



The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist

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

December 31, 2017 The Feast of the Holy Family



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: Once God became a man, born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, everything changed: the relationship between creation and the now Incarnate-Creator became the heart of all existence, and the way we live should become different than if He had never become a man. Since the first Christmas, the personal happiness and fate of each person is now be determined by our daily response to this God become man in each of our lives.

God would touch the hearts of each human person born, and their response to that Divine intervention would be seen, not merely in words theological, but in lives spiritual, clear and distinct in their bearing witness either that God became a man to change us into sharers of His eternal life, or witness that we really don't care about God or eternity, but only about our personal here-and-now.

The saints give us such examples of men and women who succeeded in responding to the Incarnation actually, in daily lives and not merely in daily words or pretty religious sentiments. They are God bearers in their unbelieving centuries and cultures; their love for God formed their very thoughts and motivated their every deed. Since we are blessed in the parish with numerous relics of saints—rather real proofs that living to please God was possible in years past and is possible in the present, I would like to point out some rather interesting saints during this Christmas season.

On the high altar are two tower-like reliquaries: 19th century English works of superb craftsmanship of carved brass, donated by a parishioner. Each bears relics of saints: that on the left contains a large bone of Saint Constantine: the more imaginative of his biographers said he was the nephew of King Arthur! Actually, he came from Scotland, married the daughter of the King of Brittany and, after her untimely death, renounced his crown to become a monk, worked with Saint Columba in Ireland and St. Kentigern in South-West Scotland. He was elected abbot of his monastery and bishop on the Island of Kintyre, and while preaching God's Incarnate mercy in Christ to local pagans, he was martyred in 576 A.D. He spent his life preaching God's mercy, hoping that those who heard him would respond in faith and charity.

In the right-hand reliquary, are the relics of Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of Our Lady, along with the relic of Saint Stephen, the first martyr. The legend of Joachim and Anne is that they were an elderly couple, who were unable to have children. Mocked by their neighbors, they separated, and prayed for divine guidance. Their prayers heard, and sent back to each other by God, their love and God's grace finally accomplished the seeming impossible: Saint Anne conceived, and her daughter, Mary, would become the Mother of Our Lord, whose birth as a man we celebrate on December 25th. They trusted entirely in God and His promises, and found happiness by being able to participate in bringing salvation to the world. Saint Stephen, a contemporary of Our Lady's parents, of Our Lady, Our Lord and the Apostles, Stephen was one of the first deacons, as spoken of in the *Acts of the Apostles*, 6-7. Because of his forceful preaching and charity, he converted many. The Temple leaders were unhappy with his successes, had him dragged outside the walls of Jerusalem, and stoned to death. As he was dying, he prayed for the one who led his murderers: Saul, who changed his name to Paul. Stephen's prayers, witness of God's mercy in the flesh and charity towards his persecutors, even as he was dying, are said to have brought Paul to conversion. Saint Paul would work with Saint Peter as the two Princes of the Apostles, the founders of the Church in Rome. Stephen's feast is December 26th, to remind us the day after Christmas that the birth of the Savior is serious business: neither Satan nor many people like the reality of God coming into the world, because it makes God too real, and demands an equally real personal response by us to God: we accept Him and live to please Him; or reject Him, and ignore Him in our daily lives.

These people, not really different from ourselves, understood that because God had become a man at a certain time and in a certain place, everything is changed: the Creator had become a man to reconcile all creation with the Father. These saints knew that their lives would bear immense importance by doing one thing: loving the God who took on human flesh, in their words and deeds, in order to share in the victory of the Christ born in Bethlehem, crucified and risen from the dead in Jerusalem. These saints are remembered around the world by millions of people throughout the centuries to the present today. Can you remember the names of the kings, princes or presidents who ruled when these saints lived? Can you name any public figures of their times, or politicians or any of the shakers and movers who lived in the same cities where these saints lived? No. Yet it is these saints who are remembered because they responded to the Divine Generosity manifest at Bethlehem: they lived to please the God who became man, so that one day they could share God's very life. Let's do the same: kneel at the altar rail after Mass today, and say a prayer to Saints Joachim and Anne the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to the martyrs Saints Constantine and Stephen: we share the same Faith with them, and are part of the same Body of Christ, the Catholic Church, in which they are still members with us. Pray to imitate them in the New Year, since they imitated Christ perfectly, so we may all meet one day in Heaven. —**Monsignor DiGiovanni**

Please pray for the sick: Loretta Wallace, Elma Hefferna, Michael Scully, Roger Borrelli , Nyal Colies, Dorothy Keyes, Joanne Santarsiero, Joevil Basulgan DelaCruz, Mary Duffy, Louise Morello, Joanne Santarsiero, Pat Farenga, Kenyon Jimmy Valcour, Maria Izurieta, Jennifer Marciano, John Mellace, Ann Borkowski, Timothy Lyons, Gene Gavin, Richard Ridge, June Roberts, Marie Cassis, Patricia Morgan, Vittorio Faugno, Robert Strada, Dionysia Oliveira, Salvatore Piria, Mary Ellen Callahan, Louise Wiles, Frank Wruk, Isaac Lopez, Ron Frasca, Lisa Giugno, Michele Giugno, Helga Pecaric, Maria Trivino, Maria Gabriela Mossa, Diane DiNapoli, Gayle Moore, Paula Bennett, Mildred Beirne, Karen Hsu, Silvana Smith, Harriet Lockhart, Joseph Kung.

Please pray for those who have recently died: Carmen Colon Diaz, Kathryn Anne Marciano, Marilyn VanAuken, Joyce Patten, Katherine Kimberly, Mary Louise Wakin, David Kochosky, Jonathan Shearman, Debbie Schemmel, Ralph Dante Puzzuoli, Sr., James Tarzia, Sr., Antonietta Cerone, Mary A. Gaine, Grace Steele, Benita Rebula, Sylvia Iannazzi, Anne Hieronymus, Julia Fabrizio, Msgr. Joseph Kohut, Steven Bates, Catherine Dolan, Cesidro Piselli, John & Joan Kronk.

Banns of Marriage: I Banns: Matthew David Almeida and Deborah Freier

Solemnity of Mary Envelope: Please drop your Solemnity of Mary envelope into the **ONE** basket that will be passed at the Offertory. There will only be one collection today.

Police: 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 Stamford's EMS and Fire Department and our military women and men who protect our nation.

FORMED: Donated by a parishioner, this is a revolutionary online platform provides access to the best Catholic audio talks, movies, e-books, and video-based studies from trusted providers like the Augustine Institute, Ignatius Press, Catholic Answers, Sophia Institute Press, and St. Paul Center– **right at your fingertips, without cost.** Learn more at app.formed.org/ Access Code WWT2NF.

Children's Choir: Ages 8-18 who are interested. Please speak with our choir master, David Indyk or leave your contact information in the parish office, 203-324-1553, ext 21.

Men's Choir: Men who can even just hum a tune are welcome: contact David Indyk in person, or leave your contact information at the parish office, 203-324-1553, ext 21.

Sacraments for students in Catholic School: If you have students in Catholic school in Second Grade hoping to receive First Confession and First Communion this Spring, please contact Fr. Vill at religioused@stjohnsstamford.com.

Not Married in the Catholic Church? Please call the parish 203) 324-1553, and speak with either Msgr. DiGiovanni (ext. 11) or Fr. Vill at (ext. 130) to make an appointment, to discuss the Church's teaching on marriage and the possibility of getting married in the Church. This also applies to those who want to learn more about seeking an annulment.

Preaching to Baby Jesus: A pious practice begun by Saint Francis of Assisi is that children of the parish enter the pulpit and tell Baby Jesus their thoughts and hopes. The children of our religious education program will do this each Sunday at 9 am until early February. All are welcome to attend.

DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY: Interested in reading Dante? We'll begin during Lent [March 8th] with the *Inferno*, which is not a torture tour, but a meditation on God's plan for human happiness by loving Him, and humankind's search for happiness that too often leads away from God to through real life folly that ends invariably to unhappiness, pain and suffering in this life and in the next. NO Charge: just purchase the book. Interested? Call Msgr. DiGiovanni, 203-324-1553, ext 11.

Baptism/Confirmation Sponsorship Certificate: When asked to be a sponsor, a certificate is needed from your home parish. If the priest does not know you personally, or by sight, the only other way of knowing you as a practicing Catholic is by tracking your contributions by check or envelope.

Latin Mass in the Extraordinary Form: Is offered every Friday at 2pm on the Saint Joseph Altar.

Weekly Sunday collection:

Sunday	December 24, 2017	\$ 11,751.00
Sunday	December 20, 2015	<u>\$ 14,019.48</u>
Sunday	December 25, 2017	\$ 22,192.00
Sunday	December 25, 2016	<u>\$ 28,402.52</u>

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

January 7th Sunday Readings: IS 60:1-6; EPH 3:2-3A, 5-6; MT 2:1-12

Saints' Relics: During the Christmas season, two gilded relic towers will be displayed on the high altar:

Left Relic Tower: contains the relics of Saint Constantine, a early sixth century king and martyr who worked preaching with St. Columba and was martyred in Scotland in 574 A.D.;

Right Relic Tower: contains the relics of Saints Joachim and Anne, the parent of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Saint Stephen, the first martyr to die in witness to Christ soon after Jesus' death and resurrection.

Walking with Purpose: Reaches out to women who desire to grow in their faith using a Scripture based program that is fresh, relevant, and focused on conversion of heart. We meet Tuesday mornings in Msgr. Nagle Hall from 9:30am-11:30am. Childcare is available. **Register at: tinyurl.com/WWPTBSJ2017.**

For more information, contact Rosa Federici at: wwptbsj@gmail.com or 203-536-5480.

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

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

End Legalized Abortion: Abortions take place daily at Stamford's Planned Parenthood, 35 Sixth Street. Help us stop this by joining parishioners in front of the facility on Wednesday or Friday mornings, 8am-10:30am, or even just for 30 minutes. We pray and silently bear witness to the sanctity of human life. Our presence has even helped convince expectant mothers to spare their children. To join us, or for specialized training as a Sidewalk Counselor, call Noelle at 857-345-0808.

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. We also need tutors. We currently have a new student who needs a tutor in Japanese. For more information or to volunteer and/or tutor, please contact Fanny Moran: fmoran@futurefive.org

Save the date: The next Faith on Tap will be Tuesday, January 23, 2018 from 7-9pm at Murphy's Townhouse. Stay tuned for the speaker and topic!

Religious Education: Classes for all students grades Kindergarten through 7th grade will resume on Sunday, January 7, 2018. Classes begin at 8:30am and end promptly at 9:45am. Please be on time.

Lost & Found...Please check the Lost & Found in the Rectory for any items you may have left in the church. Feel free to call Keri at the Rectory, M-F, 9AM-4:30PM, 203-324-1553 x21.

Please do not leave valuables in the pews, especially when you go to Communion. Please do not light candles during Communion.

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 anglamarchettifcp@gmail.com

Homeplace Wisdom: Is a Catholic women’s organization promoting friendship and vocational development with monthly speakers and gatherings, play dates, and a daily email list for sharing ideas, prayer requests, parenting or home-place questions, and reading material. To join: lisakotasek@gmail.com

SilverSource: SilverSource is available to St. John’s parishioners both as a place to volunteer or an important resource to help parishioners as we age. SilverSource is looking for volunteers to help older adults live as independently as possible by reaching out to say “hello”, reading and visiting a senior, or running to the market. St. John’s parishioners who are seniors and require some help can receive financial assistance for housing stability, for eye glasses and hearing aids, or for transportation to and from doctor’s appointments. Call Michael Feighan: 203-324-6584, or website: www.silversource.org.

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

Employment: Malta House in Norwalk is a transitional residence to promote the dignity of God-given life by providing a nurturing home environment, support services and independent living skills for pregnant and parenting mothers of all faiths and their children. Looking for a **House Manager** , anyone may apply for this position by forwarding a cover letter/resume to: John Hinshaw: John_Hinshaw@goodcounselhomes.org We are located at: 5 Prowitt Street, Norwalk, CT. 06855.

Job Seekers: Led by Melanie Szlucha whose company, Red Inc., is a leader in helping find jobs. Jobseeker's Group will not be meeting during November and December, but please call or email Melanie Szlucha for a free 30 minute consultation. Meetings will resume in January in the Monsignor Nagle Hall the 4th Wednesday of every month from 7:30 to 9PM. Topics include Job Interviewing, Resumes, Networking and Job Search Strategies. Next meeting: Wednesday, January 24th. **THERE IS NO CHARGE**, this is free job coaching. Call Melanie Szlucha at 203-866-1606, or melanie@redinllc.com

Electronic Giving - Offertory Donations Made Easy...Consider using your credit card to make your weekly or monthly donation to St. John’s. Easier for you, and less costly for the parish than the printing and mailing of weekly envelopes, credit card giving automatically sends your weekly offering to the Basilica of St. John’s. Call the parish secretary to set this up(324-1553, ext. 21).

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: “The Eaglet,” the parish blog on our Basilica website, www.stjohnsstamford.com, is up and running, featuring a variety of thought-provoking articles on the Catholic Faith and Church. Feedback is welcome and discussion is encouraged, via a comments form at the end of each article. Please bookmark the page, visit often, and share the link with your family and friends.

Mass Intentions

+ Denotes Deceased

Saturday, December 30, 2017

4:00 Nelson and Maria Vargas req. family

Sunday, December 31, 2017

7:30 +Catherine Olnek req. Sharon Gannon

10:00 +Theresa Pereira req. Abdul and Sarah Aslam

12:00 Thanksgiving to God req. Ferry G.

5:00 +Fr. Rufin Kuveikis, OFM, Cap.

Monday, January 1, 2018

8:00 +Charles Cycon req. Thomas Cycon

12:10 +Joseph Comunale req. Mossa Family

Tuesday, January 2, 2018

8:00 +Charles Wentworth req. Frank and Beth Carpanzano

12:10 +Bryan Sclafani req. Mossa Family

Wednesday, January 3, 2018

8:00 +Dan McCarthy req. Erin and Chris Fisher

12:10 +Justine Lapolice req. Lisa and Darrell Ingram

Thursday, January 4, 2018

8:00 +Martin Alonzo req. Thomas Walsh

12:10 +Fr. Joseph Amato req. Lisa and Darrell Ingram

Friday, January 5, 2018

8:00 In Honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus req. Anne Marie Samedi

12:10 +Frank Verrastro req. Uncle Ed Nemchek

Saturday, January 6, 2018

8:00 +Lou Augustin req. Jennie Sorese

12:10 +Patsy Denicola req. Pinto 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 Keri, ([203-324-1553](tel: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, Keri, 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: The St Monica Latin Reading Group meets on Tuesdays. Please call St John's Rectory, 203 324 1553, ext. 21, for more information.

ST. JOHN'S IN THE ADVOCATE:

155 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 4, 1860: "New Year's day passed off quietly, so quietly that we, who have always been accustomed to the noise and gaiety and rushing about of one half the city calling upon the other half, could hardly bring ourselves to believe that this was the veritable "Happy New Year." It being the feast of the Circumcision, there was Mass in the Roman Catholic Church."

125 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 2, 1891: St. John's R. C. Church. "The Christmas services this year in St. John's R. C. church were largely attended and were satisfactory in every respect. To see the long line of worshippers wending their way to this beautiful temple of worship at 5 o'clock in the morning was something which those who beheld it will not soon forget. There was not sitting room in the church for all who were present, and a low estimate will make the number at least 1,500. Rev. T. J. Keena was celebrant of the early Mass. The church was finely decorated with evergreens, and at 7:30, Mass was celebrated by Father Rogers. There was also a 10:30 Mass by Father Carroll. All of the Masses were well attended and the music was of a high order, showing not only great taste but great preparation. In the evening there were vespers and the benediction at 7:30, at which there was a very large attendance."

105 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 7, 1910: Proceeds for Philanthropy. "There was an entertainment, last night, in St. John's parochial school hall, under the auspices of St. Ann's Ladies' Aid Society which is interested in philanthropic work, and the proceeds went into the fund for that work. A pretty feature of the entertainment was a gypsy dance, given by a group of children from St. John's parochial school. John Klinger gave a recitation, and Arthur Lee sang. This was followed by dancing."

100 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 6, 1917: "A merry time is in store for those intending to participate in Monday night's "social" under the auspices of the Parochial School Alumni Association in St. John's Parish Hall. Although the evening is one set aside by the committee as an open night for the entire parish, with a select entertainment provided expressly for the older folks, the dancing, which will follow, will make a stronger appeal to the younger generation. The customary invitation regarding the refreshments is extended to the fair sex."

85 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 6, 1932: "The January Court of Honor session of the Stamford Council BSA was held, last evening. Scouts Henry Moransky and Robert Graham, both of Troop 22, sponsored by St. John's R.C. Church, qualifying for Eagle Scout, the highest Scout award."

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
12noon 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, Deutsch).

Mon-Fri: 11:30-11:50 a.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 religious@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)

Church Information

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