

### 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.*

**We miss seeing you and hope you are all well!** We long for the days when we can once again gather at Mass together. Until then, our **Church is open** for you to come in and pray before the Tabernacle:

Mon – Fri: 8am – 10am

Sunday: 8am – 2pm

Please visit our parish website for frequent updates on resources and **to view our weekly Sunday Mass visit** [www.stjohnsottsville.org](http://www.stjohnsottsville.org) **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.**

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### **Mass Intentions for April 27 – May 3, 2020**

Fr. Lucas and Fr. Tony are praying for our parish Mass Intentions during their *Private Masses* each day.

**Monday:** John Zdanowicz (*Tumolo Family*)

**Tuesday:** Intentions of Lucyann Rossi (*Donna Sciacca*)

**Wednesday:** Intentions of Ken Furlong (*Antonelli Family*)

**Thursday:** Mike Renzi (*Joe & Linda Renzi*)

**Friday:** Elaine & Ronald Weaver (*Ed Wismer*)



**Our First Friday Monthly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament opens at 10am on Friday and closes at 9am on Saturday.**

**Saturday 5pm:** Robert Benton (*Patty Benton*)

**Sunday 8am:** Parishioners' Intentions

**Sunday 10:30am:** Intentions of the Middleton Family  
(*SJB Parish Priests & Staff*)

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### **Meetings this Week**

**ALL PARISH EVENTS & MEETINGS CANCELLED**

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**Weekly Mass Collections Sunday, April 19, 2020**

**Envelopes \$6,061.00** (incl. \$1640. intended for Easter)

**Parish Giving \$2,588.66**

**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*

## **INTO THE DEEP** a reflection on the Gospel of Luke 24:13-35

Deep within each and every one of us there is a hunger and a thirst. We all experience this yearning of the soul—a heart that burns with longing, but we don't always recognize what it is for which we yearn.

*“Late have I loved you, O Beauty, so ancient and so new, late have I loved you! And behold, you were within me and I was outside, and there I sought for you, and in my deformity I rushed headlong into the well-formed things that you have made. You were with me and I was not with you. Those outer beauties held me far from you, yet if they had not been in you, they would not have existed at all.”* (St. Augustine)

St. Augustine speaks of the burning deep within his heart and recognizes that it was God whom he sought. But he had sought instead those pleasures and beauties of creation instead of the Creator—and so his hunger was not satisfied then.

Reflect a moment on this... how many times have we made the same mistake? Have we sought to satisfy our hunger with material pleasures and riches, even good things, failing to see that our yearning is for God who alone can satisfy our deepest desire?

For St. Augustine, in the end it was through the breaking open of the Scriptures by St. Ambrose of Milan and the prayers of his mother St. Monica that his heart began to burn within him, melting away his pride, correcting his errors and opening the door for Christ to rush in.

The two disciples who encountered the Risen Lord on the Road to Emmaus in today's Gospel must also have experienced this inner desire. They had come to know Jesus and placed their hopes in him. But they misinterpreted the Old Testament Scriptures and therefore, they were disheartened and disillusioned when this man, who they believed to be the Messiah who would drive out their worldly enemies, was crucified and died. Imagine, if you will, the euphoria they must have experienced prior to the Crucifixion and compare it to the anguish they expressed in today's Gospel. They did not yet recognize the Risen Lord, this stranger who asked them what was troubling them. One of the disciples, Cleopas, said of the Crucified Christ, “...we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel.” (Luke 24:21) Can you sense his deep pain?

Sadly for us today there are times when we who already know and believe in Jesus lose sight of Him, fail to recognize Him or even misinterpret the Scriptures to our own spiritual detriment. Or maybe like St. Augustine, we are simply too wrapped up in seeking the pleasures and surviving the worries of this world to see Him... in His word and in His sacrament, and in the lives of the men, women and children He places in our lives.

These two disciples failed to recognize Jesus when they encountered Him. Although they loved Him, they were no longer seeking Him, so they did not know Him. So, lovingly and patiently He broke open the Scriptures and taught them all that had been written of Him in the Old Testament. After He left them, they remarked to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:32)

The Scriptures and our desire for Him are special graces given us—our search for God is a result of His call to us. As St. John of the Cross taught, “we seek God because God first sought us and is passing close by when we think of Him. Do not our hearts also burn within us? We are able to meet the Risen Lord in Scripture.”

We see in today's Gospel another grace given to us—the Eucharist. It was in the breaking of the bread that the two disciples came to recognize the stranger as Jesus, risen from the dead. Today, the entire world has become for us a “Road to Emmaus” and we are blessed to see Jesus in the breaking of the bread at Holy Masses celebrated the world over each day, the making present of the once for all Sacrifice of the Cross and our participation in the heavenly banquet.

In this Eucharist which we celebrate, we are to come to more fully and deeply know Jesus. There is no other place on earth where we can have so special and singular, so personal an encounter with Jesus than in the Mass and Holy Communion.



### St. John's Online Electronic Stewardship Program

Offering our parish family, a more secure, and convenient way to offer their weekly Mass tithe. Through our online program...*Parish Giving*, funds are electronically deposited directly from your checking, debit, or credit card account into our parishioner Mass contribution fund.

A link to this program is on our parish website, visit [www.stjohnsottsville.org](http://www.stjohnsottsville.org) Click on the tab and follow the screen prompts. *It's that easy!*

Your on-going weekly Mass contributions helps to sustain us, as is our only means of income.

**THANK YOU!**



PREP PARENTS please check your inboxes often for an email from your child's teacher with your child's weekly assignment.

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

Final Assessment Tests for grades 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> will be emailed home on May 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>.

Completed tests - due back on or before May 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Final Assessment test is intended to allow us to determine the level of knowledge each child acquired through the end of this school year.

For those who may have fallen behind, an alternative plan will be offered to allow them to catch up before the start of the new school year.

All students will move onto their next grade level at the close of this year.

### CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWS

Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>  
4pm via Zoom meeting.

An email was sent to the parents of all our Candidates earlier this week. If you did not receive it, or if you have not yet responded, please contact me on Monday.

First Holy Communion Retreat packet was emailed to all last week. If you did not receive one, please contact Donna Sciacca, DRE at the parish office.

### 2020 Sacraments Postponed

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 word from the Bishops office.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Donna Sciacca, DRE at [prep@stjohnsottsville.org](mailto: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](mailto:tkoerber@rasjb.org)

Mrs. Amy Mattle, Admissions Director  
[amattle@rasjb.org](mailto:amattle@rasjb.org) / 267-424-5762

[www.rasjb.org](http://www.rasjb.org)



## Shouldn't love of neighbor supersede everything right now? by Russell Shaw, OSV

It now appears that the legacy of the coronavirus pandemic is going to include an ongoing, sometimes ugly debate on the merits of closing churches and suspending religious services to halt the spread of COVID-19. The argument is one of those unfortunate cases where two important goods — here, religious liberty and public health — are set in opposition, with no one likely to emerge a clear winner.

In the Catholic Church, virtually all pastors followed their bishops' orders to close their churches and suspend public Masses and other ceremonies or allow them only under the most stringent limits. There was — and still is — some grumbling about this, but few visible acts of noncompliance.

The first diocese in the country to relax the church lockdown was Las Cruces, New Mexico, where shortly after Easter, the Bishop ordered a limited reopening of churches for Mass, with no more than five people allowed inside and other congregants staying in their cars. This was hailed as "prudent, decisive leadership." Conceding good intentions on the bishop's part, others nonetheless wondered.

People who object to forced church closings regularly argue their case in terms of religious liberty. This presumably is what lay behind a Justice Department spokesperson's announcement that Attorney General William Barr was "monitoring" the situation. "While social distancing policies are appropriate during this emergency," the spokesperson added, "they must be applied evenhandedly and not single out religious organizations."

Who can argue with that?

Obviously there are legal issues here that need to be examined. At the same time, though, it's important to realize that this is the sort of controversy in which common sense and moral reasoning are more to the point than arguments about law.

When people insist that churches should stay open come what may — "physical health must not be pursued to the exclusion of spiritual health," — they ignore the fact that someone who goes to a church service and comes home carrying the novel coronavirus may be bringing a potentially deadly disease to his or her family and friends.

That points to an obvious conclusion. Lacking a truly compelling reason like saving lives, knowingly acting in a way that risks spreading a potentially deadly disease to others is morally irresponsible. ***The commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself has far more weight than any law, whether civil or canonical, or even the First Amendment. And if realistic love of neighbor requires keeping churches***

***closed a while longer, then the churches should stay closed.***

Extending the general lockdown — including church closings — also carries the advantage of spreading out the incidence of new cases of COVID-19 until improved treatment and, later, a reliable vaccine are available. There are no certainties, but this cautious approach seems measurably preferable to impetuously letting down our guard in the name of religious liberty or anything else.

## FATIMA RETREAT HOUSE, Bedminster, PA "A Quiet Country Retreat"

### Offering Day & Overnight Retreats for Small Groups & Individuals



**Monday, 7pm**

Adoration & Prayers

**Wednesday, 9:30am**

Adoration & Prayers

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 12pm**

Adoration & Prayer for  
Vocations

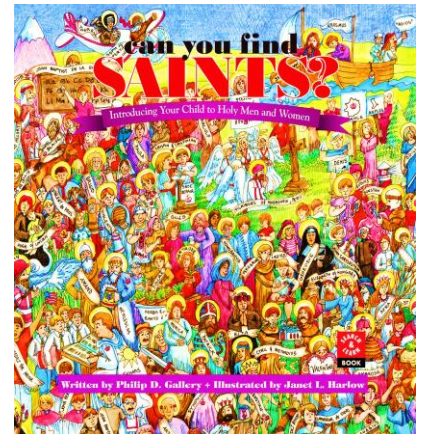
**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday, 10am**

**Rosary, Confession, Mass,  
& Lunch**

## "can you find SAINTS?"

### Introducing Your Child to Holy Men and Women

is filled with inviting, kid-friendly illustrations. The stories of the heroes of the faith spring to life in dazzling pictures that sprinkle a little learning in with the fun.



"It's a great book! First of all, I LOVE the Saints...and I love the information that this book gives about the Saints, the different categories it arranges the Saints in and the colorful *Find Waldo* kind of jammed-packed, Saint-filled scenarios!"

~ review by EquippingCatholicFamilies

Ministry Schedule for: May 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> – Fourth Sunday of Easter

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



## PLEASE PRAY FOR...

March 1<sup>st</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup> 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.