



The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist

The Mother Church of Stamford
279 Atlantic Street · Stamford, Connecticut 06901

February 16, 2014 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time



Pastor

Rev. Mons. Stephen M. DiGiovanni

**Parochial Vicar and
Director of Religious Education**

Rev. Terrence P. Walsh

Resident Priest

Rev. Albert D. Audette, Jr.

Chairman, Parish Financial Council

John Regan (203) 324-1553 ext.117

Lay Members of the Parish Corporation

Michael S. Guarnieri

Dr. Joseph McAleer

Organist and Choir Master

Christopher Mueller

St. John's Haitian Ministry

Rev. Jean-Rony Phillippe

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Haitian Music Director

Leclerc Joseph

Photo by John Glover

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Pastor's Corner: "Simon, son of John. . . You are Peter and on this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" [Mt 13:16-19]

When Our Lord spoke these words to Simon, son of John, in the presence of the other Apostles, He did not single out a particular friend to give him a gift—the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. If Jesus were giving out gifts, it would have been logical that he chose His closest friend, our patron, Saint John. But Jesus didn't. He chose the least expected of His Twelve Apostles; would never have chosen Peter. He first observed wonder that Simon, of all the Twelve, was the only one who answered His question correctly: "Who do you say I am?" Not being the brightest of the Apostolic group, Simon's answer surprised Jesus. The Heavenly Father gave Simon the answer—since no one knew Jesus to be the actual Son of God to show Jesus that the Heavenly Father had chosen Simon for a special work. And, that special work required a change of the man's name, to signify the change in the man's reason for existence. Abram became Abraham in order to be the Father of the Chosen People whose "descendants would be more numerous than the stars" [Gen 17]. God changes Simon's name to Peter, since Peter would bring that promise to fulfillment through the Church—the New Israel. Why did Jesus choose the name "Peter"? Why not George or Reginald? Because Peter means Rock in Aramaic, the language spoken by Our Lord and in which the Gospel of Matthew was written: the word for rock is *Kephas*, or Cephass in the English transliteration, which is repeated in the Gospels and the

Epistles of St. Paul [4 times in *Corinthians*]. In English, this play on words doesn't work: Peter doesn't

modern language is the French suggest a link between the words Our Lord next told Simon Rock I will build my Church, and it." The Church isn't built on an it was established by the Divine Divine Person, the Eternal Father, Person, the Holy Spirit, guiding the "the gates of hell will not prevail permanent Church, which will last ends of the world, offering truth, symbol of that authority?—the *Isaiah 22:22*, which is about a king his palace to his chief steward. That authority only for a while, and then too with Peter. Jesus does not make Church: that permanent and

But the visible head of the Church is Peter and his successors, the Bishops of Rome, where Peter taught and ministered as the head of the believing community, and died a martyr, with Saint Paul in the year 67 AD.

Our Lord knew that Peter was imperfect; He scolded Peter soon after, when Peter objected that Jesus should not suffer and die. Likewise, Peter would deny Christ three times on the evening of Jesus' arrest; abandoning Him the day He died on the Cross. Yet, Our Lord did not withdraw His grant of authority from this weak and flawed *Rock*. After the Resurrection, Jesus asked three times, "Do you love me?"—offering Peter three opportunities to redress his triple denial of Jesus. Peter's triple reply, "Yes Lord, you know I love you" [Jn 21:15-19]. Peter grew into his job as the *Rock* upon which the Church of Christ is built: he had to understand that the only way to exercise authority in the Church was first to be so in love with Jesus that he wanted to imitate Him entirely, even to the point of martyrdom. Faith must lead to love of God, and we can all get there.

February 22nd is the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter. The chair of a bishop is a symbol of his authority. So, the feast day is a celebration of that authority granted uniquely to Peter and his successors, the popes. Our bronze statue of Saint Peter, holding the Keys of Heaven, seated on a white marble chair, is an exact replica of the famous statue in Saint Peter's, Rome. Let us pray for our Holy Father, Pope Francis, the present Successor of Saint Peter. It is Saint Peter, still a member of the Body of Christ, the Church, who works and speaks through Francis. Not an easy job, but an essential one, as Christ designed it, for the salvation of the world.



Epistles of St. Paul [4 times in *Corinthians*]. In English, this play on look anything like Rock; the closest in a word *Pierre* or Italian, *Pietro*—which Rock and Peter. Peter is the Rock. that "You are Peter [Rock], and on this the gates of hell will not prevail against idea, or a social movement or ideology: Person of Our Lord, obedient to another and enlivened by the Third Divine Church to teach only the truth so that against it." Jesus was establishing a until the end of time, and reach to the grace and salvation to everyone. The Keys of Heaven: Jesus just about quotes giving authority in the form of keys of chief steward was given the keys of they were passed to his successor. So Peter the absolute and only Head of the perpetual Head of the Church is Jesus.

—Msgr. DiGiovanni

Please pray for the sick: Karin Fahey, Margaret Potalicchio, Ruth Coyle, James Tymon, Terence Dervishi, Antoinette Rubino, Andres Ferrer Sr., Val McIntosh, Pasqualina Bruzzese, Kathy Raggio, Elaine Mellace, Florita Guimbal, Harrie Humphreys, William Perretti, Rosa Vera, Tom Diffley, Bonnie Keyes, Ed Grady, Connor Walsh, Billy Therriault, Thomas Bernie, Megan Bobroske, Mary Churley, Lena Cocchia, Thomas Bernie, Nancy Gallagher, Maria Wnek, Reno Antonio Rosa, Silvana Smith, Connie Ward, Ron DeCamp, Keith Nicholson.

Please pray for those who have recently died: Virginia Donaghue, Marcel Gedeon, Antoinette Rubino, James Hale, Edna Campbell, Joseph Pavia, Elmer Lipinski, Nelson Mandela, William Henry, Sr., Louis Chiapetta, Ann R. DiGiovanni, Patricia Morris, Jean Fusaro, Frederick Intrieri, Jody Ann O'Brien, Frances Rose Fabrizio, Zelma Potter, Thomas Lupo, Robert LeBeau, Robert Jegle, Jennie Galasso, Father Richard Futie, Charles Austin, Jr. , Carol Lovello, Joseph Michael Kirkland, Harry Parson, Stephen Boccuzzi, John DeDomenici, Scott Clark, Richard Agnew, M. Esther Hart, Cliff Linqvist, Kathy Robustelli, Yvette Constant, Sr. Fernanda, P.O.S.C.

Monthly Collection . . . The second collection today will be the monthly collection for the parish. Your generosity is appreciated.

ASH WEDNESDAY: March 5th: Is NOT a holy day of obligation. Ashes will be given out at the 8 am and 12:10 pm Masses that day; AND in the basilica at 7 am, 1pm and 7:30 pm. **HOWEVER,**

ASHES WILL NOT BE GIVEN OUT AT THE RECTORY.

Monday Evening Holy Hour: Monday nights 7-8:00 pm for *Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Rosary in the Basilica. Next Holy Hour, tomorrow evening, Monday, February 17th.*

St. Monica Latin Reading Group: Wednesday meetings at 6:15 pm in the Rectory. We read the Latin Church Fathers. Currently, we are translating St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*. A basic reading ability in Latin [high school level] is necessary. Please join us.

St. Monica Biblical Greek Grammar: An intermediate grammar/reading class: Basic grammatical knowledge of Biblical Greek is required. Currently we are also translating the Gospel of Saint John. We meet Thursdays at 6:30 pm in the Rectory. Please join us.

BIBLE STUDY: Fr. Walsh leads our study of *The Book of Isaiah*, on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8 pm in the Rectory. Bring your Bible. Next meeting: February 19th.

Supper with Bishop Caggiano: Any young man of high school, college and post-college age, who has ever thought about the priesthood, can be the guest of our Bishop on **Tuesday, February 18th** at the Saint John Fisher Seminary Residence on Newfield Avenue. There is no charge, nor obligation: just an opportunity to consider that God may truly be calling you to the priesthood and meet our bishop. If you are interested, just contact Monsignor, Fathers Audette or Walsh, or simply phone the office [203-324-1553, ext 21] and speak with Cindy, our parish secretary. If you'd need a ride, we'll be happy to oblige.

Weekly Sunday collection:

Sunday February 9, 2014	\$ 9,775.00
Sunday February 10, 2013	<u>\$ 9,074.46</u>

“I ask you one thing: do not tire of giving to God, but do not give your leftovers.”
---Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Feb. 23rd, Sunday Readings: Lv 19:1-2, 17-18; 1 Cor 3:16-23; Mt 5:38-48.

Annual Bishop's Appeal: Has begun. Many parishioners may have already received a letter from Bishop Lori. Saint John's annual goal, set by the diocese, is \$87,000. The funds collected for the Bishop are used for the numerous charitable and educational works of the Diocese. Please be generous.

Home Schooling Families: Meet in the Msgr. Nagle Parish hall each First Friday: March 7, April 4, May 2. All ages are welcome. Please contact Bridget Bethray: bridget.bethray@gmail.com, or Janet Lancaster: 203-637-3301, jmlancaster@optonline.net.

RCIA: Interested in **becoming Catholic** or Catholics wanting to receive First Communion or Confirmation are invited to attend classes: Tuesdays at 7:00 pm in the Rectory.

St John's Flock (20's and 30's Young Adult Ministry): Meetings on Two Tuesdays a month and other social/service events. For info: stjohnsflock.com or Email: core-team@stjohnsflock.com.

Francis & Clare: Our High School Youth Group. Students interested in being part of the Teen Leadership Group: E-mail Deirdre.garrahan@gmail.com to get involved.

Project Rachel Ministry: Offers free and confidential help to those seeking healing after abortion. Come back to God, who is love and mercy. Please call (203) 416-1619 or projectrachel@diobpt.org.

Birthright: of Greater Stamford is seeking volunteers: Supports women with unplanned pregnancies to bring their babies to term, providing pregnancy tests, connecting women with medical, financial, legal and other needed resources. Schedules are flexible, and training is provided. Call 348-4355 or www.birthright.org.

SAINT GABRIEL PARISH LECTURE SERIES FOR LENT: CATHOLIC IDENTITY:RENEWING OUR APPRECIATION - On four Monday evenings during the Lenten season (March 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st) from 7:30 -8:30 p.m. in the Saint Gabriel parish hall, Dr. Joan Kelly will lead us on a tour of our Catholic Faith Tradition. Together we will explore the wealth of our glorious Catholic Heritage steeped in a centuries old Tradition more than 2000 years old. You will be enlightened about the historical resplendency of Catholic doctrine, ritual and devotion that manifests itself in our Church down to the present day!

Job Seekers: Meets monthly in the rectory at 7:30pm: There's no charge. Led by Melanie Szlucha whose company, Red Inc., a leader in helping find jobs. More info, see: www.redinc.biz or 203-866-1606: **Next meeting: Monday, February 24th.**

STAMFORD HIBERNIAN COMMUNION BREAKFAST: SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2014 - The 71st Annual Stamford AOH/LAOH Communion Breakfast will be held on Sunday, March 2nd, at the Hibernian Hall on Greyrock Place in Stamford. The Breakfast will take place immediately following the **10AM Mass at The Basilica of St. John the Evangelist.**

This year's Guest Speaker will be Bishop Frank Caggiano, Fifth Bishop of Bridgeport.

The cost for the Breakfast is \$25. All are welcome.

For reservations, please call Agnes Sheridan at (203) 662-9751.

Mass Intentions

+ Denotes Deceased

Saturday, February 15, 2014

4:00 Special Intentions Diane O'Connell req. Carpanzano Family

Sunday, February 16, 2014

7:30 +Blanche Ann Raschella req. Gary and Armelle

10:00 +Anthony Lepore req. Rose Lepore

12:00 +Aniello Preziosi Birthday Remembrance and +Shirley Rittman req. Aniello's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and Pam Rittman

5:00 +Frank Alagia

6:00 +Patrick Kane and Family req. Estate of Catherine Kane and Family

Monday, February 17, 2014

8:00 +Jean Galasso req. Tom Timon

12:10 +Doris Gremm req. Hannah Sexton Young

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

8:00 +Lucille Kohn req. Maude and Paul Hughes

12:10 +Sherley Dieu and Gerard Dieu req. Marie Florestal

Wednesday, February 19, 2014

8:00 Thanksgiving req. Thang Nguyen

12:10 +Michael Coppola req. Jean Vaccaro

Thursday, February 20, 2014

8:00 +Jennie Galasso req. Maude and Paul Hughes

12:10 +Kathy Rogers req. Mary Jean Dal Molin

Friday, February 21, 2014

8:00 +Hien Do req. Thang Nguyen

12:10 Souls in Purgatory req. Fabiola C.

Saturday, February 22, 2014

8:00 +Karen Kump req. Eleanor and Frank Zach

12:10 Michael Kravar req. Fabiola C.

Baptisms: Are celebrated every day of the week, according to the schedule of the parish priests and the families. Baptisms at St. John's are one-family only ceremonies: never groups. Please call Cindy (203-324-1553, ext 21).

Weddings: Couples must contact and begin meeting with one of the parish priests for at least 6 months before a hoped for wedding date at Saint John's. Please call the parish secretary, Cindy, or one of the priests for an initial discussion.

Holy Name Society: For the men of the parish, meets Fridays in the Rectory, 7-7:50 a.m. for coffee, Eucharistic Adoration & Benediction. All men of the parish are welcome. We finish in time for the 8am Mass.

Moms & Tots: Moms and their kids meets in the Church each first Tuesday of every month at 10:30a.m.

St. Anne's Family Society: A family society meeting four times a year on Sundays after the 5pm mass, with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament and prayer, supper, and a lecture in the church hall.

Francis & Clare: Co-Ed High School Youth Group. Email Deirdre.garrahan@gmail.com.

Pray to end Legalized Abortion: Wednesdays, 7-10:30a.m., Stamford's Planned Parenthood, 1039 East Main St.

St. Dominic Savio Society: For spiritual formation of men, 7th-8th grades-High Schoolers welcome Contact-Ferry203-324-1553 x22.

St. Maria Goretti Society: For the spiritual formation of young ladies, 7th-8th grades(High Schoolers welcome).Beth 203-975-0074.

Holy Hour: on Monday Nights, **7pm—8 pm.** Adoration, Holy Rosary, and Benediction. All are welcome!

The Legion of Mary: **Meets on Wednesday Evenings, 7:30 pm 'till 9:00 pm** in the Msgr. Nagle Hall. All are welcome.

St. Monica Institute for Patristic Studies: Wednesdays, 7:30 pm in the rectory.

The Latin Reading Group: Meets Wednesday evenings at 6:15 pm in the rectory: basic reading ability required.

Intermediate Studies in Biblical Greek: Intermediate Grammar: Meets Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm in the rectory.

Coffee Hour: Sunday, after the 10:00 a.m. Family Mass in the Monsignor Nagle Parish Hall.

ST. JOHN'S IN THE ADVOCATE:

135 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

February 16, 1877: St. John's School Exhibition. "The attendance at the St. John's R. C. school exhibition on Tuesday evening furnished a remarkable contrast to the rows of empty benches which have been the characteristic feature of nearly all the public entertainments in the hall this winter. The house was crowded, up stairs and down, probably not less than sixteen hundred people being in attendance. No part of the entertainment was more interesting than the choruses sung by some hundred and thirty young girls from eight to sixteen years of age, and all dressed in white. These were aligned upon the stage according to stature, the youngest being in the front rank, and the ranks behind graded according to size. The choruses were sung with remarkable precision for so large a number of children, and the movements of the body of performers on the stage were not only free from confusion, but were almost automation-like in moving forward to the front of the stage and retiring again before the curtain was lowered. Several of the pupils exhibited considerable skill on the piano, especially Miss Tillie Loughry, a little lady who played with a vim and intelligence that many much older performers might attempt in vain. The exercises included a humorous tableau, dialogues, and some amusing school comedies, together with the choruses and piano pieces for two, four and six hands. The musical portion of the performance was perhaps the best part of it, but all was cleverly done, and appeared to be greatly relished by the large audience assembled."

February 22, 1878: "The successor of Pope Pius IX was elected on Wednesday by the method known as "by Adoration." His name was Cardinal Gioacchino Pecci, who has assumed the title of Leo XIII. The election of Cardinal Pecci is sure to give great satisfaction throughout the Catholic world. A requiem Mass was said in St. John's Roman Catholic Church, Stamford, Monday, for the repose of the soul of Pope Pius IX in obedience to the request of Bishop Thomas Galberry of Hartford."

120 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

February 19, 1892: St. Patrick's Day Parade. "Mr. D.D. Dinan, who is to act as grand marshal for the great street parade on St. Patrick's Day, says that there has been no celebration of the kind here for twenty years, and that March 17th will be a gala-a red letter day in fact in the history of Stamford. On Wednesday, Captain J. J. Hurley, of the Hibernian Rifles of Bridgeport, called on the grand marshal relative to making arrangements for the visit of his own, and other outside companies, on the day. Stamford boys from 12 to 18 years of age will drill Saturday night in Hibernian Hall."

Mass Schedule:

Saturday (Sunday Vigil): 4:00p.m. (Hymns)

Sunday: 7:30a.m. (No Music)
10:00 a.m. Solemn Choir Family Mass
12 noon (Gregorian Chant)
5:00p.m. (No Music)
6:00p.m. Haitian Mass (French/ Creole)

Monday through Saturday: 8:00a.m. & 12:10p.m.

Holy Days of Obligation:

- Vigil Mass (evening before): 5:15p.m.
- Holy Day: 8:00a.m., 12:10p.m. & 5:15p.m.

Confessions: (*English, Francais, Espanol, Italiano, Portugese*).

Mon-Fri: 11:30-11:50 a.m.

First Fri: 7:30a.m.- 7:50a.m. & 11:30a.m.- 11:50a.m.

Saturday: 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 7:00-7:55, 9:30-9:55, 11:30-11:55 a.m.

Anytime by appointment

Baptism

Parents must be parishioners of St. John's. Please call the parish office: (324-1553 ext. 21).

First Communion and Confirmation

For information on Religious Education, please call Fr. Walsh at (203) 324-1553 ext. 14 or at firtwalsh@catholic.org. Confirmation is a two-year program.

Sacramental Records call Ferry Galbert at the rectory, 324-1553, ext. 22.

Marriage

Engaged couples should contact one of the parish priests at least 6 months in advance of the wedding. Marriages are not performed on Sundays at St. John's. At least one member of the engaged couple should be a registered parishioner regularly attending Mass at St. John's.

Sick Calls, First Friday Communion Calls, and the Anointing of the Sick:

Our priests would be happy to bring Communion, hear Confession and administer the Sacrament of the Sick to anyone seriously ill, homebound or in the hospital. Please call the rectory: 324-1553, ext. 21.

Devotions

- Miraculous Medal Novena: Monday, following the 8:00 a.m. Mass.
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Friday, following the 8:00 a.m. Mass until 12:00 p.m.
- Daily Rosary following the 12:10 Mass: Mon-Sat.

The Basilica of St. John Bookstore Hours

Sunday: 10:45a.m. - 12 Noon.

Thursday: 11:30a.m. - 1:00p.m. (Closed during Mass)

THE HEART

- Fr. Terry Walsh

“Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God.” - Matthew 5:8

What heart! So often we hear that cry when a truly extraordinary effort takes place - one that simply leaves us awestruck and instills in us an exuberant joy. Man proves time and again that he is capable of reaching new heights through a deep interior commitment to excel. Such amazing stories capture our hearts and prompt us to peer into our own soul and ask simple, yet profound questions: ‘What have I done with the gifts that God has given me? What have I done to celebrate the blessings he has poured into my heart?’

Consider the contrasting stories of two very different experiences of Olympic Marathon runners, yet one common attribute: a *never say die* spirit. In the 1960 Rome Olympics, Ethiopian Abebe Bikila was a late substitution in the marathon for an injured teammate. Bikila didn’t have a pair of running shoes so he ran the 26 mile race barefoot and won the grueling marathon in record time. Eight years later, the Tanzanian, John Stephen Akhwari, suffered an injury while competing in the 1968 Mexico City Olympic marathon. Yet, determined to finish the race, Akhwari finally entered the sparsely populated Stadium long after the winner had broken the tape. As the safety motorcycle followed close behind him, he slowly made his way to the finish line. Those people who still remained in the stadium began to realize the extraordinary effort of this lone runner still running. Why? Akhwari would finish dead last. And yet, many other runners who began the race with him did not finish the race at all. Akhwari simply would not quit. When he was asked by a reporter why he didn’t just bow out, his now famous response was: “My country did not send me 10,000 miles to start the race – they sent me 10,000 miles to finish the race.” It is the *never say die* spirit of the human heart that is so inspiring and no doubt compels each of us to look into our own hearts and examine our interior life, perhaps asking the simple questions: ‘Will I go the distance in my daily life?’ Or, will I pull up and bow out when I am confronted with obstacles? Will I courageously dig deep for the strength to endure, to ‘complete the race’? Imagine if Michelangelo refused to paint the Sistine Chapel? After all, he considered himself to be a sculptor, not a painter. Imagine if Beethoven quenched the flame of his brilliant gift composing symphonies after being struck with the tragedy of losing his hearing? What heart! What “gutsy” effort! What a wonderful example of fortitude: courage to respond to the invitation of Grace.

On an even deeper level, of course, we look to the Saints whose unwavering faith serves as an example to inspire us as well as serving as a conduit of grace for us all. St. Paul, for instance, endured shipwrecks, beatings, imprisonment, slander, scourging, and ultimately death, all for love of God. Every time he was knocked down, he got up and moved on. He explained that each step he took for Christ ultimately served to win him the supernatural graces of the Holy Spirit. Writing to the Romans, he urges us to “fight the good fight” – that is – to seek holiness and so truly become like Christ. “Now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have gained access by faith to the grace in which we now stand, and we boast of our hope for the glory of God. And this hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us”(Romans 5: 1-2,5). Despite all the many obstacles, he pressed on. To the Corinthians, St. Paul added, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

Throughout Sacred Scripture, there is a constant emphasis on the need for a pure and faithful heart. Indeed the word Heart appears over a thousand times in the Bible and is under intense scrutiny in both the Old and the New Testaments. How often our Lord peers into the hearts of those he encounters throughout the Gospels, challenging them to embrace holiness. “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me” (Mt 15:8). Jesus challenges us to ‘go the extra mile’ and to see each experience through the eyes of faith. The world might see failure, but our Lord looks into the heart and if we are truly giving our best effort, asking him to help us, we will have brought joy to Him.

Indeed, throughout the centuries countless men and women have witnessed to their love of God through deep spiritual battles and have been victorious through their humble cooperation with Divine Grace - the Apostles and Martyrs – Mary Magdalene, Augustine, Patrick, and hosts of others. Where would we be without their monumental contribution to the faith by their example or their writings? Every day people are fighting the good fight in all the ordinary circumstances of daily life, circumstances that try our patience and test our courage and our love. When the heart is oriented to God, all things are possible.

What motivates us? Do we begin the day with an offering at the foot of the Cross and then honor that offering through acts of kindness, mercy, and love? When we allow our Lord to fill our hearts with His grace, especially through attentive prayer, reverent reception of the sacraments, and good deeds, we are allowing him to mold our hearts into more perfect likenesses of his heart. And as we cross the finish line of this life, we will be caught up in the love of the Holy Trinity for all eternity!

“ A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” -Ezekiel 36:26