

St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic Church

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**Nineteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
August 9, 2026 Year A**

Sunday Mass at NOON

Parish Contacts:

ADMINISTRATOR *Fr. Paul Dudek*

CHAIRPERSON *Jeanine May*

VICE CHAIR *Jeff Smith*

FINANCIAL SECRETARY *Barbara Chernesky*

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR *Lisa Vasas*

Where is God in the most difficult moments of my life?

The comforting answer we can find in today's Gospel. Jesus did not stop the storm from coming, but He came to His disciples in the middle of it. When Peter lost courage and began to sink, Jesus immediately reached out His hand and lifted him up.

We all experience 'storms': waiting for medical test results, worrying about our children or parents, struggling to pay the bills, grieving the loss of someone we love, or wondering what tomorrow will bring. In those moments, God may seem silent or distant. Yet the Gospel reminds us that He is closer than we think. Sometimes God reaches us through someone who cares, a helping hand when we need it most, an encouraging word, or the quiet assurance that we can take the next step even when we cannot see the whole path.

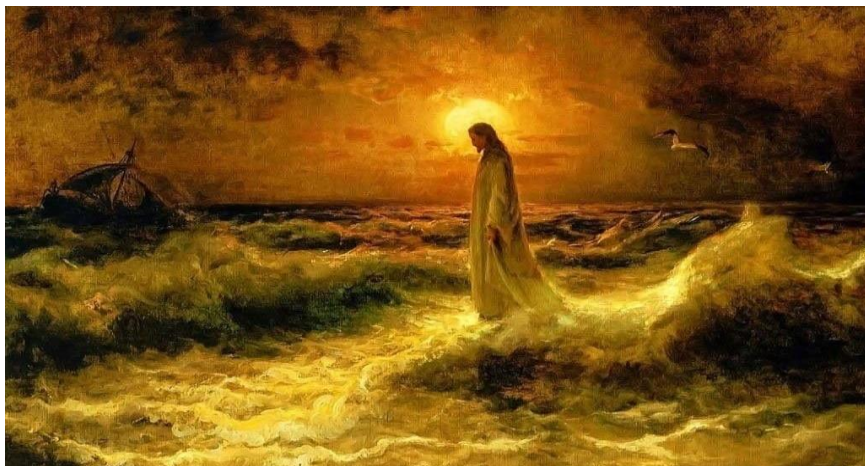
God does not always calm the storm immediately, but He never abandons us in it. He takes us by the hand and says, "*Take courage. Do not be afraid.*" So, let us keep our eyes on Christ, He is always nearby.

~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, Richard David, Bishop John Mack, Stella Shandrowski, Jane Pelland, Joe Pelland, Bishop Paul Sobiechowski, Fr. Henry Smolinski & Margo, Fr. Robert Koerber, Ann Marie Egelski, Rich Lasecki, Edmond Bresh, Helen Reynolds, Helen Popp, Florence Rasmussen, Robin Lupinski, Ray Morrison, Meghan Castellet, Henry Costigan, Dana Barry, Mateo Cirioli, Eloise Grabowski, David Grabowski, 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.**

Saturday Mass this week!

This being the third week of the month, Mass will be this Saturday, August 15 at 4:00 p.m. **NOT** on Sunday the 16th. **Please make note of it on your calendars so you don't miss it!** See you there!

**4pm
Saturday
Mass**

New Date for the Tag/Estate Sale!



The new date for the Tag/Estate Sale is Saturday, September 19th! It will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., giving us an hour to clean up before the monthly Vigil Mass at 4:00 p.m. Mark your calendars now and get ready to put up flyers and do advertising!

Flyers are available on the foyer table for you to take home and post where you can. We will also need to have at least one more unpacking/pricing party to make sure all the items received so far are ready to be put out for sale.

Lectors for August

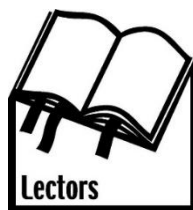
The lectors for the remainder of August are:

August 9 – Charles

August 15 – Joe (Saturday Mass)

August 23 – Jeff

August 30 - Chris



August outreach collection started



This month we will collect cereal. As the return to school approaches, let's start families off with a nutritious breakfast to begin their day. A collection bin is in the foyer marked for your donations. All it takes is adding a box or bag to your normal shopping trip to give those in need a good start to their day!



ST. JOSEPH'S CHRISTMAS FAIR



Vendor invite letters and applications as well as flyers are on the foyer table. Please take some and give them out to those you think might be interested in exhibiting with us at the fair. It's not too early to fill the hall with a variety of vendors!

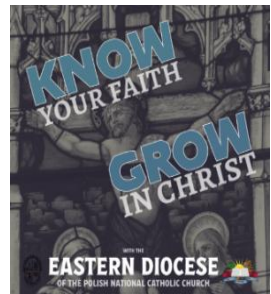
If you would like to volunteer to help, please see Lisa. There are plenty of things to do, not all requiring you to be here at church! Many thanks to those who have already stepped forward to give their time!



And yes, it's early, but begin thinking of making baskets (or providing the contents for one) and baking goodies. There will be basket making parties and baking parties in November for those who would like to come here to make their treats or help package what has been donated already. Let's try and repeat last year's success!

Next Know & Grow Session

The eighth installment of the 2026 Eastern Diocese Know & Grow sessions will be held on **Thursday, August 13th at 7:00 p.m.** via Zoom. The featured speaker this month is Father Pawel Lukaszewicz, from St. Joseph's parish in Westfield, MA, (Fr. Sr. Soltysiak's former parish) and he will help us to explore the topic of:



Spiritual Gifts: Your calling and purpose

Each unit will have biblical texts as a starting point, with lecture, meditation, discussion, and practical life applications.

To join via Zoom, please contact revpauls@yahoo.com or ksobiechowski@yahoo.com

~ Eastern Diocese Mission and Evangelism Commission

READINGS FOR THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading

1 Kings 19: 9, 11-13

A Reading from the first book of Kings

At the mountain of God, Horeb, Elijah came to a cave where he took shelter. Then the LORD said to him, “Go outside and stand on the mountain before the LORD; the LORD will be passing by.”

A strong and heavy wind was rending the mountains and crushing rocks before the LORD— but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake—but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there was fire—but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire there was a tiny whispering sound. When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave.

The Word of the Lord

R: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps. 85: 9, 10, 11-12, 13-14

R: Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what God proclaims;
the LORD — for he proclaims peace.

Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.

R: Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Kindness and truth shall meet;

justice and peace shall kiss.

Truth shall spring out of the earth,

and justice shall look down from heaven.

R: Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

The LORD himself will give his benefits;

our land shall yield its increase.

Justice shall walk before him,

and prepare the way of his steps.

R: Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Second Reading

Rom 9: 1-5

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

Brothers and sisters:

I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie; my conscience joins with the Holy Spirit in bearing me witness that I have great sorrow and constant anguish in my heart.

For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. They are Israelites; theirs the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law,

the worship, and the promises; theirs the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord

R: Thanks be to God.

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

R: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

C: I wait for the Lord;
my soul waits for his word.

R: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL

Mt 14: 22-33

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, Lord.

After he had fed the people, Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.

When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During

the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them walking on the sea.

When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once Jesus spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come."

Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

R: Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Response to Intercessions:
Lord, graciously hear our prayer.

***How do we find God in the storms
and struggle of daily lives, in the trials we
encounter in trying to do His will?***



God commands Elijah in today's First Reading to stand on the mountain and await His passing by. And in the Gospel, Jesus makes the disciples set out across the waters to meet Him. In each case, the Lord makes Himself present amid frightening tumult, heavy winds and high waves, fire and earthquakes. - Elijah hides his face. Perhaps he remembers Moses, who met God on the same mountain, also amid fire, thunder, and smoke ([Deuteronomy 4:10–15](#); [Exodus 19:17–19](#)). God told Moses no one could see His face and live, and He sheltered Moses in the hollow of a rock, as He shelters Elijah in a cave. The disciples, likewise, are too terrified to look on the face of God.

Today's Gospel is a revelation of Jesus' divine identity. Only God treads across the crest of the sea ([Job 9:8](#)) and rules the raging waters. And the words of assurance that Jesus speaks - "It is I"—are those God used to identify Himself to Moses ([Exodus 3:14](#); [Isaiah 43:10](#)). Even Peter is too overcome by fear to imitate his Lord. His fears, Jesus tells him, are a sign of his lack of faith.

And so it often is with us. Our fears make us doubt, make it hard to see His glory dwelling in our midst. Yet, we should know, as we sing in today's Psalm, that His salvation is near to those who hope in Him. By faith we should know, as Paul asserts in today's Epistle, that we are heirs to the promises made to His children, Israel. We must trust that He whispers to us in the trials of our lives, that He who has called us to walk along the way of His steps, save us whenever we begin to sink.

- Fr. Paul

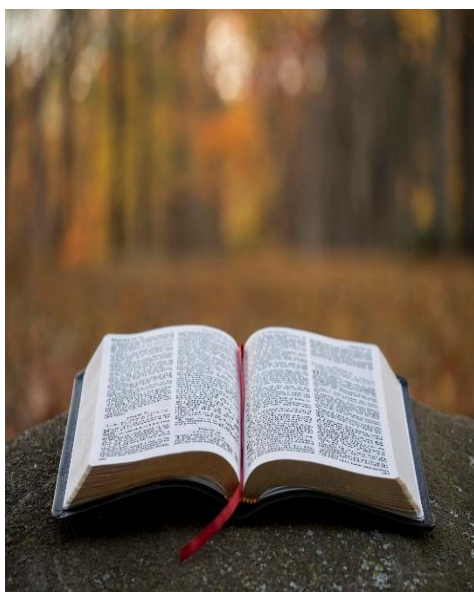
THE BIBLE – Q & A (part 2)

Q: What are the Deuterocanonical Books, and why are they included in the Catholic Bible?

A: The **Deuterocanonical Books** are seven books of the Old Testament that are recognized as inspired Scripture by the Catholic Church: **Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, 1 Maccabees, and 2 Maccabees**, along with additional passages in **Esther** and **Daniel**. The term *Deuterocanonical* means "second canon," not because these books are less inspired, but because their recognition was discussed more extensively in the early Church.

Q: Why does the Catholic Church accept Deuterocanonical books?

A: The Catholic Church recognizes them because they were included in the **Septuagint**, which was widely used by the early Christians and the Apostles. The Church officially affirmed this canon at the Councils of Rome (382), Hippo (393) and Carthage (397 and 419). These councils listed the same Old Testament books found in Catholic Bible we use till today.



Q: What is the Septuagint?

A: The Septuagint (LXX) is the **ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament**. It was translated from Hebrew and other Semitic texts beginning in the 3rd century B.C. in Alexandria, Egypt, for Jews who no longer spoke Hebrew fluently. By the time of Jesus, it had become the most widely used version of Scripture throughout the Jewish world.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT YOUR CHURCH

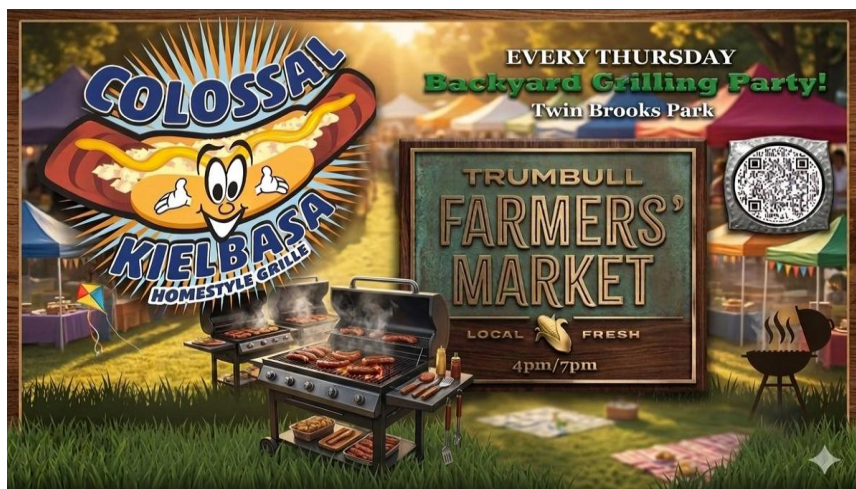
Saturday, 15 August 2026 – Vigil Mass at 4:00 p.m. **NO SUNDAY MASS THIS WEEK.**

Thursday-Tuesday, 20-24 August 2026 – Office will be closed

Saturday, 19 September 2026 – New date for Tag/Estate Sale, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Vigil Mass to follow at 4:00 p.m.

Monday-Wednesday, 28-30 September 2026 – XXVII General Synod of the PNCC, Manchester, NH

Saturday, 5 December 2026 – Annual Christmas Fair, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



Potluck next month



In order to prepare for the potluck get-together after Mass on the first Sunday of September, a signup sheet has been placed on the foyer table so everyone can fill in what they'll be bringing.

Remember, we currently do not have a working refrigerator! The next two blankets to be completed will be ready on a side table. Mark it on your calendar to come, have a bite to eat, a bit of conversation, and catch up on what's happening!

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.



September and October Outreach

If you wish to plan for the next months of outreach, here is what we're going to be collecting:

September – Or should we say Souptember? With temperatures beginning to cool, soup is a great way to warm up the day and is a quick and easy meal to prepare.



October – In preparation for Veterans' Day in November, we'll collect toiletries and socks for our local veterans, giving them a little back for all they've given in service to our country.

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.

Please note

The office will be closed from August 20th through the 24th. **Deadline for any items for the August 23rd bulletin will be Tuesday, August 18th.** Thank you in advance for your cooperation!