



The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist

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

January 14, 2018 The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time



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

religioused@stjohnsstamford.com

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

Tel: (203) 324-1553 x 21

Fax: (203) 359-2660

Website: www.stjohnsstamford.com

E-mail Address: stjc@optonline.net

Pastor's Corner: *MONEY, SEX & POWER!* And anyone with a television, computer, iPhone, iPad, or who might still peruse a newspaper or magazine, is bombarded with ads & stories sex, money & power daily. Not only is sex *savvy* marketing, it is publicly touted that everyone must have sexual relations with some one or something on a regular basis—just like regularly brushing your teeth. Those whose lives lack regular sexual activity are judged *strange*, and sexual abstinence and virginity, definitely antiquated, valued only by the socially non-adroit, or by the garden variety religious fanatic. Anyone can be used for anything you want: people are only things, at least in the common wisdom of the marketplace. Many may never verbally state that as real, but many state that as true by their actions—People exist to be used as things, especially if money, sex & power are involved. ***The reality is otherwise:*** In our world, sex has been degraded; people have been debased, and, both people and sex are now *simply* tools to be used, to get what we want or to sell what we have.

On January 21st the Church commemorates the martyrdom of a young girl, Saint Agnes, who died during the last persecution of the Church by the Roman Empire, under the Emperor Diocletian, in 303 A.D. This year the feast day is bumped since it is a Sunday, so much more reason to highlight this young saint.

Agnes was 12 years old [marrying age in 4th century Rome], the beautiful daughter of wealthy noble parents. While “her beauty and riches excited the young noblemen of the first families in Rome”, as Dom Alban Butler wrote in his “Lives of the Saints”, Agnes responded repeatedly that she had one spouse already: Christ, to whom she had vowed her virginity. Frustrated in their pursuit of the girl’s wealth and beauty, these young, wealthy, socially advanced and adept young men, angered that Agnes was unwilling to satisfy their lusts for power, money or sex, reported to the governor that she was a Christian, an enemy of Rome. Her suitors and the governor, knowing the family and the girl, thought that the mere suggestion of a trial and torture would be sufficient to frighten and wear Agnes down so she would relent and marry herself and her fortune to one of them. Yet, to the consternation of all, neither pleasant words, nor threats nor even the sight of instruments of torture could weaken her resolve to be faithful to her Heavenly spouse. “You may”, she said, “stain your sword with my blood, but will never be able to profane my body consecrated to Christ.”

There was more going on here than simply a young girl protecting her virtue for Christ. Like today, sex, money & power were all too often closely linked. The Emperor Diocletian put a new spin on his persecution of Catholics: Now, if a nobleman or official of the Imperial Court was found to be a practicing Christian, his fortune, lands and all possessions could be confiscated by the state, and a cut given to the person who turned the Christian in to the authorities, unless he publicly disavowed Christ. In Agnes’ case, that meant that her personal fortune could be confiscated by the local Imperial officials, unless she broke her vow of virginity to Christ and denied her faith in public. If her suitors could not succeed in depriving her of virtue or religion, the state officials and suitors could. It was now financially and politically worthwhile to kill Christians.

The great 4th century Church Father, Saint Ambrose, continues the story,

“Was her little body really large enough to receive the sword’s thrust? She was hardly big enough to be struck, yet was great enough to overcome—and then at an age when little girls cannot bear a mother’s stern look and think a needle’s jab a mortal wound. Agnes did not tremble when in the executioner’s bloody hand nor cringe at the harsh sound of chains. She did not know yet how to die, but was ready. Dragged to the pagan altar, she extended her hands to Christ in the flames of the pagan sacrifice, and turned the sacrilegious fire into a victor’s banner. She offered her neck and hands to the fetters, but they were too large for her tiny limbs.” [On Virgins, Book 1]

Finally, Agnes was led outside the City and beheaded: she courageously bent her head, praying for her persecutors, while the executioner, terrified and trembling, dispatched her with one stroke. From the moment of her burial, her tomb became a site of pilgrimage, embellished after the Peace of the Church in 313 by the Emperor Constantine, who built a small basilica over her tomb on the Via Nomentana.

For centuries since, there, each January 21st the pope would send an archbishop as his special emissary to bless two white lambs: each crowned with red and white roses, carried into the church by twelve young girls, likewise crowned with red and white roses. Hundreds of people crowd the small church built above Agnes’ tomb, and join in the prayers of blessing, after which the lambs are taken away [in a Vatican Mercedes!!], to the convent of Saint Cecilia across the Tiber, where, once grown, their fleece is shorn, and is woven into a number of palia: liturgical stoles of white wool with black crosses, which are placed within the Tomb of Saint Peter in the Vatican. The Holy Father gives these to newly-named archbishops on June 29th, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, as a sign that their authority comes from Peter through his successor the Pope, and that apostolic authority to preach and teach is linked with the virtue in personal life, both symbolized by the wool of the lambs blessed at the tomb of Saint Agnes. Virtue and Faith: essentially linked. Saint John, our parish patron, relates how highly virginity for Christ was held in the early Church: in the *Book of Revelation*, virgins are the companions of the Lamb of God, following Him wherever He goes [Rev xiv, 1-5].

Sex, money & power! But sexual relations outside a marriage of a man and a woman lead to disastrous unhappiness: because, if we use one another for personal pleasure, then we debase one another. All we become are things to be used, commodities to be traded, and then tossed away. By doing this, we cheapen ourselves and we cheapen sexual love. For, we are not things to be used: we are the Image of God. It was true then, in the days of St. Agnes, and still true today. Let us teach our children to value purity and to practice it in daily life: preferring, as did Saint Agnes, to please Christ by loving virtue, and find true happiness, rather than using sexuality for personal gain or pleasure. If we try actively to please God, we will never harm anyone, because we will not use anyone as a thing or object, for all are the Image of God.—**Monsignor DiGiovanni**

Please pray for the sick: Loretta Wallace, Elma Hefferna, Michael Scully, Roger Borrelli , Nyal Colies, Dorothy Keyes, 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: Joanne Santarsiero, 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. Gainé, 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: III Banns: Matthew David Almeida and Deborah Freier

Special Energy Collection . . . The second collection today will be the Special Energy Collection to help pay the Higher Energy and Fuel Costs for the parish. Your generosity is appreciated.

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: Our readings will begin on March 7th at 7:30pm in the Rectory. We will read a new translation of Dante: *Inferno* translated by Anthony Esolen, The Modern Library, New York, 2002. The parish bookstore will purchase a number of copies and will sell them at cost to those who wish to read Dante beginning on March 7th at 7:30pm in the Rectory. Feel free to purchase your own copy, however. If anyone is interested in joining us, please phone Msgr. DiGiovanni: 203-324-1553, ext 11.

Weekly Sunday collection:

Sunday	January 7, 2018	\$ 14,670.34
Sunday	January 8, 2017	<u>\$ 10,806.15</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 21st Sunday Readings: JON 3:1-5,10; 1COR 7:29-31; MK 1:14-20

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.

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.

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 30, 2018 from 7-9pm at Murphy's Townhouse. Living Evangelical Poverty in a world of Materialism by Fr. Stephen CFR.

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 angela_marchettifcp@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, January 13, 2018

4:00 +Thomas Diffley req. Jimmy and Michelle Sagdati

Sunday, January 14, 2018

7:30 +James F. Berger req. Family

10:00 +Catherine Morris 33rd Anniversary req. Marion Morris and Family

12:00 +Maria Preziosi 25th Anniversary req. Marion Morris and Family

5:00 + Louise Epting

Monday, January 15, 2018

8:00 +Lupangelo Vaccarella req. Lawrence and Kathleen Bolanowski

12:10 +Paul Hughes req. Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Ingram

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

8:00 Alexandra and Gertha Laurent

12:10 +Beverly DiBlasio req. Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Ingram

Wednesday, January 17, 2018

8:00 +Daniel Finley

12:10 +Regina L. Grier req. Grace and Joseph Violone

Thursday, January 18, 2018

8:00 +Mary Milano req. Angela and John Paul Marchetti

12:10 +Barend van den Brink req. Carol and Bill Christiaanse

Friday, January 19, 2018

8:00 +Helene R. Guinee req. Angela and John Paul Marchetti

12:10 +Lorraine Beldoti req. Pinto Family

Saturday, January 20, 2018

8:00 Mandy Richardson req. Mainville Family

12:10 +Vincenza and Joseph Saglimbeni req. Mary Bridget Gaine

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:

145 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 15, 1875: Lecture on "The Jesuits."

"Honorable W. C. Robinson, of New Haven, is announced to deliver a lecture on the above subject in the Town Hall Sunday evening. That the lecturer will be greeted with a good house is a foregone conclusion, for he is known as an eloquent speaker who handles an interesting subject with great ability, and the proceeds are for the benefit of the new Catholic church building on Atlantic Street, an enterprise which is being pushed forward with vigor, and which requires all the help its friends can give it."

105 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 15, 1913: Holy Name Society Elects Officers.

"At the regular meeting of the Holy Name Society of St. John's R. C. Church, officers for the ensuing year were elected, and further arrangements were also made for the euchre which the society will hold in the Parish Hall, Jan. 31. The officers for the ensuing year are: President, Thomas Keegan; vice-president, John C. O'Connor; secretary William Hyland; treasurer, Rev. N. P. Coleman."

95 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 17, 1921: BISHOP MURRAY DEFINES

MANHOOD. "At the meeting of St. John's Holy Name Society, held last evening in the Alhambra Theatre, Rt. Rev. John G. Murray, Auxiliary Bishop of Connecticut, and David E. Fitzgerald, Mayor of New Haven, delivered addresses, the first on "The Holy Name Society and Catholic Manhood," and the latter on "The Holy Name Society and Citizenship." Senator Matthew H. Kenealy was chairman of the meeting. The local Catholic clergy and those from nearby towns occupied a box, and the local and out-of-town officers of the society sat upon the stage. The theatre was filled to its entire seating capacity."

85 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 21, 1932: Children of Mary to Have Social

Jan. 27. "The Children of Mary of St. John's R. C. Church will give a social on Wednesday, January 27, in St. John's School hall, and will have as their guests the Children of Mary of the Sacred Heart Church."

45 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Jan. 18, 1974: 1,000 Expected At. Ecumenical

Service Scheduled For St. John's. "St. John's Roman Catholic Church—one of the largest church edifices in Stamford—is to be the site of a service for Christian unity involving all the denominations of Stamford. With the joint sponsorship of the Stamford-Darien Council of Churches and Synagogues and the Roman Catholic Vicariate of Stamford, a congregation of about 1,000 persons is anticipated. Addressing the gathering will be the Very Rev. James P. Morton, Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (Episcopal), New York City."

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, Portuguese, 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 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)