



# The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist

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

**March 5, 2017 First Sunday in Lent**



**Pastor**

Rev. Msgr. Stephen M. DiGiovanni

**Parochial Vicar**

Rev. Andrew A. Vill

**Resident Priest**

Rev. Albert D. Audette, Jr.

**Director of Religious Education**

Rev. Andrew A. Vill

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**Basilica Choir Master & Organist**

David Indyk

**Chairman, Parish Financial Council**

John Regan (203) 324-1553 x 117

**Lay Members of the Parish Corporation**

John DeSoye

Annie Schreck

Photo by John Glover

***Rectory, Parish Office and Religious Education***

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**Pastor's Corner:** Throughout Lent we hear from various Old Testament prophets and patriarchs:



Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Micah, and Jonah, to name a few. They all pointed to the coming of Our Lord and His work to destroy the power of Satan and death by His Cross, thereby freeing humankind for eternity with God. Jonah is one of the most interesting, and his story captured the imagination of the ancient Church, since his being swallowed by a whale was seen as rather cool. His story was also seen in the early Church as the story of a man who at first rejected God, but who then accepted God's will, and found happiness and success.

The Old Testament Book of Jonah tells the story of his mission. God called Jonah to preach repentance to pagans in the city of Nineveh. He refused and tried to escape God, boarding a ship with pagan sailors. But God called up an enormous storm, threatening all on board. The sailors come to understand that the Jonah was the problem, and cast him overboard, whereupon Jonah was swallowed by a large fish. What could this mean? Why doesn't Jonah do what God asks of him? Simply, because he doesn't want to, and tries to run away and hide. It's very much like Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven*, in which he, too, sought to flee from God. It's not that Jonah can't do God's will; he just doesn't want to do God's will! Sound familiar? Saint Augustine, in his work *On Shepherds* [#46], wrote as a guide for priests to help them as they helped people find God. Augustine wrote that those who wish to sin cannot be permitted to remain in their sins, even though they want to sin and be left alone by Church. St. Augustine wrote his priests to ignore what the sinner wanted, since the will of Christ is stronger, and that which Christ wants—the salvation of sinners—is of greater importance even than what the sinner wants or chooses. What Jonah wanted was of no importance; God's will was greater, since its object was for Jonah's good and the good of others. So, Jonah was swallowed by the whale, and had ample time during the three days inside its belly to reflect upon the importance of doing God's will. Spewn ashore at Nineveh, Jonah is again called by God, and this time accepts to preach repentance. This time, Jonah had figured out that God meant business, and so he went about preaching. Immediately, upon hearing Jonah's call to repentance, the entire kingdom repented of their sins and did penance!

Jonah points to Christ—spewn forth from the belly of the whale on the third day, Christ is spewn forth, if you will, from the belly of the earth on the third day in the Resurrection: Christ, the New Adam, triumphant over the sin of Adam by means of His total obedience to the Father, even to death on the Cross. Jonah is a sign for us during Lent—what do you want to do, continue sinning or to submit humbly to the will of God and change your life? Sin is a matter of the person's will—I want to sin. The old comic skit, "The Devil made me do it!" is false. The Devil never forces anyone to do anything—we cooperate quite willingly in sin. Without the use of one's free will, there is no sin. Each willingly chooses to break God's commandments, and make our will in daily life unbending, even before God. Thompson expressed God's unrelenting chasing of us until we give up and agree to do what He asks of us: "Halts by me that footfall: Is my gloom, after all, Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly? 'Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest, I am He whom thou seekest! Thou drive love away from thee, who drives away Me.'" We seek happiness, imagining that we'll have it in doing what we want by misusing God's creation for our own reasons. All we find is emptiness without God. It is all a matter of the will: my will or God's in my daily life. Jonah's fulfillment and happiness came only in serving the God who loved Him. So to with us! Imitate Christ, obedient to death, in order to triumph for eternity, and to find happiness here on earth.

—**Monsignor DiGiovanni**

**Please pray for the sick:** Kimberly Rice, Jimmy Berube, Maria Travino, Maria Gabriela Mossa, Anne Touhey, Bill Rice, Diane DiNapoli, Evan Fernandez, Gayle Moore, Paula Bennett, Mildred Beirne, Karen Hsu, Silvana Smith, Harriet Lockhart, Joseph Kung, Jacqueline Domingue, Eilish Collins Main, Antonietta Cerone, Sylvia Iannazzi, A.J. Barr, William Byrnes, Jonathan Victor, Sophia Petrafesa, Donald Gerbasi, Lyn Geikie-Rice, Addison Byrne, Ruth Coyle, Elaine Shoztic.

**Please pray for those who have recently died:** John Thompson, Francesco Russo, Lillian Jacobs, Rosalie Liguori, William DeLeo, Sylvia Ardise, Rosemary Pavia Grasso, Walter Bradley, Paul Hughes, Paul Polotaye, Joyce Simoneau Rybnick, Cathy Itri, Oswaldo Diaz, Maria Imbrogno.

**American Bishops' Overseas Appeal Collection** . . . Please drop your special envelope into the **ONE** basket that will be passed at the Offertory.

**St. Joseph Votive Light Memorial:** +Joseph Taricani req. Leon Taricani

**The Lenten rules of fasting and abstinence from eating meat** apply on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday: **Fasting** refers to the cutting back on the amount of food eaten on certain days, and applies to those aged 14-60 years old, unless ill or suffering from a medical condition. **Fasting** means that only one full meal [on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday] is to be taken and NO snacking between meals. **Abstinence** from eating meat means that no meat be eaten on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and on all Fridays of Lent. This is a simple way to begin doing penance for our sins. **All Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence from eating meat for those 14 years and older, unless sickness or medical conditions prevent this. If one is ill, 60 years or older, or suffers from any medical condition, these rules do not apply.**

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

**Saturday, May 6:** 4-7:00 pm: The Kentucky Derby fundraiser in the Rectory.

**Saturday, May 13:** 5-7:00 pm: St. John's in World War I Exhibit in the parish hall.

**May 13:** 7:30-9:00 pm: Solemn Rosary, Benediction and Procession in honor of the centenary of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima.

**June 13, July 13, August 13, September 13, & October 13:** 7:30 pm: Rosary in honor of Our Lady of Fatima during this centenary year.

**Men of the Parish [ages 18 and up]:** Looking for a spiritual boost for Lent—with coffee? Every Friday morning, about 30 men of the parish meet in the Rectory at 7 a.m. for coffee, then join together for twenty minutes of prayer and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament: all completed in time to attend the 8 a.m. Mass or to go off to work. All parish men are welcome: 18 years of age and up. Just walk in the Rectory front door, go down the hall, and you'll find the coffee.

**Stations of the Cross: Fridays during Lent at 4:00pm** in English, but **NOT** on Good Friday.

**Saint Jude:** First class relics of Saint Jude the Apostle are on display during Lent on the Saint Joseph side altar. There are also novena cards for your devotion.

**Annual Catholic Appeal:** This is the annual appeal by the Diocese of Bridgeport to fund all the charitable, educational, and faith-based works of the Diocese of Bridgeport that assist thousands of people daily throughout Fairfield County. You will be contacted directly by the Diocese. Each parish in Fairfield County is given a goal: ours is \$110,000. We have collected to date: \$32,267.00. Please be generous; we need everyone's help. Our parish Appeal leaders are John & Eileen Tarleton, who have led our efforts last year so successfully. Thank you for your generosity.

**Weekly Sunday collection:**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>February 26, 2017</b>	<b>\$ 14,029.02</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>February 28, 2016</b>	<b>\$ 14,432.24</b>

Please increase your Sunday offering by \$5.00 each weekend. "I ask you one thing: do not tire of giving to God, but do not give your leftovers."---Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

**March 12th, Sunday Readings:** Gn 12:1-4a; 2 Tm 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9.

**Police:** As policemen and women are under attack throughout the country, we ask that you *Please* remember the members of our Stamford Police Department in your prayers. Likewise, remember in your prayers members of Stamford's EMS and Fire Department, and our military women and men who protect our nation.

**Sports Tickets:** Got season tickets for games? If so, please consider donating a pair to a game as auction items for the upcoming parish Kentucky Derby. Give a call to Cindy at the Rectory: 203-324-1553, ext 21.

**Project Rachel Ministry:** Offers free and confidential help to those seeking healing after abortion. Come back to God's love and mercy. Call 203-416-1619 or [projectrachel@diobpt.org](mailto:projectrachel@diobpt.org).

**Birthright:** seeks volunteers: Support women to bring their babies to term, providing pregnancy tests, connecting women with medical, financial, legal and other resources. Flexible schedules; training provided. Call 203-348-4355 or [www.birthright.org](http://www.birthright.org).

**Help End Legalized Abortion:** Abortions take place daily at Stamford's Planned Parenthood, 35 Sixth Street. Help us stop this. To join us, or for training as a Sidewalk Counselor, call Noelle at 857-345-0808.

**New Covenant House of Hospitality:** Saint John's parishioners staff the kitchens once each month to feed the homeless and less fortunate. For information, please call: 203-324-1553, ext 21.

**The Upper Room:** March 15—The Ides of March, celebrating the assassination of Julius Caesar by Brutus—for Adults 39 years of age and up, at Columbus Park Trattoria [the Upper Room], 205 Main Street in downtown Stamford, 7-9pm. Our speaker is David Bonagura, adjunct professor of theology at St. Joseph Seminary, Dunwoodie, who will speak on *Et Tu, Catholic: Caesar's Enduring Influence on Western Culture*. This is NOT a political discussion, but one about Faith and culture. Come join us—bring a friend or two for a glass of wine, some pasta and a lively conversation.

**Volunteers:** *FUTURE 5* is a non-profit organization to help motivated low income high school students in Stamford to improve themselves and their future. We need volunteers to do one-on-one student work, such as college coaches, job prep coaches, and teachers. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Fanny Moran: [fmoran@futurefive.org](mailto:fmoran@futurefive.org)

**R.C.I.A.:** Next class: **Monday, March 6th** at 7pm-8:30pm in the Rectory.  
Topic: The Sacrament of Penance, Part III: Chapter 5, (pages 336-347).

**Latin Low Mass:** In the Extraordinary Form each Friday at 2pm. Everyone is welcome.

**“Walking with Purpose”**: A program of prayer and Bible Study for Catholic women, Tuesday mornings beginning at 9:30 am in the parish hall. For more information, contact: Rosa Federici at [wwptbsj@gmail.com](mailto:wwptbsj@gmail.com) or 203-536-5480.

**Natural Family Planning & Fertility Care**: Natural Family Planning / Fertility Care – Are you seeking a family planning method that is natural, effective, and morally sound? The Creighton Model System is based upon a couple’s knowledge and understanding of their naturally-occurring phases of fertility and infertility. Engaged couples preparing for marriage, as well as married couples, and couples who are experiencing infertility issues, can all benefit from using this system. The teachers of the Creighton Model System are trained allied health professionals, and specifically-trained physicians have been educated to incorporate the Creighton Model System into their medical practice. For a FREE introductory session, please contact Angela Marchetti at [angelamarchettifcp@gmail.com](mailto:angelamarchettifcp@gmail.com).

**Baptism/Confirmation Sponsorship Certificate**: When asked to be a sponsor, a certificate is needed from your home parish. If the parish priest does not know you personally, or by sight, we can only presume you to be a practicing catholic by tracking your contributions by check or envelope. If you do not attend Mass regularly or practice your Catholic Faith, you cannot be a sponsor.

**Catholic Young Adults of Stamford**: We are Catholic young adults in our 20s and 30s, We regularly meet for social events and community service projects. Join us for our monthly Sunday dinner following 5pm Mass. Connect with us on Facebook or Meetup, or email us at [catholicystamford@gmail.com](mailto:catholicystamford@gmail.com).

**Trinity Catholic High School**: Grades 8 thru 12 - First Friday Fest - Every First Friday of the Month -Games, Adoration, Friends, Food - 7PM - 9PM.

**VIRTUS PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEERS**: - As part of the Diocese's Safe Environment Compliance Policy, any person over 18 who chooses to volunteer at the Church in any capacity, no matter how briefly, must take a class regarding child sexual abuse prevention called Virtus. There are no exceptions to this policy. For more information, call the parish secretary.

**St. Monica Latin Reading Group**: Tuesdays at 12:45 in the Rectory. We are continuing our review of ecclesiastical Latin using *Second Latin* by Cora and Charles Scanlon. We are also reading excerpts from

*Ambrosi Epistulae Variae*, letters of St Ambrose, Bishop of Milan and mentor to St Augustine. These range from letters to the Emperor to letters addressed to relatives. An intermediate reading ability in Latin is necessary. Please call the Rectory for information.

**Are you a student at UCONN Stamford?** in some on campus activities. Please contact Fr. Andy Vill, [frvill@diobpt.org](mailto:frvill@diobpt.org). We are looking for some help/interest.

**Job Seekers**: Led by Melanie Szlucha whose company, Red Inc., is a leader in helping find jobs. More info, see: [www.redinc.biz](http://www.redinc.biz) or 203-866-1606: There’s no charge. **Next meeting: Monday, March 27th at 7:30PM** - at Stamford Corners, 1455 Washington Blvd, Stamford. *Walk up the stairs, past the concierge to the club room. Go around to the left to right side conference room.*

## Mass Intentions

+ Denotes Deceased

### Saturday, March 4, 2017

4:00 In Honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus req. Margarita Arenas

### Sunday, March 5, 2017

7:30 +Cardinal Edward Egan req. Dr. Joe McAleer

10:00 Special Intentions Christopher Nana req. Heloise Nana

12:00 +Anna Young req. Family

5:00 +Monsignor Andrew Cusack

### Monday, March 6, 2017

8:00 +Patrick Kane and Family req. Estate of Catherine Kane and Family

12:10 +Ralph Cirulli req. Maude Hughes and Family

### Tuesday, March 7, 2017

8:00 Thanksgiving to Mother of God req. Anne Marie Samedi

12:10 +Ann Cody req. Cody Family

### Wednesday, March 8, 2017

8:00 +Margaret Timon req. Tom Timon

12:10 +Trinidad Sevidal Untalan req. Ted and Beth Untalan

### Thursday, March 9, 2017

8:00 +Gloria Adrian req. Dianne and Steve

12:10 +Jack Blomquist req. Anthony and Carolyn Conte

### Friday, March 10, 2017

8:00 +Mary Churley req. Mary Petrizzi

12:10 +Eileen Dietl req. Bill Christiaanse

### Saturday, March 11, 2017

8:00 Paul Gjelaj req. Hana Gjelaj

12:10 Joseph Kung req. Family

**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. For more information, please call Cindy, (203-324-1553, ext 21). Baptisms are offered for parishioners only. Baptisms are offered in English, French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese.

**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. Weddings are offered for parishioners only.

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

**The Legion of Mary**: **Wednesday Evenings**: 7:30 pm 'till 9:00 pm in the Msgr. Nagle Hall.

**St. Monica Latin Patristic Reading Group**: Tuesdays at 12:45 in the Rectory.

**Coffee Hour**: After the 10a.m. Family Mass in the Monsignor Nagle Parish Hall.

## ***ST. JOHN'S IN THE NEWS:***

### **THE STAMFORD ADVOCATE:**

#### ***155 YEARS AGO, OR SO:***

**March 7, 1862: Lent.** “Last Wednesday being Ash Wednesday, or the first day of Lent, there were the usual services in the Roman Catholic Church. This yearly fast, which takes its name from a word in the old Saxon, signifying Spring, is of great antiquity. It was solemnly observed by the early Christians as a season of self denial preparatory to the holy feast of Easter, and was kept during forty days, in commemoration of our Savior’s fasting forty days in the wilderness.”

#### ***150 YEARS AGO, OR SO:***

**March 12, 1869:** “The Roman Catholic Society have purchased a lot 200 X 100 feet, in one of the most prominent and valuable positions on Atlantic Street, from Mr. A. J. Bell, for \$12,500. We understand it is the intention of the society to build a handsome church edifice on their new purchase.”

### **THE CONNECTICUT CATHOLIC:**

#### ***130 YEARS AGO, OR SO:***

**February 14, 1885: Stamford.** “The Lenten exercises will commence on Ash Wednesday morning, when Mass will be said. The blessed ashes will be distributed in the morning and evening. There will be the usual observations in the church during Lent, as in former years. On Wednesday evening the Rosary will be recited followed by a sermon, and on Friday evenings the devotion of the cross will take place.”

### **THE STAMFORD ADVOCATE:**

#### ***100 YEARS AGO, OR SO:***

**March 7, 1913: Catholic Churches and Societies.** “The Holy Name Society of St. John’s Catholic Church will receive Holy Communion Sunday, at 7:25 a.m., and will hold a regular monthly meeting in the chapel at 7:30 p.m. Father O’Brien is giving an interesting course of short sermons at St. John’s Catholic Church on Sunday evenings. On last Sunday he had for his subject “The Catacombs.”

### **THE NEW YORK TIMES:**

#### ***10 YEARS AGO, OR SO:***

**March 12, 2009: Confession Makes a Comeback.** “The day after Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni was installed in June 1998 as pastor of St. John’s, he walked through the quiet sanctuary. One particular sight seized him. The confessional at the rear of the church had been nailed shut. So in his first month as pastor, he pried open the door to the rear confessional, wiped off the dust of decades and arranged for replacing the lights, drapes and tiles. Then, in the fall of 1998, Msgr. DiGiovanni rolled back the clock of Catholic practice, having St. John’s priests hear confession in the booths before virtually every Mass. Confessions are now heard in English, Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese.”

## **Daily & Weekend Mass Schedule:**

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

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

**Sunday:** 7:30 a.m. (No Music)  
10:00 a.m. Family Mass  
12 noon Solemn Mass (Gregorian Chant)  
5:00 p.m. (No Music)

## **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: 7:30 a.m.- 7:50a.m. & 11:30a.m.- 11:50a.m.

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

Sunday: 7:00-7:25, 9:30-9:55, 11:30-11:55 a.m.

Anytime by appointment in the Rectory.

## **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 e-mail [religioused@stjohnsstamford.com](mailto:religioused@stjohnsstamford.com), attention Fr. Vill. Confirmation is a two-year program.

**Sacramental Records** call the parish secretary, Mon-Fri: 9am - 4pm.in the rectory, 324-1553, ext. 21.

## **Marriage**

Engaged couples [**bride or groom must be a St. John’s parishioner and attending Sunday Mass regularly**] should contact one of the St. John’s parish priests at least 6 months in advance of the wedding. Marriages are not performed on Sundays 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)

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