

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

69 VALLEY STREET, HILLSDALE NJ 07642 • STJOHNHILLSDALE.ORG



AUGUST 23, 2026

21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,
and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it — Matthew 16:18*

PASTOR

Rev. Msgr. Peter Smutelovic

WEEKEND ASSISTANTS

Rev. Bogumil Misiuk
Rev. Frank Lennie

DEACONS

Deacon Jack Gray
Deacon Albert Ganter

• RECTORY 201.664.3131

Cathy Williamson, Office Manager/Outreach
Jennifer Cannon, Business Administrator
Glen Ford, Plant Superintendent

• PARISH CENTER 201.666.2707

Kathy Breitenbach, Registrar / CCD
Roberto Sabastiani, Director of Music
Paulette Gilchrist, Safe Environment Coordinator

• ST. JOHN'S ACADEMY 201.664.6364

Ann Mitchell, Principal

MASS SCHEDULE

SATURDAY VIGIL

5:00 PM

SUNDAY, THE LORD'S DAY

8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM

WEEKDAYS & SATURDAY

8:00 AM

HOLY DAYS

8:00 AM, 12:00 PM, 7:00 PM

CONFESSIONS

- Saturdays 2:00 - 3:00 PM
- After 8:00 AM Mass—Weekdays
- Any time by appointment

A MESSAGE FROM FR. BOGUMIL

An essential part of the structure of the Catholic Church is the office of the papacy. It is the source of visible unity in the Church as well as teaching authority. Because of the office of the papacy, we are one, apostolic Church. The institution of the papacy is well-established historically from the earliest decades of the Church.

Despite so much historical evidence supporting the early Church's reverence and deference to papacy—perceived as the authority given by our Lord Jesus Himself to St. Peter to be perpetuated from generation to generation until His Second Coming in glory—in the last five hundred years the legitimacy of the office of the papacy has been questioned and criticized by Protestants and secularists, who see it as an “invention” by Catholic bishops to maintain control over the laity of the Church.

This Sunday's readings from Sacred Scripture highlight how erroneous this claim is. In the Gospel, our Lord Jesus clearly declares to St. Peter: “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church... I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt 16:18-19).

Nonetheless, the counter argument is often made that the authority granted by Christ is to St. Peter as an individual and not to his alleged successors. That is why today's First Reading is so important as a refutation of this claim. It was customary in the Old Testament Kingdom established by King David for the king to give the “keys to the kingdom” to his prime minister as a symbol of the minister's authority. The prime minister in the Davidic Kingdom was given the authority to “open” and “shut” just like St. Peter is granted the authority by Jesus to “bind” and “loose.” Moreover, like the prime ministers in the Old Testament, the authority of the pope resides in the office, not the person. That is why the authority entrusted by Christ to St. Peter has passed on to his successors throughout the centuries.

St. Peter's papal authority stems from his profession of faith revealed to him supernaturally by Jesus' “heavenly Father.” Therefore, Peter becomes the rock upon which Christ builds His Church, and “the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.” However, that does not mean that Peter always knows the right thing to say, is sinless, or always has the best practical judgment. Case in point: Only a few verses after Jesus praises St. Peter's profession of faith, He rebukes him: “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does but as human beings do” (Mt 16:20). Then Peter famously denies our Lord three times on the eve of the Crucifixion (Mt 26:69-75). Additionally, in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter is hesitant to baptize Gentiles and admit them into the Church until God gives him a clear sign in a dream to do so (Acts 10).

Therefore, the Petrine Office of the papacy does not mean that its current occupant (Pope Leo) or previous popes are without shortcomings worthy of our criticisms. Instead, it means that they are divinely-appointed to be a means of visible unity in the Catholic Church in safeguarding the deposit of faith entrusted to them by our Lord Jesus. Therefore, today and every day may we pray for Pope Leo for wisdom and prudence in fulfilling his obligation to honorably govern the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

Prayers for Healing and Peace:

Kim Costa, Thomas Tobin, Anthony K., Jim Derbyshire, James Carbone, Terry Medino, Anita Lawrence, Ann Walsh, Elaine McBreen, Baby Rocco, Caroline Bisi, Baby Nellie, Liam Fanning, Ken McGlone, Eileen Stasiunis, Bruce Hawkinson, Walter Minx, Mary Lou Wilson, John Manning, Alex Rodriguez, Ruth Dell Valle

Remembering Those Who Have Passed:

Donna Mazarella, Patrick Clohessy

Mass Intentions

*We remember our loved ones
and community*

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22

5:00 PM Edward Laux

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

8:00 AM Mary Ann Lyon

10:00 AM Dorothy Giacomia

12:00 PM Sophie & Matthew
Kudla

MONDAY, AUGUST 24

8:00 AM Frances Delasey

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25

8:00 AM People of the Parish

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

8:00 AM Jozef Smutelovic

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27

8:00 AM John Mirkovich

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28

8:00 AM Giselle Conheeny

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

8:00 AM Anne Ciliberti

5:00 PM Edward Laux

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

8:00 AM Leonardo Poccia

10:00 AM Hubert Stigliano, Jr.

12:00 PM D. Agatha Choo

The **Bread & Wine** are given
in memory of

MARY ANN LYON

at the request of
The Lyon & Damken Families

A Prayer as College Begins

*Lord, as our young people
prepare for a new semester,
make them ready, attentive and
available to hear you.*

*Thank You for their gifts
of being able to rise each day
with the assurance that
You walk through it with them.*

*Thank You for their gifts of
creativity and uniqueness, and the
energy to put them to good use.*

*May all that they are today,
all that they try to do today,
may all their encounters,
reflections, even the frustrations and
failings all be placed in your hands.*

*May the work they do and
the way they do it, bring new
hope, new life, and courage to all they
come in contact with this semester.*

Thank you, Lord. Amen

**"Be strong and steadfast!
Do not fear nor be dismayed,
for the Lord, your God,
is with you wherever you go."
—Joshua 1:9**



When we have a break from our activities, especially in the holidays, we often take up a book we want to read. It is on this very aspect that I would first like to reflect today. Each one of us needs time and space for recollection, meditation and calmness.... Thanks be to God that this is so! In fact, this need tells us that we are not made for work alone, but also to think, to reflect or even simply to follow with our minds and our hearts a tale, a story in which to immerse ourselves, in a certain sense "to lose ourselves" to find ourselves subsequently enriched. Of course, many of these books to read, which we take in our hands during our vacation are at best an escape, and this is normal. Yet various people, particularly if they have more time in which to take a break and to relax, devote themselves to something more demanding. I would therefore like to make a suggestion: why not discover some of the books of the Bible which are not commonly well known? Or those from which we heard certain passages in the liturgy but which we never read in their entirety? Indeed, many Christians never read the Bible and have a very limited and superficial knowledge of it. The Bible, as the name says, is a collection of books, a small "library" that came into being in the course of a millennium. Some of these "small books" of which it is composed are almost unknown to the majority, even people who are good Christians. Today I would like to suggest that you keep the Holy Bible within reach, during the summer period or in your breaks, in order to enjoy it in a new way by reading some of its books straight through, those that are less known and also the most famous, such as the Gospels, but without putting them down.

By so doing moments of relaxation can become in addition to a cultural enrichment also an enrichment of the spirit which is capable of fostering the knowledge of God and dialogue with him, prayer. And this seems to be a splendid holiday occupation: to take a book of the Bible in order to have a little relaxation and at the same time to enter the great realm of the word of God and to deepen our contact with the Eternal One, as the very purpose of the free time that the Lord gives us.

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, August 3, 2011

Please Join Us For A BACKPACK BLESSING

Saturday, September 12 • 11:00 AM

St. John the Baptist Church, Hillsdale

Please join us as we come together as a community of faith and pray for God's blessings for this new school year.

Teachers and students are invited to bring their backpacks for the blessing. We invite all school families to join us for an ice cream social in the Parish Center following the blessing.

OUR PARISH STEWARDSHIP

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2026

		2025	BUDGET
Envelope & In Pew Giving:	\$6,401	\$ 6,596	\$ 7,900
Online Giving via ParishSOFT:	<u>6,442</u>	<u>\$ 4,752</u>	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
TOTAL	\$12,843	\$ 11,348	\$12,900

*Your financial support enables our parish home to continue the mission of the Church.
Thank you and God bless you!*

BEREAVEMENT GROUP MINISTRY

at St. Pius X Parish, Old Tappan

**“Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.”**

Everyone will experience grief at some point in time and it can be overwhelming. If you are grieving the loss of a spouse, parent, child, sibling or other family or friend, you are not alone in your grief. St. Pius X Parish (268 Old Tappan Road, Old Tappan) will begin a series of bereavement meetings on Wednesday, September 9, 7:00 – 8:00pm in a classroom off their church hallway, and following for eight consecutive Wednesday nights, ending on October 28. This is a short time to hopefully help you feel a lot better.

Please contact Lorraine Delling at: lldelling@gmail.com or 201-722-0982. Repeat members are always welcome!

RACHEL'S VINEYARD RETREAT

Rachel's Vineyard is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Weekend retreats offer a supportive, confidential, and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release, and reconcile post-abortive emotions to begin the process of restoration, renewal & healing. The Archdiocesan Respect Life Office will be offering a retreat on the weekend of September 25 – 27, 2026. For further information and to register, please contact Cheryl Riley, Director, Archdiocese Respect Life at 201-912-3272 or email cheryl.riley@rcan.org.

JOB OPPORTUNITY AT SJA



St. John's Academy, a pre-k 3 through 8th grade Catholic school located in Hillsdale, is currently seeking **Part Time Teacher's Aides**.

The position is 5 days per week; approximately 25 – 28 hours per week. The salary is: \$16.00 per hour.

St. John's Academy is also looking for a **Lunch/Recess Aide**. The position is 5 days per week; approximately 2.5 hours per day. The salary is \$16 per hour.

Part time employees are eligible to participate in the 403b Savings Plan.

Qualified candidates should send their cover letter, resume, and credentials to: Mrs. Annie Mitchell at:

amitchell@sja-hillsdale.org

ParishSOFT
Giving

SIGN UP TODAY!



ParishSoft provides the ability to give to St. John's through electronic donations (credit card or direct debit from your bank.) Please use the QR code or visit:



<https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/stjohnhillsdale>

Once you are in the ParishSoft giving page, to begin a giving account, please click on Sign In.

With online enrollment, you can access your account any time to view or make changes to the account info and gifts.

*“Spread love wherever you go.
Let no one come to you
without leaving happier.”*

— St. Therese of Calcutta (1910 - 1997)