

**8th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**March 2, 2025**

**Very Rev. Robert Glasgow, V.F.**  
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**MASS SCHEDULE**

Saturday (Anticipatory) ..... 5:30 PM  
 Sunday ..... 8:00 AM  
 Sunday ..... 10:00 AM  
 Sunday ..... 6:00 PM  
 Daily (Mon, Wed-Fri) ..... 12:15 PM

**CONFESSION**

Saturday ..... 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
 And before/after daily Mass, or by appointment.

**BAPTISM**

Parents must attend a Parent Baptism Class before the baptism of their child. The class is offered the first Sunday of each month following the 10:00 AM Mass.

**MARRIAGE**

Please contact the office at least six months prior to the wedding date. The diocese requires Marriage Prep.

**VISITS TO THE HOMEBOUND AND SICK,**  
**ANointING OF THE SICK**

Please call the office to request home or hospital visitation.

**ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION**

OCIA is the process of formation offered to those who seek to become Catholic. For information, please call the office.

**HOLY DESIRE**

Yes, Lord, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts. —Isa 26:8

The first excerpt below is from St Augustine's (d. 430) Tractates on the First Letter of John, the second from his Letter 130 (a short instruction on Christian prayer). Both speak of **HOLY DESIRE**, as does the 5th Sunday after Easter's post communion collect: **"Grant us, O Lord, who have been nourished and strengthened at the heavenly table, both to desire that which is right, and to gain that which we desire."**



SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENNA  
 by Alessandro Franchi (d. 1914)

"Be who God meant you to be  
 and you will set the world on fire."

**OUR HEART LONGS FOR GOD**

WE have been promised that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. By these words, the tongue has done its best; now we must apply the meditation of the heart. Although they are the words of Saint John, what are they in comparison with the divine reality? And how can we, so greatly inferior to John in merit, add anything of our own? Yet we have received, as John has told us, an anointing by the Holy One which teaches us inwardly more than our tongue can speak. Let us turn to this source of knowledge, and because at present you cannot see, make it your business to **DESIRE** the divine vision.

The entire life of a good Christian is in fact an exercise of holy **DESIRE**. You do not yet see what you long for, but the very act of **DESIRING** prepares you, so that when he comes you may see and be utterly satisfied.

Suppose you are going to fill some holder or container, and you know you will be given a large amount. Then you set about stretching your sack or wineskin or whatever it is. Why? Because you know the quantity you will have to put in it and your eyes tell you there



is not enough room. By stretching it, therefore, you increase the capacity of the sack, and this is how God deals with us. Simply by making us wait he increases our DESIRE, which in turn enlarges the capacity of our soul, making it able to receive what is to be given to us.

So, my brethren, let us continue to DESIRE, for we shall be filled. Take note of Saint Paul stretching as it were his ability to receive what is to come: Not that I have already obtained this, he said, or am made perfect. Brethren, I do not consider that I have already obtained it. We might ask him, "If you have not yet obtained it, what are you doing in this life?" This one thing I do, answers Paul, forgetting what lies behind, and stretching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the prize to which I am called in the life above. Not only did Paul say he stretched forward, but he also declared that he pressed on toward a chosen goal. He realized in fact that he was still short of receiving what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

Such is our Christian life. By DESIRING heaven we exercise the powers of our soul. Now this exercise will be effective only to the extent that we free ourselves from DESIRES leading to infatuation with this world. Let me return to the example I have already used, of filling an empty container. God means to fill each of you with what is good; so cast out what is bad! If he wishes to fill you with honey and you are full of sour wine, where is the honey to go? The vessel must be emptied of its contents and then be cleansed. Yes, it must be cleansed even if you have to work hard and scour it. It must be made fit for the new thing, whatever it may be.

We may go on speaking figuratively of honey, gold or wine—but whatever we say we cannot express the reality we are to receive. The name of that reality is God. But who will claim that in that one syllable we utter the full expanse of our heart's DESIRE? Therefore, whatever we say is necessarily less than the full truth. We must extend ourselves toward the measure of Christ so that when he comes he may fill us with his presence. Then we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

LET US EXERCISE OUR DESIRE IN PRAYER

WHY in our fear of not praying as we should, do we turn to so many things, to find what we should pray for? Why do we not say instead, in the words of the psalm: *I have asked one thing from the Lord, this is what I will seek: to dwell in the Lord's house all the days of my life, to see the graciousness of the Lord, and to visit his temple* (Ps 27:4). There, the days do not come and go in succession, and the beginning of one day does not mean the end of another; all days are one, simultaneously and without end, and the life lived out in these days has itself no end.

So that we might obtain this life of happiness, he who is true life itself taught us to pray, not in many words as though speaking longer could gain

us a hearing. After all, we pray to one who, as the Lord himself tells us, knows what we need before we ask for it.

Why he should ask us to pray, when he knows what we need before we ask him, may perplex us if we do not realize that our Lord and God does not want to know what we want (for he cannot fail to know it) but wants us rather to exercise our DESIRE through our prayers, so that we may be able to receive what he is preparing to give us. His gift is very great indeed, but our capacity is too small and limited to receive it. That is why we are told: Enlarge your DESIRES, do not bear the yoke with unbelievers.

The deeper our faith, the stronger our hope, the greater our DESIRE, the larger will be our capacity to receive that gift, which is very great indeed. *No eye has seen it; it has no color. No ear has heard it; it has no sound. It has not entered man's heart; man's heart must enter into it* (2 Cor 2:9).

In this faith, hope and love we pray always with unwearied DESIRE. However, at set times and seasons we also pray to God in words, so that by these signs we may instruct ourselves and mark the progress we have made in our DESIRE, and spur ourselves on to deepen it. The more fervent the DESIRE, the more worthy will be its fruit. When the Apostle tells us: *Pray without ceasing* (1 Thes 5:16), he means this: DESIRE unceasingly that life of happiness which is nothing if not eternal, and ask it of him who alone is able to give it.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Mar 2, SUNDAY — 8th Week in Ordinary Time

- 8:00 AM | Sunday Mass
- 10:00 AM | Sunday Mass
- 11:30 AM | Order of Christian Initiation of Adults
- 6:00 PM | Sunday Mass
- 7:00 PM | Eucharistic Adoration

Mar 3, MONDAY

- 12:15 AM | Daily Mass

Mar 4, TUESDAY

- 7:00 PM | Scouts

Mar 5, WEDNESDAY — Ash Wednesday, beginning of Lent

- 12:15 AM | Mass w/ distribution of Ashes
- 10:30 AM | FOLLOW ME: Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John [Adult]
- 4:30 PM | Mass w/ distribution of Ashes
- 6:30 PM | FOLLOW ME: Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John [Adult + Children]
- 6:30 PM | Grief Share
- 7:00 PM | Mass w/ distribution of Ashes

## Mar 6, THURSDAY

9:00 AM | Day Away  
12:15 AM | Daily Mass  
6:00 PM | EPIC: Church History

## Mar 7, FRIDAY

10:00 AM | Food Pantry  
10:30 AM | EPIC: Church History  
**12:15 PM | Daily Mass (w/ Stations [Short Form] followed by Adoration)**  
**6:00 PM | Confession**  
**6:00 PM | Stations [Long Form] (followed by Soup Supper)**

## Mar 8, SATURDAY

8:30 AM | Men's Group  
9:30 AM | Widow's Group (2nd Sat of month)  
4:00 PM | Confession (until 5:00 PM)  
5:30 PM | Anticipatory Sunday Mass

### OFFERING

16 Feb '25 (6th Sunday Ordinary Time): \$6,676.00  
23 Feb '25 (7th Sunday Ordinary Time): \$5,445.00

THANK YOU for your generosity!

### MASS INTENTIONS

Mar 1 (Sat), 5:30 PM	SJN Parishioners
Mar 2 (Sun), 8:00 AM	Pat Davis - 3rd Anniv. (req. by Tom Davis)
Mar 5 (Wed), 12:15 PM	Carlos Medeiros (req. by Emily Medeiros)
Mar 5, 7:00 PM	Pat Davis, Diane Bonenfant, Ginny Early (req. by Monday Night Faith Sharing Group)
Mar 6 (Thu), 12:15 PM	The Adviges Silva Family (req. by Adviges Family)
Mar 7 (Fri), 12:15 PM	Joseph & Agatha Oertel (req. by the Connelly Family)
Mar 8 (Sat), 5:30 PM	Richard Boucher, Sr. (req. by Ellie Boucher)
Mar 9 (Sun), 8:00 AM	Jennie Pinelle (req. by Ed & Sandy Pinelle)
Mar 9, 10:00 AM	Joan Griffin (req. by Ronan O'Sullivan)

The Code of Canon Law confirms the practice of offering Mass(es) for particular intentions is ancient: "The Christian faithful who give an offering to apply the Mass for their intention contribute to the good of the Church and by that offering share its concern to support its ministers and works" (945 §2).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Blessed Brunch*

Saturday, March 8

All women of the parish are invited to join us for an afternoon of quiet and reflection. We'll be having a LENTEN RETREAT this Saturday, March 8 from 1:00-5:00 PM, ending with the Saturday evening parish Mass.

### LENT

Lent starts this week.

ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5, 2025

Mass w/ distribution of Ashes:  
12:15 PM, 4:30 PM, and 7:00 PM

- All the days of Lent are DAYS OF PENANCE. The faithful are encouraged to practice some form of voluntary self-denial or personal penance (e.g., physical mortification or temperance or acts of religion, charity or Christian witness).

The three pillars of Lenten observance are PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING. The purpose of the discipline(s) we voluntarily undertake during Lent should be to counter ingrained habits of sin or to foster works of selfless charity. In the words of St John Chrysostom (d. 407):

"(Lent) is a period of spiritual 'combat' which we must experience alongside Jesus, not with pride and presumption, but using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the promises of our Baptism."  
—Pope Benedict XVI

- FRIDAYS OF LENT (Mar 7, 14, 21, 28, Apr 4, 11) are obligatory DAYS OF ABSTINENCE. The faithful from age 14 onwards are bound by the law of ABSTINENCE = meatless meals.
- ASH WEDNESDAY (Mar 5) and GOOD FRIDAY (Apr 18) are DAYS OF FAST & ABSTINENCE. The faithful aged 18-59 (until the beginning of the 60th year) are bound by the law of FASTING. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one

full meal. Two smaller meals may also be taken, but not to equal a full meal. If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday as the "paschal fast" to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus, and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily his Resurrection.

**GriefShare**

## Grieving the **death** of a loved one?

### 13 SESSIONS

Join us at any time in the series

#### WHEN:

Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30 PM

Starting February 19

#### WHERE:

St John Neumann Hall  
708 Milford Rd., Merrimack

Contact: Deacon Brian Lester, [deacon@sjnnh.org](mailto:deacon@sjnnh.org)

### PRAYER LINE

To add someone to the Parish Prayer Line, contact Teri at the parish office: (603) 880-4689, [tschmitt@sjnnh.org](mailto:tschmitt@sjnnh.org).

PLEASE PRAY FOR: Youth volunteers and students (past, present, & future). Fr. Paul. Dan. Vivian. Laura. Tom. Chuck. Sue. Bill. Jan. Chrissy. Dave. Adam. Peggy. Sue. Mike. Orestes. Betty Jean. Elizabeth. Betty. Souls of Jane & Agatha. Ruthann. Ginny. Sue. Jackie. Milly Concetta. Dusty & Janelle. Miriam. Mary. Kathleen. Dale. Maya. Raymond. Bill. Bella. Kim's Family. Alice. Cheryl. Karl. Lilly. Marie. Michael. Kathy. Andrew. Amy. Sue. Clara. Millisa. Mikala. Baby Gallagher. Baby S. (Due March). Baby S. (Due April). Dick. Laura. Peg. Dale. Christine. Lisa. Kimberly. Hazel. Soul of Rosemary. Caitlin. Susan. Mark. Helena. Mike. Keagan. Family and friends who have stepped away from the faith. Vocations. All of our parishioners and their needs.

**PARISH** *online*

For monthly parish updates, subscribe via FLOCKNOTES by going to:

<https://SJNMERRIMACK.flocknote.com>  
Or, by texting "SJNMERRIMACK" to 84576  
(message/data rates may apply)

### TAX NOTICE

If you would like a statement of your 2024 contributions to the parish, please fill out the CONTRIBUTIONS REQUEST CARD (located in the back of the church) and place it in the collection basket. You can also request a statement by emailing us your:

- Name
- Address
- Phone #
- Envelope #

Your financial support has been very much appreciated!

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### SJN Staff

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KATHY HOPKINS — Day Away (Thursday)  
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FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Bob Fregault (Chairman)

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
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