

PARISH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Selvaraj Lucas, M.S.C.

Parochial Vicar: Rev. Tony Ripp, M.S.C.

Finance Manager: Carolyn Marchese

Dir. of Religious Education: Donna Sciacca

Parish Office Manager: Donna Sciacca

Parish Secretary: Rebecca Tirpok

Bulletin Editor/Webmaster: Donna Sciacca

MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00pm

Sunday: 8:00am & 10:30am

Mon - Thurs: 8:35am / Fri: 9am

Holy Days: 9:00am & 7:30pm

CONFESSION: Saturdays 4:15pm - 4:45pm

or by appointment.

Register: Please contact the parish office to register when you move into our parish.

Only registered parishioners, in good standing, can receive a Certificate of Eligibility to act as a Godparent or sponsor.

BAPTISMS: The Sacrament of Baptism is administered on the fourth Sunday of every month. Parents are encouraged



to invite family members to the 10:30 Mass as the Sacrament of Baptism takes place immediately following the Mass. Parents and Godparents must attend an enrichment class approx. 1 month prior to the Baptism. You will need to call the Parish Office to register for this class. A Godparent must

be a committed, practicing Catholic, and if from another parish, must provide a certificate of eligibility from their pastor. A Christian of other denominations may serve as a Godparent along with a practicing Catholic.

MARRIAGE: A Saturday Mass for the Sacrament of



Matrimony may be celebrated no later than 1pm. Couples planning marriage are to contact the parish office & schedule a meeting with our wedding coordinator no later than 6 months in advance of the wedding. Shorter preparation

periods must be approved by our Pastor. Couples will meet several times with the Pastor throughout the preparation process. Couples are to attend a Pre-Cana program approved by our Pastor.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please call the rectory at any



time for the Sacrament of the Sick. Also the Holy Eucharist will be brought to the sick and shut-ins upon request to the Parish Office. We celebrate a Communal Anointing of the Sick in June, near the

Feast of St. John the Baptist.

Weekly Mass Schedule

ALL PUBLIC MASSES SUSPENDED

OUR CHURCH IS OPEN FOR YOU TO PRAY

Monday – Friday: 8am – 10am

Sundays: 8am – 2pm

Our Weekly Collection Basket is at the entrance to the center aisle for you to leave your weekly Mass envelopes or cash offerings.

Confession is by appt. only, and will be held in the main church please call 610-847-5521.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Please remember to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm TODAY

Mass Intentions for April 20 - 26, 2020

Fr. Lucas and Fr. Tony are praying for our parish

Mass Intentions during their *Private Masses* each day.

Monday: John Zdanowicz (*Kathy Gaughan*)

Tuesday: Hank Trancredi (*Fr. Lucas, Fr. Tony*)

Wednesday: John Joseph Koerber (*Jackie Litzenberger*)

Thursday: Hank Trancredi (*Fr. Simi*)

Friday: John Zdanowicz (*Fetscher*)

Saturday 5pm: Inex Becker (*Loving husband John*)

Sunday 8am: Patricia Baker (*Tom & Charlene Plachecki*)

Sunday 10:30am: Parishioners' Intentions

Meetings this Week

ALL EVENTS & PARISH MEETINGS CANCELLED

Weekly Mass Collections

Sunday - April 5

Envelopes \$4,186.00

Parish Giving \$4,936.77

EASTER SUNDAY - April 12

Envelopes \$11,788.00

Parish Giving \$5,498.00

Thank you for your generosity!

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This extraordinary season of quarantine has forced us to learn to do Lent and the Triduum differently. COVID-19 can also be our chance to rediscover the “season of Easter” in a new way.

Recover the idea of the Octave. Liturgically, we celebrate Easter at highest pitch from Easter Sunday to Divine Mercy Sunday. Each and every day of this Octave is considered a solemn feast (aka a solemnity) in the Roman calendar. God calls people to salvation through the Spirit; God also creates a community comprising those who are called. You and I have been called.

The idea of community simultaneously attracts and repels most of us. We long for the life-affirming benefits that community can bestow, but we resist the demands that community makes.

Living through this pandemic seems to have changed this mindset. It seems to have brought out the best of what God's people are capable of, in the power of the Spirit. The challenge of “self-distancing” the concept of being in quarantine, has forced us into a world of creativity brought about by the longing for connectivity. We miss our community. We rely upon one another more than we ever cared to admit.

In our first reading today from the Book of Acts 2:42-47, we find it anchors humanity's deepest hopes for community, justice, generosity, and meaning specifically as a result of people coming to embrace the crucified, risen, and glorified Christ as God's designated agent, as the particular means by which God institutes and exercises God's reign within creation. Do not assume that this passage celebrates community or the church for its own sake. The community of faith exists as an extension of the ascended Lord Jesus' commitment to bring salvation to the world. The challenge for Pastors is getting communities of faith to believe this about themselves--and about God. Congregations are easily frustrated in their attempts to build community that functions as an authentic expression of the gospel. But it is an empowering thing to realize that Christians are not left to their own devices in creating such an environment. The ministry of God's reign that Jesus inaugurated during his life and secured by his death, resurrection, and glorification is not merely a thing of the past or a faint hope for future days; it continues. It is important to underscore that Acts 2:42-47 describes a community of faith that operates in the power of God's Spirit. The virtues of justice, worship, and mutuality are not accomplishments of extraordinary folk; they are signs of the Spirit within a community of people who understand themselves as united in purpose and identity--not a dispersed collection of individual churchgoers. This is not to say that the members of a community of faith bear no responsibility for living in a way that displays God's reconciliation. The audacious claims of a resurrection faith demand such boldness from us.

THANK YOU! *We are truly humbled by your generosity and grateful for your ongoing support to our parish during this challenging time for all of us.*



An immediate concern the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to our parish doors is the sudden loss of our regular means of income. This income which sustains our parish comes from one source, our Sunday Mass collections.

During a time when we are forced to stay at home, would you please consider making your weekly offering to our parish through our online program...**Parish Giving**. Funds are electronically deposited from your checking, debit, or credit card account. No binding contract. You may adjust the amount you contribute at any time. **It is simple, convenient, and most of all secure.**

A link to this program is on our parish website, www.stjohnsottsville.org Click on the tab and follow the screen prompts. *It's that easy!*

RESTRICTED PARISH HOURS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

THE PARISH OFFICE is closed. If you are in need of service, please call 610-847-5521

THE LORDS PANTRY IS OPEN NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS.

NO in-pantry shopping.

Pre-bagged items available for curbside pick-up.

*Please remember to **wear a mask** when coming to the church, parish office, and the Lord's Pantry.*

Thank you for your cooperation!



This past week we resumed our virtual teaching following our Easter break. Please check your inboxes for an email from your child's teacher that was sent home this week.

Although it is unlikely we will be back in class this school year, I remain hopeful that we may see one another at our PREP closing Mass, originally scheduled for May 17th...time will tell.

Below are some decisions made under the guidance of the Diocese regarding this PREP school year, they are as follows:

1. All parishes must record and retain the "Annual Attendance" records of each PREP student. For the record, All students will be marked as "present" for each class since the start of the pandemic school closure. Prior attendance remains unchanged.
2. Final Assessment Tests for grades 1st - 6th will be emailed home the first week in May and are due back the following week. The grade your child achieves on their Final Assessment test will NOT be recorded in their permanent record, but rather, will be used as a tool to determine the knowledge each child acquired throughout this school year. And what steps may be necessary next year to catch them up.
3. All students will move onto their next grade level at the close of this year.
4. 2nd & 7th Grade Sacrament classes, once the ban on public Masses is lifted, a new Sacrament Mass date will be sent to you.
5. **2nd Grade First Holy Communion Retreat** a modified version for you to do at home with your child is in the works. Email to follow.
6. **7th Grade Confirmation Interview** may be via ZOOM or phone. Email to follow.

2020 Sacraments Postponed due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place.

Once the ban on public Mass is lifted our children's parish Sacraments will be rescheduled.

Sacrament of First Holy Communion: A new date will be selected for a time convenient to all.

Sacrament of Confirmation: We are currently awaiting further news from the Bishops office.

It is imperative your child continues with their Sacrament preparation work.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Donna Sciacca, DRE
prep@stjohnsottsville.org



The Regina Academy at St. John the Baptist

Knowing - Loving - Serving - Leading

The Regina Academy at St. John the Baptist is now accepting **Registrations for the 2020/2021 School Year.**

\$1500 transfer grants are available for students transferring from another school.

Why register your child for our school?

Here are just some of the wonderful benefits:

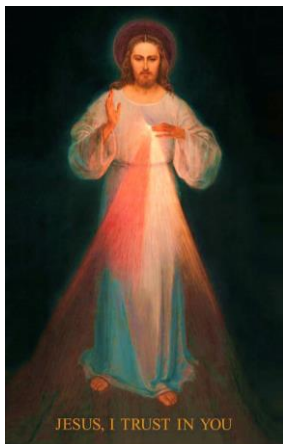
- ~ Joy Filled Authentic Catholic Community
- ~ **Classical** (not Common Core) Catholic Curriculum
- ~ Protective and Nurturing Environment that allows **Children to Become Who God Intended Them to Be**
- ~ Weekly Mass and Adoration
- ~ Full Day Pre K and Kindergarten
- ~ Transfer Grants Available
- ~ Busing from All of the Local School Districts

To register your child now, or for more information, visit our **ADMISSIONS PAGE** on our website.

Mrs. Tami Koerber, Head of School
tkoerber@rasjb.org
Mrs. Amy Mattle, Admissions Director
amattle@rasjb.org / 267-424-5762
www.rasjb.org

Our church will remain open today for those who wish to pray the **3PM Divine Mercy Chaplet**.

(Please wear a mask)



Divine Mercy Sunday or the Octave of Easter presents us with one of the most famous of gospel stories — the story of Doubting Thomas. It shows us how and when the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, aka “confession,” was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ,

DIVINE MERCY

Mercy is not just pity. Neither is it simply sparing someone the punishment that they deserve. No, mercy is love’s response to suffering. When mercy encounters suffering, it ultimately seeks to alleviate it. God the Father is so “rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4) that Paul calls him “the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort” (2 Cor 1:3).

Jesus is the perfect human image of the Father’s mercy. When he meets those suffering from hunger, he feeds them. When he encounters someone suffering from physical sickness, he heals them. True mercy is not superficial, but radical. And Jesus sees that the deepest suffering in human life, the root cause of all other suffering, is sin. Sin debases us, robbing us of our dignity, weakening and even rupturing our connection with God, our loving Father and the source of our life. Sin is not just a transgression of some arbitrary law; it creates a wound in us that can fester and, if not attended to, corrupt us entirely. It gives the Prince of Darkness a hold in our lives that he tries to turn into complete control of our lives. True mercy seeks to alleviate this deeper suffering that can lead to eternal suffering.

SACRAMENT OF MERCY & RECONCILIATION

Jesus died to do precisely this. And the risen Christ instituted the sacrament of penance to apply the medicine of mercy, won on Calvary, to each individual sinner at the moment of their deepest need.

Wait a minute. So Jesus, not the Church, established this sacrament? Where does the Bible say he did that? Right there, in John’s gospel, on Easter Sunday afternoon. Despite the locked doors, he stands amidst the apostles and says “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” Jesus is the original “apostle” of the Father — the word means “one who is sent.” As he was sent on a mission of

mercy, so he sends out his “apostles” on the same mission. He breathes on them and says “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive men’s sins, they are forgiven them; if you hold them bound, they are held bound.” (Jn 20:19-22).

THE SPIRIT OF MERCY

If you have a problem with the Church intruding on what you think ought to be just between just you and God, you’ll have to take that one up with Jesus. It was his idea. From the looks of this text, he gave the apostles and their successors, whom we call bishops, a great deal of authority in this matter. But he also gave them a great deal of power. The same Holy Spirit responsible for the bringing of order out of chaos (Gen 1) and causing a virgin to conceive and bear a son, is breathed upon the apostles. He is the Spirit of Mercy, the Spirit of healing, the Spirit of liberation and resurrection.

Going to confession is not just meeting an official of the institutional church. It is meeting a man who has been anointed with the Spirit of Mercy to stand in the place of Christ (in persona Christi) and serve as an instrument of the divine physician. True, this instrument is a sinner in need of mercy himself. Peter and doubting Thomas make that abundantly clear right from the start. But they are instruments of God’s healing, merciful love, nonetheless. That is the case whether or not they are wise counselors and whether or not they are exceptionally holy.

MEETING CHRIST IN CONFESSION

The Spirit Christ breathed on the apostles on the first Easter afternoon has been passed on to these men through the sacrament of Holy Orders. That means that Christ is the one you meet in confession. And he comes not just to forgive, but to heal, to liberate, strengthen and transform.

His merciful love means that he died not just to “cover our sins,” to wipe them off God’s record book, leaving us the same miserable creatures we’d always been. No, his mercy kills, the infection, heals the wound, and breaks the bonds.

In the sacrament of reconciliation, Jesus invites us penitents, like he did Lazarus, to come out of the place of darkness and decay. And he says to his priestly confessors the same thing he said to the people standing around Lazarus’s tomb: “unbind him, and let him go free!”

This post focuses on the relation between Divine Mercy Sunday, the unbelief of Doubting Thomas, and the sacrament of penance, reconciliation and confession.

Ministry Schedule for: April 25th & 26th – THIRD SUNDAY of EASTER

	Extraordinary Minister	Lector	Altar Server	Music
Saturday 5pm	<div>Per the Archdiocese of Philadelphia: ALL PUBLIC MASSES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE</div>			
Sunday 8am				
Sunday 10:30am				



PLEASE PRAY FOR...



March 1st – June 1st prayer list.

To RENEW or To ADD a name to our prayer list, **please call the parish office.**

OUR SICK: Roger Bahnck Sr., John Becker, Julia Ferguson, Patricia Fite, Maddie Gardner, Marie & Rosalyn Giardullo, MaryAnn Hauber, Valerie Korbar, Nate Leidtke, Jackie Litzenberger, Bridget McHugh, Anne McNichol, Maria Middleton, Nancy Moreno, James O'Hanlon, Riley Telesco, Cynthia Tocci, Helen Wall.

PRAY FOR ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY THE CORONAVIRUS

Our Doctors, Nurses, Hospital Technicians, EMT's, First Responders, Care Givers, the isolated sick and their families.

OUR TROOPS: Jamie Steven Ayuso, Fionna M. Boyle, Derek Brosius, Christopher Brune, Kyle Crossland, Casey DeLauretis, David Fisher, Michael Froeder, A.J. Giovino, Aaron Given, Matthew Gumprecht, Bob Hankinson, Victor Hormilla, Stephen Lindmeier, Jason Litschauer, Cory Litzenberger, Dan O'Connor, Jonathan Pucci, Dusty Rhodes, Craig Russell, Steven Salva, Kate Salva, Jack Salva, Ann Salva.