.

Ladies' Society Fall Outing

Please sign up for the Goodspeed Opera Outing so we know how to plan for tickets and transportation! You don't have to be a member of the Ladies' Society to attend – all are welcome!

LifeLine Screening Event



There is a simple, convenient way for you to get preventive health screenings and learn your risk for stroke, heart disease and other

chronic conditions. These painless screenings go beyond your regular checkup to identify dangerous plaque buildup or blockage, a major risk factor for stroke and heart disease. The screenings are accurate, affordable and will give you valuable information about your health that you can share with your doctor.

We are pleased to host Life Line Screening, who will be on site on Thursday, August 17, 2023 to conduct these valuable screenings which take 60-90 minutes to complete. Register by calling toll free 1-844-591-7160, text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607 or online at <https://llsa.social/HC>

Eastern Diocese Strategic Planning Commission The Future is Yours!

The Polish National Catholic Church Eastern Diocese (PNCC ED) is growing and will continue to grow because of you. The PNCC ED established a Strategic Planning Commission to work across all parishes to create and act on a long-term plan to grow our diocese. A lot of work has been accomplished, a vibrant plan for growth has been created and now is the time for action.

Some of the plan's key focuses are:

- Commitment
- Traditions and Branding (Increasing Spirituality and Learning)
- Growth and Membership (Community Engagement and Social Media Usage)

The question is: Will you join us in this great work of discipleship? If you are interested in hearing more details or would like details on how you can help, then please contact Subdeacon Justin Daviault at deaconjustinPNCC@gmail.com



READINGS FOR THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING

1 Kgs 3: 5, 7-12

A Reading from the first book of Kings

The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you." Solomon answered: "O LORD, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David; but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?"

The LORD was pleased that Solomon made this request. So God said to him: "Because you have asked for this— not for a long life for yourself, nor for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but for understanding so that you may know what is right— I do as you requested. I give you a heart so wise and understanding that there has never been anyone like you up to now, and after you there will come no one to equal you."

This is the Word of the Lord

R: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 119: 57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130

R: Lord, I love your commands.

I have said, O LORD, that my part is to keep your words.
The law of your mouth is to me more precious
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

R: Lord, I love your commands.

Let your kindness comfort me
according to your promise to your servants.
Let your compassion come to me that I may live,
for your law is my delight.

R: Lord, I love your commands.

For I love your command more than gold, however fine.
For in all your precepts I go forward; every false way I hate.

R. Lord, I love your commands.

Wonderful are your decrees; therefore I observe them.
The revelation of your words sheds light,
giving understanding to the simple.

R. Lord, I love your commands.

SECOND READING

Rom 8: 28-30

A Reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the

image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

This is the Word of the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.

C. Alleluia, alleluia

R: Alleluia, alleluia

C. Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

R: Alleluia, alleluia

THE GOSPEL

Mt 13: 44-52

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.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it. Again, the kingdom of

heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

"Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."

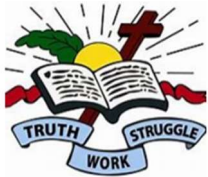
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

R: Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Another article from The Messenger

Diocesan Council Meeting, June 3, 2023 (Zoom Meeting) [Part 1]

[Due to the length of this article, it will be reprinted in parts.]



The Eastern Diocesan Council meeting was opened by Bishop Sobiechowski at 10:06 am. Father Senior Nemkovich offered the opening prayer. All those in attendance had been previously sworn in so there was no need for the oath of office to be administered.

The agenda was accepted on a motion by Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd, seconded by Ray Pierczarka, and passed. Bishop appointed Marilyn Folcik and Janice Klimczak as co-secretaries to complete the term of Jo-Ann O'Connell.

No minutes of the 2022 meeting were available because of the death of Jo-Ann O'Connell. There was no correspondence.

The treasurer's report was given by Cindy Hebert. Books have not been audited because of illness of the auditors. Motion to accept the report was by Father Senior Nemkovich, seconded by Father Tenus.

Congratulations to Robert and Emilia DeVore who both celebrated their 100th birthdays this week.

A prayer was offered by Father Senior Soltysiak for the repose of the souls of Father Senior Fryderyk Banas who passed away on July 18, 2022, and Jo-Ann O'Connell who passed away on March 16, 2023.

Ray Pieczarka gave a report on the Finance Commission. He stated that the diocese relies on these monies to fund loans to parishes. He also mentioned that it takes between \$130,000 to \$150,000 to keep the diocese afloat. As of May 27, 2023, the fund had a balance of \$1,919,885.

Administrative matters

There are no plans for the movement of the clergy. Father Walsh and Father Piekarszewski have been formally installed in St. Joseph's Parish, Stratford, CT, and St. John the Baptist Parish, Manchester, CT respectively. Father Koerber must be installed as pastor of Holy Name of Jesus, South Deerfield, MA. Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd was asked to look into arranging a date for installation.

(Continues on next page)

Stipends to Administrative Seniors, the Diocesan Treasurer and the editor of The Messenger were reviewed. On a motion by Ray Pieczarka, seconded by Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd, the stipends were set at \$1,025/month for Administrative Seniors, Diocesan Treasurer, \$750, and Editor of The Messenger, \$900/ quarter.

A discussion regarding increasing Bishop Paul's salary took place. Father Senior Krusinski was given the chair to oversee the discussion and vote. On a motion by Father Senior Nemkovich, seconded by Kathy Nemkovich, Bishop's salary was set at \$4,884.35-an increase of \$250/month.

Our legal advisors continue to be Sheehan, Phinney of Manchester, NH.

The Holy Cross Church property (Enfield, CT), including the cemetery, has finally been sold to Holy Ghost Temple Church (Pentecostal). A corporation consisting of Bishop as president and the seniors as officers had been formed in order for this to be accomplished. The new owners will maintain the cemetery (grass cutting) and Father Senior Soltysiak will maintain the cemetery records for the time being.

The diocese had kept the property insured with a multiperil policy which has since lapsed and will be canceled, and Father Senior Soltysiak had been having services to eliminate the possibility of paying real estate taxes.

Thanks were expressed to Father Senior Soltysiak and Father Senior Krusinski for taking care of the legalities and to Father Senior and Janice Soltysiak for removing over 40,000 pounds of debris from the buildings in preparation for the sale. We are waiting for the final bills from Paul Chello, Attorney, and need to dissolve the corporation.

After all costs to the diocese have been paid, the net proceeds equal about \$30,000 which can remain in the diocesan coffers for five years.

The Messenger –Quarterly Newsletter of the Eastern Diocese — Volume 13, Issue #2, July 2023 87 SS. Peter and Paul Grant money has all been distributed to parishes wishing to do community outreach. Some have done free lunches, fed the homeless, and distributed bags of groceries. Father Was reported that people who have heard about the work of his parish have given donations to continue the work. Written reports from the recipients will be submitted for review by the Council for the next meeting.

Kathy Nemkovich reviewed the Salaries and Benefits report for 2023 and the 2023 COLA.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT YOUR CHURCH

Wednesday - Friday, 9-11 Aug 2023 – 28th NUC Music Workshop & Conference, Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA

Wednesday, 16 Aug 2023 – Lord's Kitchen

Thursday, 17 Aug 2023 – LifeLine Screening event in church hall

Monday - Thursday, 21-24 Aug 2023 – 50th Annual Eastern Diocese Youth Retreat, Camp Berea, Hebron, NH.

Wednesday, 23 Aug 2023 – Lord's Kitchen (volunteers needed!)

Prayer Blanket Project

Yes, this is still an active project! The Ladies' Society is learning how to prepare the fabric for you to complete on a Sunday after Mass. We ask for your patience as they learn the process. It takes about an hour to get the blanket to where you can work on it.



Meanwhile, we are still collecting towards the purchase of fabric for the future. 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.

Please remember that we are currently the sole supplier to Yale-New Haven hospital of these much needed items of comfort.

A Polish National Catholic Church Prayer for Vocations

Our diocesan family is being asked to pray the "prayer selected for the month" and the "Our Father" prayer found in the PNCC Prayer Book each Wednesday at 12 Noon.

**Heavenly Father, Master of the harvest,
we humbly ask You to send more laborers into Your field,
for the work is indeed great.
Grant more faithful priests and deacons
to Your Polish National Catholic Church.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.
Amen.**

Important announcement concerning St. Joseph's Cemetery – *Starts this week!*



Dear Parishioners of St. Joseph's Church and non-members, the Parish Board is going to begin cleaning up grave plots that have overgrown trees, shrubs or anything surrounding a grave stone that is not in compliance per the Rules and Regulations of the cemetery. Please see below:

PLANTINGS:

1. Planting of trees or shrubs is not permitted as they are detrimental to adjoining plots.
2. Flowers and potted plants are permitted in front of the monuments and may not exceed the width of the monument.
3. Artificial flowers, evergreens in boxes and Christmas wreaths are permitted in front of the monument and must be removed when unsightly.
4. Grave blankets and sprays are not permitted.
5. Funeral flowers are removed from grave sites in one week to not damage the sod.
6. Crushed stones, wood chips, shells and bricks are not permitted and will be removed.
7. Fencing, edging and border of any material are not permitted.
8. The Cemetery Committee reserves the right to remove and dispose of all floral pieces after the interment, inurnment, or when they become unsightly.

Effective August 1, 2023, any grave plots that have not been cleaned up and adjusted to align with the rules and regulations will be handled by the Church committee and Cemetery Landscaper. Anyone needing guidance or extra time to attend to this, please contact Fr. Tom to make arrangements. We respect everyone's sacred family plots. This is not meant to be punitive in nature, but there are many plots that have been neglected for years that must be attended to.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.