

Welcome to the Church of St. Andrew the Apostle

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

CYCLE A

JANUARY 18, 2026



MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKEND

Saturday Vigil 4:00 PM
Sunday 8:00 AM

10:00 AM
& 6:00 PM

WEEKDAY

Monday - Saturday 8:00 AM

Rosary and Adoration
after 8:00 AM Mass
(Monday - Saturday)

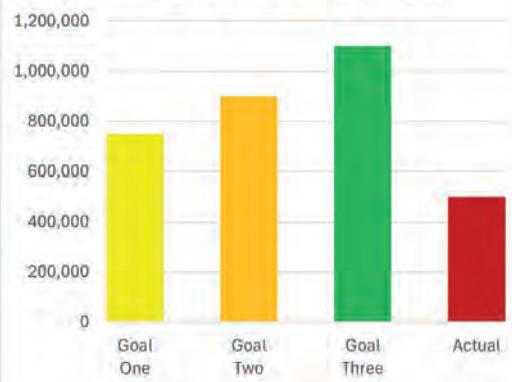
CONFESSiON

Saturday 3:15 PM

ADORATION

Wednesday 7:00 PM

Building Up the House of the Lord



27 Kresson-Gibbsboro Road • Gibbsboro NJ 08026
(856) 784-3878 - Visit us online — www.churchofsaintandrews.org
Office hours: Mon-Fri: 8:30 AM-3:00 PM

Clergy			
Rev. Msgr. Louis A. Marucci, VF, D. Min.	Pastor	msgrmarucci@churchofstandrews.org	ext. 19
Rev. Anthony Infantì	Parochial Vicar	frinfanti@churchofstandrews.org	ext. 14
Deacon Aaron Smith	Permanent Deacon	asmith@churchofstandrews.org	leave message at Office
Deacon Anthony Malatesta	Permanent Deacon	amalatesta@churchofstandrews.org	leave message at Office
Parish Administration			
John Michael Thomas	Worship & Music	jthomas@churchofstandrews.org	leave message at Office
Kathy Emrich	Lifelong Faith Formation	kemrich@churchofstandrews.org	ext. 33
Michelina O'Neill	Administrative Assistant	moneill@churchofstandrews.org	ext. 15
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Bibiana Sola Trejo	Parish Bookkeeper	bsolatrejo@churchofstandrews.org	ext. 11
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Carl Zuccarelli	Maintenance	czuccarelli@churchofstandrews.org	ext. 35
June Stengel	Sacristan	jstengel@churchofstandrews.org	856-784-3878

Parish Registration

Welcome to St. Andrew the Apostle Church! We invite you to join our family! You may register or update your current information by calling the Parish Office or visiting our website. www.churchofstandrews.org

Parish Office News and Updates

Parish Office Hours of Operation

The Office hours for the Parish Office are 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

Gluten Free Hosts

Those who are gluten intolerant and wish to receive Holy Communion should speak with an usher or member of the hospitality ministry before the start of Mass.

Children and Family Masses are held on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the 10:00 AM Mass.

Masses of Inclusion are held on the 2nd Sunday of each month at the 4:00 PM Vigil (Saturday) Mass.

New to the Parish?

Call the Parish Office to learn about our ministries and how to register with the parish, or you can visit our website to register online and find information about our many ministerial opportunities.

Parish Lost and Found

Numerous items get left behind after Mass and parish events - umbrellas, hats, reading glasses, etc.

The parish lost & found is located on the shelf in the hallway near the priest's sacristy. Due to space concerns, the lost and found is cleaned out monthly, with items being donated. Thank you!

Sacrament of the Sick

Call the Parish Office to request a home or hospital visit.

Prayer List for Those that are in Need of Healing

Please call the Parish Office to add someone to the list.

Marriage

Arrangements are made at least one year in advance. One wedding may be scheduled on Saturday afternoon.

Baptism

Please call the Parish Office to schedule. Baptisms take place on the first and third Sunday of each month at 11:30 AM.

Mass Cards

You may request a Mass for your intention through the Parish Office, or conveniently through the website.

Sanctuary Candle / Blessed Mother Candle

We offer candle remembrances for special intentions. Please call the Parish Office to reserve a Sanctuary or Blessed Mother Candle.

Spiritual Bouquets

Your prayer intention will be remembered on First Fridays for six consecutive months. Your prayer intention may be for anyone either living or deceased. Please call or stop by the Parish Office to obtain a Spiritual Bouquet.

From the Pastor's Desk



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK: Building Up the House of the Lord: Called in Christ to Be a Holy People

As we gather on this **Second Sunday of Ordinary Time**, the Church places before us a beautiful and challenging theme: **"In Christ, we are called to be a holy people."** Holiness is not an abstract ideal reserved for a few; it is the daily vocation of every baptized person. It is the

call to live with purpose, generosity, and love. It is the call to build up the Body of Christ—not only spiritually, but also in the very places where we worship, gather, and serve.

This weekend, as we reflect on our parish's future, this theme becomes especially meaningful. Our **Building Up the House of the Lord Capital Campaign** is not simply about bricks and mortar. It is about answering Christ's call to holiness by strengthening the spiritual home where we encounter Him, where we form disciples, and where we serve the needs of our community.

Over the past several weeks, many of you have responded to this call with remarkable generosity. **Approximately 80 families have already pledged \$428,000** toward our campaign. This is a tremendous beginning, and I am deeply grateful for every family who has stepped forward in faith. Your early leadership is a sign of hope and a witness to the holiness to which Christ calls us.

Yet we are still on the journey. To move forward with **Tier One**—the construction of our new **gathering space and community center**—we must reach **\$750,000 in pledges**. This is the threshold that will allow us to break ground and begin transforming our parish campus in ways that will bless our community for generations.

Why This Project Matters for a Holy People? Holiness is lived in community. It is nurtured in the spaces where we pray, learn, serve, and share life together. Our parish is vibrant and growing, but our physical space has not kept pace with our needs. A **gathering space** is not merely an architectural addition—it is a pastoral necessity. It is the

place where the parish becomes a family.

Imagine a space where new parishioners are welcomed warmly, families can linger after Mass, ministries can meet without competing for limited rooms, Faith formation can flourish, and hospitality becomes a hallmark of our parish identity.

A **community center** will allow us to host formation programs, receptions, meetings, and events in a space that is accessible, comfortable, and designed for the needs of a modern parish. These are not luxuries—they are essential tools for building a holy people.

This project also prepares us for the future. As our parish continues to grow, we may one day need to **expand the seating capacity of the church**. By building the gathering space now, we create the structural flexibility to expand later in a **cost effective and efficient way**. Tier One is not only about today—it is about wise stewardship for tomorrow.

This weekend also leads us into the celebration of **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**, a moment when our nation reflects on justice, community, and the sacred dignity of every person. Dr. King's vision of the "beloved community" resonates deeply with our Christian call to holiness. Holiness is not isolation—it is mission. It is the willingness to build a community where every person is welcomed, valued, and supported.

Our capital campaign is an expression of that mission. By strengthening our parish home, we strengthen our ability to serve the poor, support families, form disciples, welcome newcomers, offer hospitality, and provide ministries that heal, teach, and uplift. A parish that invests in its mission becomes a parish that can better reflect the holiness of Christ to the world.

Dr. King once said, *"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase."* Our campaign is such a step. We may not see every detail of the future, but we know the Lord is calling us to build, to grow, and to prepare the way for those who will come after us.

Your Participation Makes a Difference. To reach our Tier One goal, we truly need **every household** to participate. No gift is too small. What matters most is that each of us makes a sacrificial commitment that reflects our love for the Lord and our hope for the future of our parish. I have

From the Pastor's Desk

asked parish families to try to recommit the same pledge you made in 2018 for the Catholic Strong Campaign. If your circumstances prevent you from doing so, would you prayerfully try to commit to a pledge of \$3,600 paid over three years. This comes to an additional \$100 per month in addition to your ordinary offertory to the parish, and your support of the poor through the House of Charity (South Jersey Catholic Ministries Appeal). All I ask is that

you do what is right in your circumstances before God. If you have not yet submitted your pledge, I ask you to prayerfully consider doing so this week. Your commitment moves us closer to beginning this essential first phase. Together, we can reach the \$750,000 needed to break ground and bring this vision to life.

Our parish was built by the sacrifices of those who came before us—families who gave generously so that we could worship in a beautiful church, receive the sacraments, and grow in faith. Now it is our turn to build for the next generation. The decisions we make today will shape the parish our children and grandchildren inherit.



CAMP VERITAS 2026: Camp Veritas is a one-week play-and-pray sleep away summer camp for middle school teens. Saint Andrew the Apostle Parish is inviting students from 7th grade through 9th grade to Camp Veritas from August 9-15 at Camp Lakota in Wurtsboro, NY (7th-9th grade; \$550 per child).

Father Infant will be going to this camp to assist with Masses and any sacramental needs. Enrollment is currently open. An early bird discount of \$50 is applied when paid in full by March 1st. More details and info on other locations can be found at www.campveritas.com. Email admin2@campveritas.com for more info.

MSGR. MARUCCI'S HUMOR BOX

A man went to see his doctor, and the doctor said, "I have some bad news and some worse news." The man asked for the bad news first, and the doctor replied, "You have only 24 hours to live." Gutted, the man said, "That's terrible! Wait a minute—what's the worse news?" The doctor responded, "I should have told you yesterday."

At a party, a woman admonished her husband, saying, "That's the fourth time you've gone back for ice cream and cake. Doesn't it embarrass you?" He shrugged and answered, "Why should it? I keep telling them it's for you."

Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

Are You Interested in Becoming Catholic?

If you have been coming to Mass for a while but are not Catholic, we *invite you to take a deeper look into the Catholic faith.*

If you are already Catholic and have not yet completed your Sacraments of Initiation (First Communion or Confirmation), we *invite you to join us and see what steps you need to continue your journey to the Lord.*

If you or someone you know might wish to learn more about this possibility, please contact Fr. Anthony Infant or Kathy Emrich.

You may call 856-784-3878 or e-mail Fr. Infant at FrInfanti@Churchofstandrews.org or Kathy Emrich at Kemrich@churchofstandrews.org

To be a holy people in Christ is to be a people who build— who invest in the mission of the Church, who strengthen the community of faith, and who prepare a spiritual home worthy of the Gospel. Let us respond with the same courage, generosity, and trust that have always defined our parish. Let us **Build up the House of the Lord**—not only in stone and mortar, but in faith, hope, and love.

Building Up the House of the Lord

YES! I want to support the Building Up the House of the Lord Capital Campaign with a Total commitment of \$ _____ over three years.

PAYMENT DETAILS

Enclosed is payment in full
 Enclosed is the down payment of \$ _____
 I will make the first payment in _____ (month) 20____

I WILL PAY THE BALANCE

OF MY GIFT:

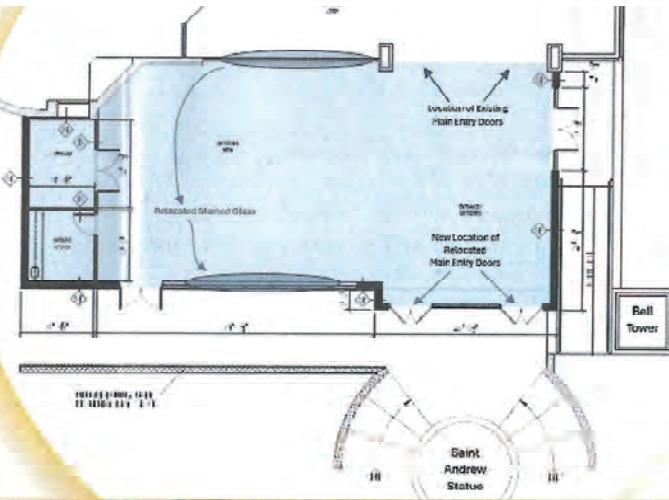
Monthly Semi-annually
 Quarterly Annually

*If you would like to fulfill your pledge using a credit card, stocks or other method, please contact Msgr. Marucci at (856) 794-3878.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Cash/Check (made payable to St. Andrew the Apostle Building Fund)
 Direct Charitable Contribution (from a Retirement Account)
 Gift of Stock/Securities: (Please send the required brokerage form)
 Other*: _____

NAME			
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE	E-MAIL		
SIGNATURE	DATE		



GIFT TABLE

(Scale based on payments over 36 months after 10% downpayment)

Total Gift	10% Downpayment	Balance	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-Annual	Annual
250,000	25,000	225,000	6,250	18,750	37,500	75,000
200,000	20,000	180,000	5,000	15,000	30,000	60,000
100,000	10,000	90,000	2,500	7,500	15,000	30,000
50,000	5,000	45,000	1,250	3,750	7,500	15,000
30,000	3,000	27,000	750	2,250	4,500	9,000
15,000	1,500	13,500	375	1,125	2,250	4,500
10,000	1,000	9,000	275	750	1,500	3,000
6,000	600	5,400	150	450	900	1,800
3,600	360	3,240	90	270	540	1,080
1,800	180	1,620	45	135	270	540

For Whom Shall We Pray

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, January 18, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: + Thomas Kaczorowski r/b Luisa
 10:00 AM Mass: + Debby Morlachetta
 r/b Aura and Ronnie Sulpizio
 10:00 AM Mass: + Florence Soberano r/b Josie and Roger Tizon
 6:00 PM Mass: + Maureen Griffith r/b Marge DiRenzo,
 Gail Greenman and Elizabeth Sampath

Monday, January 19, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: +Margaret McGuire r/b Josefina Lam
 8:00 AM Mass + Blair Tallini r/b Harold Sbrocco

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

8:00 AM Pro Populo Mass

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: + Carmella and William Fanelle r/b Family

Thursday, January 22, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: + Jane Olson r/b Michelina O'Neill and Family

Friday, January 23, 2026

8:00 AM Mass:: + Efron Sison r/b Josie Lam

Saturday, January 24, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: L Mayette Balmores r/b Family
 4:00 PM Mass: + Debby Morlachetta
 r/b Brandon and Charlene Tull

Sunday, January 25, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: +Anthony Colello r/b His son Ted
 8:00 AM Mass: +Debby Morlachetta
 r/b Dan and Sheryl McGravey
 10:00 AM Mass: +Peter J. Schultz r/b Michael Schultz
 10:00 AM Mass: +Mary Ann Falzarano Andrews
 r/b Victoria and Joe Benedetti
 6:00 PM Mass: + Almaz Tesfaiohannes r/b Peter Vitalba Graffeo
 + Deceased L Living

The Sanctuary Candle Burns in Honor of
 Fr. Infantni r/b Jim and Becca Poland

The Blessed Mother Candle Burns in Memory of
 Helen Gergo r/b Barbara Glock

We Pray For The Repose Of The Souls Who
 Have Entered Into Eternal Life In Christ
 Concetta Giannobile
 Barbara Curtis

A Time to Be Healed

Maye Alfonso	Loretta Lipp
Peggy Badey	Bill Long, Jr
Joseph Bello, Sr.	Maria LoPresti
Valerie F. Butler	Nicolina Marucci
Gary Carmody	Anna Mascino
Timothy Cody	Dan McGravey
April Cole	Marge Merkert
Barbara Curtis	Jay McGovern
Bob DeRenzo	David Misilewich
Tony Del Pidio	Jane Mooney
Stephen DiLizio	Mike Mooney
Maryann Donohue	Anthony Pallante
Guinevere V. Faulkner	Andrew Papp
Bob Freer	Linda Pinson
Alexander Fromnic	Linda Raymond
Sr. Alma Gallagher	Michael Ruggiero
Joan Geier	Marie Sheehan
Nancy Giampietro	Anthony Simone
Joe Gilmore	Maryann Simone
Amy Glenney	Mary Bauman Soards
Dottie Glenney	Don Stoll
Neil Glenney	Nina Stone
Donald Ray Hamilton	Helene Taylor
Carson Hill	Jess Verrecchia
Tina Joelstein	Baby Abigail Volk
Robert Joynes	Jane Weiman
Tim Klauder	Robert Wozniak
Peter Kricken	

A Time for Peace

Devin Badey, Army	Officer Bill Walsh
Luke Bianchini,	Officer Kevin Wynne
Staff Sargent, USAF	
Melvin Dastas, Navy	

Presider Schedule for January 24/25

Saturday, January 24, 2026

4:00 PM Mass Msgr. Marucci / Deacon Smith

Sunday, January 25, 2026

8:00 AM Mass: Fr. Infantni /Deacon Malatesta
 10:00 AM Mass: Msgr. Marucci / Deacon Smith
 6:00 PM Mass: Fr. Infantni /Deacon Malatesta

Banns of Marriage
 Enrique Josue Gonzalez Hernandez and
 Katherine Doris Rago Gonzales
 Convalidation date: February 9, 2026



Men's Prayer Group

Congratulations to our St. Andrew the Apostle Men's Prayer Group that attended the Malvern Epiphany Retreat at the Malvern Retreat House from Friday, January 2nd to Sunday, January 4th!

If you are interested in joining this growing brotherhood of men dedicated to their Catholic faith, please email Sam Parry at spcp1@comcast.net or text (856-761-7999) Sam for more information about the Prayer Group.



OPEN ENROLLMENT for September for Little Angels Academy Preschool is currently underway!

It's time for open enrollment at Little Angels Academy!

Classes fill quickly, so, if you have not yet registered your Little Angel for September, please do so as soon as possible so that we can reserve a place for your child!

Please visit the Church website (www.ChurchofStAndrews.org) to download the registration form.

Our classes do fill early...so don't delay! Give your child the gift of a Little Angels Academy education!

Full and Part Time Programs * Before and After School Care

Afternoon Enrichment Programs

Contact: Kathy Emrich 856-435-1585

Kemrich@churchofstandrews.org



Villa Maria Retreat by the Sea

Stone Harbor, NJ

Wednesday, January 21 8:45 AM—12:00 PM Cost: \$30

Private Morning of Prayer

Come and enjoy the peace and quiet of the retreat center while you spend the morning in prayer. Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 am. You are welcome to bring a bag lunch to enjoy before you depart.

Villa Maria by the Sea
Retreat Center
101 111th Street
Stone Harbor,
NJ 08247
609-964-7700
www.VMbytheSea.com



Pastoral Coordinators- Chris Parry and Lois Siebert.

If you are facing challenges or know someone struggling, we're here to help. Call or text Chris at 856-906-5127 or call Lois Siebert at 856-784-3878 Ext 27.

Joseph's House Monthly Casserole Recipe

Happy New Year!!! The management team at Joseph's House asked me to wish you all a BLESSED New Year!!!! Thank you volunteers for your continued commitment to this ministry. In addition to casseroles, we will continue collecting individual snack bags for Joseph's House clients. The next drop off for casseroles will be Thursday, January 29, 2026 from 10-11 AM. Drive up to the parish hall and a volunteer will be there in the parking area. We will hand deliver to Joseph's House later in the day. If this day and time do not work for you, we can make other arrangements. Call or text Chris Parry at 856-906-5127 with any questions and/or to confirm you will make a casserole. Prepare one or more casseroles. All donations are deeply appreciated. We will continue to use the same recipe.

Hamburger Noodle Casserole

1 lb. hamburger beef	1-cup cottage cheese
15 oz. can or jar tomato sauce	1-cup sour cream
1 medium chopped onion	12oz. egg noodles
1 cup of green pepper	2 cups Shredded Monterey Jack Cheese

Combine the hamburger, green pepper and onion and sauté until meat is cooked. Salt and pepper to taste. Add tomato sauce and simmer for 20 minutes. Cook noodles according to package directions. In another bowl combine sour cream and cottage cheese. Blend cottage cheese and sour cream mixture with the cooked noodles. Salt and pepper to taste. In a lightly greased aluminum pan spread the hamburger mixture. Next, layer the noodle mixture. Top casserole with shredded Monterey Jack cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until thoroughly heated. NOTE: Please freeze the casserole, cover with aluminum foil, date and label St. Andrew's- "Hamburger Noodle Casserole."

Christian Cupboard Needs

After our large Thanksgiving and Christmas food distributions, our Christian Cupboard shelves are sparse. Please consider helping us restock with the following items:

Canned Chicken Breast

Canned Tuna

Canned soup

Canned fruit

Mac and cheese

Your generosity makes a tremendous difference — thank you!



You do not find a happy life, you make it!

Dear Seniors, We have a few fun things planned for the rest of this month, such as a look at the life of St. Padre Pio, and movie trivia. I know it's really cold, but dress warmly and come on out to the Center!

On Tuesday, we begin with Line Dancing to get us moving, followed by "Growing in Faith". This month we will focus on some of the many typologies in the Bible. The typologies show us the amazing plan of God since the beginning.

Thursday is our Movie Day! We will be showing "Hidden Figures", about 3 African American, female mathematicians working for NASA during the space race in 1962.

Hope to see you this year, there is no membership, commitment, or cost to be part of the group. Just show up around 9:30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and enjoy some conversation, food and fun with your peers.

Just send me a note at themschoot@churchofstandrews.org, and I will send you a schedule. There is no commitment or cost to join, so what's stopping you?



JANUARY 23, 2026

Buses from South Jersey to Washington, D.C.

There is a Bus directly going to Washington, D.C., leaving from the Incarnation Church parking lot in Mantua at 7:45. There are five Knights of Columbus councils supporting this trip, including Incarnation, Holy Name from Mullica Hill, Saint Francis from Swedesboro, Saint Patrick's from Woodbury, and Saint Margaret's from Woodbury Heights. **Please contact Bob LaPalomento at 856-994-3476 to reserve a seat. We are asking for a \$20 donation.**

The Knights of Columbus Fr. Francis P. Araneo Chapter is again sponsoring buses to the March for Life this year; there is no charge for transportation, but riders will be responsible for their own meals/drinks, and we ask a contribution of at least \$5.00 per rider toward a tip for the driver.

The tentative schedule for the day is as follows (finalized itinerary provided to riders before the trip):

6:00 am **Bus #1** departs St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 591 New Jersey Ave, Absecon, NJ 08201
 6:30 am **Bus #2** departs Bruce Willis Service Area, milepost 18.3 Garden State Pkwy, Ocean View, NJ 08230
 7:00 am **Bus #3** departs Sacred Heart Church, 1010 East Landis Avenue, Vineland, NJ 08360
 8:30 am All buses arrive at the Maryland House Travel Plaza for a 30-minute comfort/refreshment break
 9:00 am All buses depart Maryland House Travel Plaza
 10:30 am All buses arrive National Mall vicinity of Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC 11:00 am Pre-March Rally
 1:00 pm National March for Life
 3:30 pm All buses depart National Mall, vicinity of Union Station, Washington, DC
 5:00 pm All buses arrive at the Maryland House Travel Plaza for a 30-minute comfort/refreshment break
 5:30 pm All buses depart Maryland House Travel Plaza
 7:00 pm **Bus #3** arrives at Sacred Heart Church, Vineland
 7:30 pm **Bus #1** arrives at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Absecon
 7:45 pm **Bus #2** arrives at Bruce Willis Service Area, Ocean View
 Space is limited!

You must contact Rob Fini at (215) 680-7556 or RobFiniSr@GMail.com to reserve a seat!



**K N I G H T S
O F C O L U M B U S**
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.



DIOCESE OF CAMDEN
**Life & Justice
Ministries**

*“Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.
 In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,
 to do your will, O my God, is my delight,
 and your law is within my heart!” Psalm 40*

Upcoming Liturgical Events and Celebrations February 2026

The Blessing of the Throats in honor of the Feast of Saint Blaise will be held at all masses on Saturday, January 31st, and Sunday, February 1st. A general blessing will be given over the congregation after the announcements but before the final blessing. Individual blessings will also be offered after the final blessing during the final hymn. The blessing of throats commemorates the intercession of Saint Blaise, a bishop and martyr, to heal ailments of the throat and other maladies.

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord will be celebrated at the 8:00 AM mass on Monday, February 2nd. All are welcome to bring in your candles from home for the blessing of candles included in this weekend's liturgy, representing Jesus as the light of the world.

A Mass of Healing will be celebrated at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, February 11th. All in need of praying for physical, emotional and spiritual well-being, are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will also be given at the Mass for those suffering from a chronic illness or those who may have been recently diagnosed with a serious illness.

The **Sinulog Mass** will be celebrated on Sunday, February 15th, at 2:00 PM. All are invited to join our Filipino community as they celebrate the arrival of Christianity in the Philippines and the Filipino spirit of unity, faith and joy.



RESPECT LIFE

“LIFE: OUR SIGN OF HOPE”

Respect Life Reflection

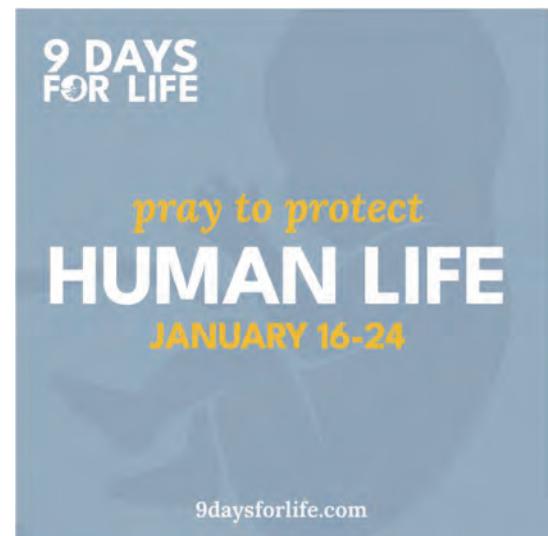
There is perhaps no more beautiful celebration than when parents bring their newborn child to the waters of baptism. Parents, godparents, family, and friends share in this sacrament with incomparable joy. For in baptism, we share in Christ’s death and resurrection, and through the outward signs of water and oil, are made *children of God* and given the hope of eternal life with Him.

“The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope.”

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, death is overcome, and life is victorious. “Hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite not knowing what the future may bring.” Because of this Christian hope, we can face the unknown trials of life with faith rather than fear.

We are called to be signs of hope to all people, especially those whose goodness, value, and dignity are undermined. As members of the Body of Christ, we carry this hope with us as we continue Jesus’ mission on earth. Pope Leo XIV encourages us, “How important it is that each and every baptized person feel himself or herself called by God to be a sign of hope in the world today.”

Sadly, there is a devastating absence of hope today. We see this most profoundly in a sweeping disregard for human life in its most vulnerable forms and stages. Abortion and assisted suicide are products of hopelessness and despair. Yet even amid the increasing attacks on



human life, we know that the “storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death.”

We have been entrusted with a message of hope for the woman who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant or for the man diagnosed with a terminal illness. At these challenging moments, we must bring God’s presence, witnessing to His love, and inspiring a renewal of hope in those whose hearts are burdened. For “hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross.”

“Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

Romans 5:5

Having been “buried with Christ in Baptism, we receive in his resurrection the gift of a new life that breaks down the walls of death.” Confident of God’s presence within us, may we share the Gospel of Life with those most in need of hope, knowing that “the grace of God precedes and accompanies his people as they press forward firm in faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope.”

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Bernard A. Platt, Dir. NJ Lic No 3480

Alison Platt, Dir. NJ Lic No. 4542

Jacob Platt, Dir. NJ Lic No. 5328

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