

St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic Church

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**Twenty-first Sunday in
Ordinary Time (Year C)
August 24, 2025**

Sunday Mass at NOON

Parish Contacts:

ADMINISTRATOR *Fr. Paul Dudek*

CHAIRPERSON *Jeanine May*

VICE CHAIRPERSON *Dee Smith*

FINANCIAL SECRETARY *Barbara Chernesky*

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR *Lisa Vasas*

Word for Sunday

In today's Gospel Jesus speaks of the narrow door, urging us to strive to enter through it. This metaphor challenges us to reflect on how we live our daily lives. In a world that often promotes shortcuts, instant gratification, and self-centeredness, the "narrow door" reminds us that authentic discipleship requires intentional effort and a willingness to let go of what doesn't serve our salvation. It's not about simply knowing about Jesus or doing good things when it's convenient, but about a consistent, heartfelt commitment to follow Him, even when it's difficult.

Today, we may face pressures to compromise our values, to take the easy route, or to conform to the world's standards. But Jesus calls us to a higher, more demanding path—a life rooted in love, sacrifice, and service. Let's ask ourselves: Are we making space for God in our busy lives? Are we walking in faith with purpose, or are we distracted by things that lead us away from Him? May this challenge propel us to make choices that align with the narrow path, trusting that in doing so, we will find true peace and joy in His presence.

— Fr. Paul

We are a Catholic community called to serve God and neighbors through the Eucharist, prayer, education, and daily living of the Gospel values.

Everyone is always welcome to worship with us in our beautiful church.

It is a house of prayer for all, who with sincere heart desire to praise God.

TODAY'S READINGS: SEE CENTER INSERT

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We remember in our prayers Fr. Bill, John (JR) Martikainen, Dee Smith, Nancy Sirois, Richard David, Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak, Bishop John Mack, Jane Pelland, Joe Pelland, Fr. Henry Smolinski & Margo, Rich Lasecki, Edmond Bresh, Helen Reynolds, Helen Popp, Florence Rasmussen, Robin Lupinski, Martha Lesnick, Mary DiMenna, Ray Morrison, Meghan Castelot, Mateo Cirioli, Renata Wos, Janice Daviault

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. Rules on the reception of the Holy Eucharist are on the back page of this bulletin.

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

**Please silence your cell phones
before Mass.**

Parish board meeting today

The parish board will be meeting after Mass this afternoon in the classrooms. If you are on the board, please remember to attend. There will be coffee and light refreshments served.



Items for the bulletin

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

Toiletries for Veterans

The 24th anniversary of 9/11 will soon be here, reminding us of those who gave everything in service to their neighbors. In honor of our veterans, *for the month of September* we will be collecting toiletries for the local VA facilities to distribute to those veterans in need. A list of useful items is on the bulletin board and the table in the foyer. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



Only a few spaces left!



Want to visit the diocesan cathedral in Manchester? With a side trip to the JFK Presidential Library? Our sister parish, Holy Saviour in Union City has organized just such a trip, scheduled for **Sunday, 7 September**, and there are 3 seats available.

The excursion will leave from Holy Saviour at **5:30 a.m.** in a 12-passenger van. **THE DEPARTURE TIME IS FIRM.** It will arrive at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manchester, NH, at approximately 8:30-8:45 a.m., just in time to celebrate 9:00 a.m. Mass. After Mass, participants will attend the cathedral's coffee hour before heading on to the JFK Presidential Library & Museum in Boston, MA, where they will get to spend roughly two and a half hours exploring the museum (1:30ish – 4:00 p.m.). After a stop at the Panera Bread in Framingham, MA, for a dinner break, the group will return to Naugatuck, arriving around 8:00 p.m.



There is a \$50 cost for transportation. Tickets to the JFK Museum are \$20/adult, \$16/senior (62+). Dinner and any donation made to the cathedral offertory collection are not included in this cost. If you estimate \$15-20 for dinner, this is an entire day's excursion for about \$100 total – a real bargain these days!

If you are interested in going, please contact Ken Krasko (203-452-5326 or sandservices@yahoo.com) **as soon as possible**. Checks for transportation should be made out to Kenneth Krasko. In the event the trip is canceled, all monies will be refunded.

Can't get to Mass?



The National Cathedral in Scranton, the Eastern Diocesan cathedral, and Holy Trinity parish in Southington (seat of the Southwestern Seniorate) have YouTube channels to which you can subscribe. All three channels archive the weekly Mass for later viewing. So, if you're away from home, or shut-in, you can still see a Mass from our Church.

Check them out –

<https://www.youtube.com/@bishoppaulsobiechowski9743> or

<https://www.youtube.com/@ststanislauscathedral> or

<https://www.youtube.com/@holyltrinitypnccsouthington156>

Yoga to return in September

Laurie Trupp, certified Kripalu Yoga instructor, is pleased to offer another six week session of Yoga on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the church hall, starting **16 September**. Further information on how to register for this session is posted on the bulletin board. Register early – the parking lot is always full for this class!

Welcome back, Laurie!

Crafts group

Only a few weeks before summer is over. The crafts group will soon be meeting in the classrooms on Thursday mornings at 11:00 a.m. to hand-make items for those in need of comfort. **All are welcome to join, including non-parishioners**, regardless of gender, age, or experience. We will train! If you are a crafter who does not wish to come to the group meetings, you can still work from home and drop your creations off to us.



The group is also accepting donations of the raw materials for these crafts (beads, beading string, small non-metallic crosses, yarn, etc.) so we can keep stitching and beading on. Let's fill the coffers so when we begin again in the Fall, we have material immediately available for converting into these items!

READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading

Is 66: 18-21

A Reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah:

Thus says the LORD:

I know their works and their thoughts, and I come to gather nations of every language; they shall come and see my glory. I will set a sign among them; from them I will send fugitives to the nations: to Tarshish, Put and Lud, Mosoch, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have never heard of my fame, or seen my glory; and they shall proclaim my glory among the nations. They shall bring all your brothers and sisters from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, on horses and in chariots, in carts, upon mules and dromedaries, to Jerusalem, my holy mountain, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring their offering to the house of the LORD in clean vessels. Some of these I will take as priests and Levites, says the LORD.

The Word of the Lord

R: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps. 117: 1, 2

R: Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

Praise the LORD, all you nations;
glorify him, all you peoples!

R: Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

For steadfast is his kindness toward us,
and the fidelity of the LORD endures forever.

R: Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

Second Reading

Heb 12: 5-7, 11-13

A Reading from the letter to the Hebrews:

Brothers and sisters:

You have forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as children:

"My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reprov'd by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines; he scourges every son he acknowledges." Endure your trials as "discipline"; God treats you as sons. For what "son" is there whom his father does not discipline? At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.

So strengthen your drooping hands and your weak

knees. Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be disjointed but healed.

The Word of the Lord

R: Thanks be to God.

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

R: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

C: I am the way, the truth and the life, says the Lord;
no one comes to the Father, except through me.

R: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL

Lk 13: 22-30

C: The Lord be with you.

R: And also with you.

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

R: Glory be to You, O Lord.

Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?"

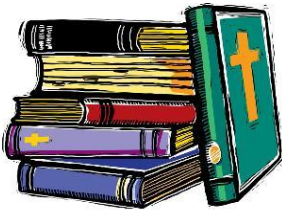
He answered them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside

knocking and saying, 'Lord, open the door for us.' He will say to you in reply, 'I do not know where you are from. And you will say, 'We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.' Then he will say to you, 'I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!' And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves cast out. And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

The Gospel of the Lord.

R: Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Missing Bible Study?



Bible Study

Never fear! Bishop Paul hosts a hybrid (in-person and virtual via Zoom) Bible study session every other Tuesday, his schedule permitting. Studies generally start at 7:00 p.m. and last one hour to one and one half hours. The next session is scheduled for **this Tuesday, 26 August**.

If you want to join on Zoom you'll need to email Bishop Paul for the Zoom link (revpauls@yahoo.com) or request it from the office. Study sheets will be sent to all participants prior to the session.

Crafts and Prayer Blankets ministries

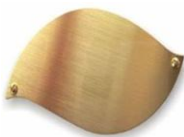
With the transition to Father Paul's administration, questions have been raised about the future of our crafts and prayer blanket ministries.

Rest assured, both will continue without fail. As to where the fruits of these labors will go, the current practice is that ***those in need from our parish (and now also our sister parish, Holy Saviour) are taken care of first*** and the remainder goes to a local hospital for cancer patients or critically ill children.



We will be meeting with Father Paul in the coming weeks to ascertain which facility or facilities will be the recipient of our future donations. Thank you for your concern!

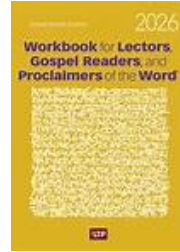
Donor Leaf Information



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 see the bulletin board for details or contact the office. A great way to honor a mother or father!

Lectors needed

Anyone interested in being a Sunday lector, please contact Dee Smith or the office. You will receive a lector workbook from which you can prepare your reading and a new one when the liturgical year changes in November.



Bottle and can collection going strong!



Keep those returnables coming! The bottles and cans collected so far have already been returned and the bin is ready for more. **Thank you** to those who have dropped off these recyclables! Over \$150 has been raised to-date to offset parish operating expenses.

Anyone interested in helping Meg return these, please contact either Meg or the office.

Ideas always welcome

If you have an idea for the board to consider, please let them know. This could be anything from recommending a civic/community group to possibly rent our facilities to a new outreach program or easy fundraiser. What would you like to see in our church?

And if you are interested in joining the parish board, there are openings for new members. Please see Jeanine to express your interest.

Want to request a Mass?

If you would like to have a Mass said for the repose of a loved one or to commemorate a special event, you can contact the office via phone or email. Or, as an added convenience, there are slips on the foyer table for you to fill out and place in the basket. We will try to accommodate your first choice of date and let you know when it has been added to the calendar.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT YOUR CHURCH

Sunday, 24 August 2025 – Parish board meeting in the classroom after Mass

Tuesday, 26 August 2025 – Zoom Bible study session with Bishop Paul, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, 7 September 2025 – Coffee Hour after Mass

Sunday, 7 September 2025 – Excursion to Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manchester and JFK Presidential Library & Museum in Boston. Leaves Holy Saviour at **5:30 a.m.**

September coffee hour

Our next monthly fellowship hour falls in two weeks on 7 September. Mark your calendar now and stay a little after Mass for light refreshments and the chance to catch up with those in our parish community.

Christmas Fair update



You already have it marked on your calendar – the 2025 Christmas Crafts Fair on Saturday, 6 December, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – now it's time to spread the word! Vendor applications are coming in, but we can always use more! **If you know of a potential vendor**, give their information to the office or give them an application.

In September, we will be soliciting businesses throughout the state for raffle prizes. **If you know of a local business who might be willing to donate a raffle prize**, let us know and they will be added to the list to be contacted next month.

Start thinking about our basket raffle and bake sale tables and what you might be able to contribute. **Basket items will be collected in November and baked goods the day before the Fair.** And TALK IT UP! You are the best advertising we have. Flyers will be available soon for posting locally.

Anyone interested in helping with this event in any capacity, please contact Lisa. Many hands make the burden light!

Reception of the Holy Eucharist

Baptized Christians who believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist and are in a state of grace, free from mortal sin, are invited to partake of this Holy Sacrament. It is the practice of the PNCC to distribute the Holy Eucharist through the method of intinction. The Body of Christ is dipped into the Precious Blood and is placed on the tongue and not in the hand of the communicant. *If you are unable to receive the Precious Blood, please alert Father before Mass so that he is aware of the situation. If you would like to receive a blessing from Father instead of Communion, come to the altar rail with your arms crossed, palms on shoulders.* Come and let us be one with our Lord.



Mission Fund collection



On the first Sunday of every month, a separate collection is taken to support the PNCC

Mission Fund. The money is forwarded to the diocesan and national levels for use in evangelical and mission outreaches, to draw more people into the PNCC. *In the recent past, such outreach and evangelism has brought some new young men into both our church and our seminary.* Please consider donating to this worthwhile endeavor!

*Are you on the
narrow path to God?*

