



The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist

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

February 18, 2018

The First Sunday of 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

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John Regan (203) 324-1553 x 117

Lay Members of the Parish Corporation

John DeSoye

Annie Schreck

Photo by John Glover

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Pastor's Corner: What do you want from life? That is the basis of another question: What is the goal of Lent? This



isn't so arcane as you might think, because, where you fit God into your life determines not just the "what" you want from life, but the "how" by which you can achieve what you want from life. Each year we go through these Lenten 40 days; but, why? The goal is to turn our minds and hearts—our desires—in a direction that is profitable. By *profitable*, I mean, towards that which will make us *happy*. Usually, when one thinks of "desire" for something that will make us happy, we imagine the immediate satisfying of some urge or fantasy. We push God out of the way, even in our thoughts, and misconstrue the immediate satisfaction of our bodily urges or fantasies for happiness. Our true happiness comes when we do that which we were designed to do: to please God and by doing that which pleases the God who loves us, rather than by merely and temporarily satisfying our every desire. Love for God urges us to do more. St. Paul reminds us of our real status as slaves to our sins [Rom 6:15 ff]. And all the time you thought you were the boss of your own life. *Silly Rabbit*. . . as the cereal advert once ran. Christ offers liberation from the tyranny of sin and death, and, as an extra bonus of His love, eternal life as His co-heirs of eternity.

All that, just for trying to please Him now, not merely in thought, but in deed. Continuing to sin is like insisting that you love your wife, while you continue to go out with your girl friend; you can't insist that you love God, while continuing to sin, acting as if He didn't exist [1 John 2:3-4].

One of the Church's most famous sinner-turned-saint, Saint Augustine, was an expert at this. He sought to "scratch every itch", as the saying goes. For him, running after women and seeking fame and fortune were the most important things in life, because he believed he was the most important person in his life and, so, he determined that was what he'd do to be happy. He believed in God, but God was not real enough for Augustine to change the way he lived, since God was an idea and not as real as Augustine's personal urges, fantasies and ambitions. That was Augustine's primary error: if we don't first treat God as God, then we treat ourselves as God, and so we tend to treat others as things, so we can use anyone, hurt anyone, cheat everyone, simply because we want whatever we want in life, and that justifies whatever we do. We are first, and everyone else is second, because God really doesn't exist in our lives, at least not enough to affect how we live. Or, because we've created an idea of God, and worship that idea instead of the true God. Here's Saint Augustine:

"The whole life of a believing Christian is, after all, a holy desire. What you desire, you do not yet see, but your desire enables you to be filled with seeing when the time for seeing comes. A comparison: If you want to fill a bag with something very big, you stretch the mouth of it; the object is big and the mouth small, but by stretching the mouth you make it bigger. In like manner, God expands our desire by deferring fulfillment; through desire He stretches the soul and makes it able to hold more. . . What, then, are we to do in this life where we do not yet lay hold of what we desire? St. Paul wrote, 'I forget what is behind and stretch out to what is ahead, intent on the goal of heavenly calling,' This is our life's purpose: to practice desire. But we can cultivate holy desire only to the extent that we detach our desire from the world. You are to be filled with good things from God; you must first empty yourself of evil. Suppose God wanted to fill you with honey, but you were already filled with vinegar! You must empty yourself of vinegar, be cleansed, even with laborious scrubbing, so that you may be fit to be filled with something better" [Commentary on the First Letter of John, Treatise 4].

Pope Saint Gregory the Great put it this way: "Some people are so *simple* that they do not know what is right. But true simplicity is marked by genuine innocence, and the *non-virtuous* do not have it. Simplicity is a passionate enthusiasm for what is good. . . Some people are not simple in their actions, for they seek external satisfaction rather than inner spiritual rewards. We cannot go down two roads at the same time: when we outwardly do what God commands, but harbor worldly desires. A person fully avoids evil and sin when he begins, out of love for God, to sin no more. As long as he does good only out of fear, however, he does not fully avoid evil; for we sin by the very fact that we would like to sin if we could do so without punishment" [Moralia in Job, Book 1]. The point is to get rid of the desire to sin.

Lent is the annual season during which we strive to turn our desires from satisfying ourselves in sinful pursuits and desires, and work for true happiness that comes from loving God here and now. After we stop doing evil actions, then we can move on to stop desiring to do or dreaming of doing what is morally wrong. For sin is not just doing evil actions; a sin is knowing the doing of something is evil, and nevertheless desiring to do it, and then actually doing it. This is a question of real life actions and the real life exercise of your free will for avoiding evil and doing good. The first thing we should all do is to go to Confession, to repent of our sins, turn our hearts from sin, and receive God's forgiveness. This is the "scrubbing" out of ourselves of the bitter residue of sin [*vinegar*, as Augustine says, above], so that God may fill us with *honey*, His very life. Try it this year: you'll be much happier by Easter, having rid yourself of bad and sinful desires and habits, and learned to want to do good, because you love God, and you desire to please Him above everything and in everything.

—Monsignor DiGiovanni

Please pray for the sick: Janet Caione, Joseph Kung, Rosemarie Drexel, Loretta Wallace, Michael Scully, Roger Borrelli, Nyal Colies, Dorothy Keyes, Joevil Basulgan Delacruz, Mary Duffy, Pat Farenga, Kenyon Jimmy Valcour, 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, Paula Bennett, Mildred Beirne.

Please pray for those who have recently died: Art Reynolds, Lena Cocchia, Pasquale [Pat] Santagata, Elma Hefferna, Anne Mennona, Emile Maignan, Regina Derrisaint, Joanne Santarsiero, Carmen Colon Diaz, Kathryn Anne Marciano, Marilyn VanAuken, Joyce Patten, Katherine Kimberly, Mary Louise Wakin, David Kochosky, Jonathan Shearman, Debbie Schemmel, Susanne and Suzanne DePreta.

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

Banns of Marriage: I Banns: Christopher Michael Kearney and Alexis Teresa Giaquinto

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.

Virtual Tour of the Basilica: Click on the parish website www.stjohnsstamford.com for a virtual tour of the interior, created and donated by Jonathan Powell of Matterport. Thanks, Jonathon!

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 or soft drinks or coffee, tea, alcohol consumed 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, or on any 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 and practices do not apply.

Stations of the Cross: Each Friday during Lent at 4:00 pm in English in the Basilica.

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.

The Upper Room: For Catholics 39 years and older will next meet on March 15th at The Upper Room in Columbus Park Trattoria for "Stump the Priest Night." Bring your questions and a friend. All are welcome.

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 (324-1553, ext. 21).

Upcoming Admissions Events at Regina Caeli: www.rcahybrid.org *Spring Open House— **Saturday, March 3rd, 3-5pm**. Location: 254 Danbury Road, Wilton (Located inside Wilton Baptist Church); includes a tour of our facilities, a short presentation, and time for questions and answers! Refreshments served; children are welcome! * You CAN Home School High School. A High School Information Session— **Sunday, March 4th, 2-4pm**. Location: Saint Lawrence Church Parish Center, 505 Shelton Ave, Shelton. RSVP with Mary Grunbok, Coordinator of Education, mgrunbok.fcc@rcahybrid.org or call (203) 701-9154. Bring your questions and get answers!

Weekly Sunday collection:

Sunday	February 11, 2018	\$ 12,420.32
Sunday	February 12, 2017	<u>\$9,577.57</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

February 25th Sunday Readings: GN 22:1-2, 9A, 10-13, 15-18; Rom 8:31B—34; MK 9:2-10

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.

Saint Peter: The bronze statue of Saint Peter is vested in pontifical vestments in honor of the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter celebrated throughout the Church on February 22nd. Pray for the present Successor of Saint Peter, Pope Francis.

Lenten Plenary Indulgence: A plenary indulgence is the remission of punishment due for sin, which the Catholic Church has the authority to offer as part of Our Lord’s concession to St. Peter in the power of the keys [Matt. 16:18] to forgive sins. On Fridays during Lent, a plenary indulgence may be obtained if, after having gone to Confession and received Holy Communion, one prays the “Prayer before the Crucifix”—copies can be found at the St. Joseph side altar—and pray one Our Father or one Hail Mary for the pope. Likewise one must be free from attachment to sin.

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. They are in need of **WINTER maternity clothes** (all sizes). Call 203-348-4355 or www.birthright.org if you can help.

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 helped convince expectant mothers to spare their children. Call Noelle at 857-345-0808 for specialized training as a Sidewalk Counselor.

DANTE’S DIVINE COMEDY: We begin on March 7th at 7:30pm in the Rectory reading the translation of *Inferno* by Anthony Esolen, The Modern Library, New York, 2002. The parish bookstore purchased copies and will sell them at cost to those who wish to read Dante. Feel free to purchase your own copy, however, if you prefer, retrieve your copy of *Inferno* at the parish office, or wait until March 7th. Interested?, phone Msgr. DiGiovanni: 203-324-1553, ext 11.

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

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

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.

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

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

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: *The Eaglet*, the parish blog on our Basilica website, www.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.

Lenten Mission at St. Mary’s, Greenwich: St. Mary’s Lenten Mission, “Radiant in Christ,” will be led by Fr. Innocent Smith, O.P. Shortly before his Passion, Jesus leads three of his disciples up a high mountain apart by themselves and is transfigured before them. From the shining cloud the Father’s voice is heard: “This is my beloved Son, listen to him.” The Lenten Mission will be conducted February 26 to March 1 at 7:30PM.

FLU: During this seriously dangerous flu season, we will dispense with the sign of peace during all Masses.

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

Job Seekers: Led by Melanie Szlucha whose company, Red Inc., is a leader in helping find jobs. Meetings are held in Monsignor Nagle Hall on the 4th Wednesday of every month from 7:30 to 9PM. Topics include Job Interviewing, Resumes, Networking and Job Search Strategies. Next meeting: Wednesday, February 28th. THERE IS NO CHARGE, this is free job coaching. Call Melanie Szlucha at 203-866-1606, or melanie@redincllc.com.

Trinity Catholic School: Trinity Catholic High School is now accepting applications for the 2018-2019 school year. There will be a “Take A Look” open house on March 18th. Entrance examinations will be on March 3rd. Details at: www.trinitycatholic.org/admissions.

Mass Intentions

+ Denotes Deceased

Saturday, February 17, 2018

4:00 +Angelina Canitano req. Maude Hughes and Family

Sunday, February 18, 2018

7:30 +Joseph Árpád Habsburg

10:00 +Franco Russo req. Rocco and Carmela Longo

12:00 +Sylvia Ardise req. Jimmy and Michelle Sagdati

5:00 + Fr. Peter M. Rinaldi, S.D.B.

Monday, February 19, 2018

8:00 Souls in Purgatory

12:10 +George Terenzio Birthday Remembrance req. Family

Tuesday, February 20, 2018

8:00 +Angeline Kom Simo req. Heloise Nana

12:10 Frank Carpanzano

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

8:00 Souls in Purgatory

12:10 +Helen McDonald req. Lucille Lester and Family

Thursday, February 22, 2018

8:00 +Edward Hamernik 1st Anniversary req. Marion Morris & Family

12:10 +Ralph A. DePanfilis req. Eleni Sotiriou

Friday, February 23, 2018

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

12:10 +Barbara Freehill

Saturday, February 24, 2018

8:00 +Michael and Salvatrice Fetta req. Michael Fetta

12:10 +Domenico Iorfino req. Pugliese 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:
100 YEARS AGO, OR SO:***

Feb. 23, 1918: Stamford Boy on Torpedoed

Ship. "James J. Marron of 54 Brown Street has arrived at an Atlantic port, after an adventurous voyage. He sailed for Liverpool, Jan. 5, on the S. S. Almanace, owned by the Garland Steamship Company of Baltimore. On Feb. 5 this vessel was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland., while he was on a lookout in the crow's nest. He was picked up by a tramp steamer and carried to a French port, where he remained but two hours, being carried to England on another tramp ship. He returned to America on the S. S. Leviathan, formerly the Vaterland. Marron entered the service on April 23, 1917. After training at Newport, he was placed on the U.S.S. Pennsylvania, from which he was transferred to the armed guard. He was graduated from St. John's parochial school, and attended High School for two years. He was a clever basketball player and an all-around athlete, and belonged to the Radio A.C. and Y.M.C.A."

95 YEARS AGO, OR SO:

Feb. 25, 1922: God Bless Padre Callahan. "It is part of the routine duties of policemen and firemen to face death in the discharge of their duties. The public expects it of them and they seldom fail to live up to the expectation. During yesterday's destructive fire at the Richards & Co. plant, firemen and policemen went about their work with a total disregard to the possibility of their being blown into kingdom come any minute. And nobody thought much of it. But when people beheld a small, clerical-looking man, encased in rubber boots and a rubber overcoat many times too large for him, poking about among the burning cotton and the tanks of killing acid, a prayer on his lips and a pleading look in the eyes that were raised frequently toward Heaven, they were filled with wonder. The little, clerical-looking man was the Rev. Henry Callahan, curate of St. John's Catholic Church. Father Callahan is not physically a strong man nor is he a man given to heroics. He was actuated solely by a desire to do all in his power for Hogan and Taxter—both members of his church and of a society of which he is spiritual director—and the beseeching look in his eyes simply pictured the hope and prayer in his heart that he would be able to find the boys before death claimed them, and give them the consolation of their church. Father Callahan was one of the first to arrive at the fire and he was one of the last to leave the place. All day long did he poke about among the blazing buildings and the smoldering ruins hoping against hope. At nightfall, when the last of the firemen were leaving, he sadly withdrew, offering a last prayer for the repose of the souls of the young men. Here was an example of devotion to duty that ought to impress people who scoff at religion and at men of the cloth. God bless you, Padre Callahan, is the wish of every friend of Joe Hogan and Joe Taxter today."



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)