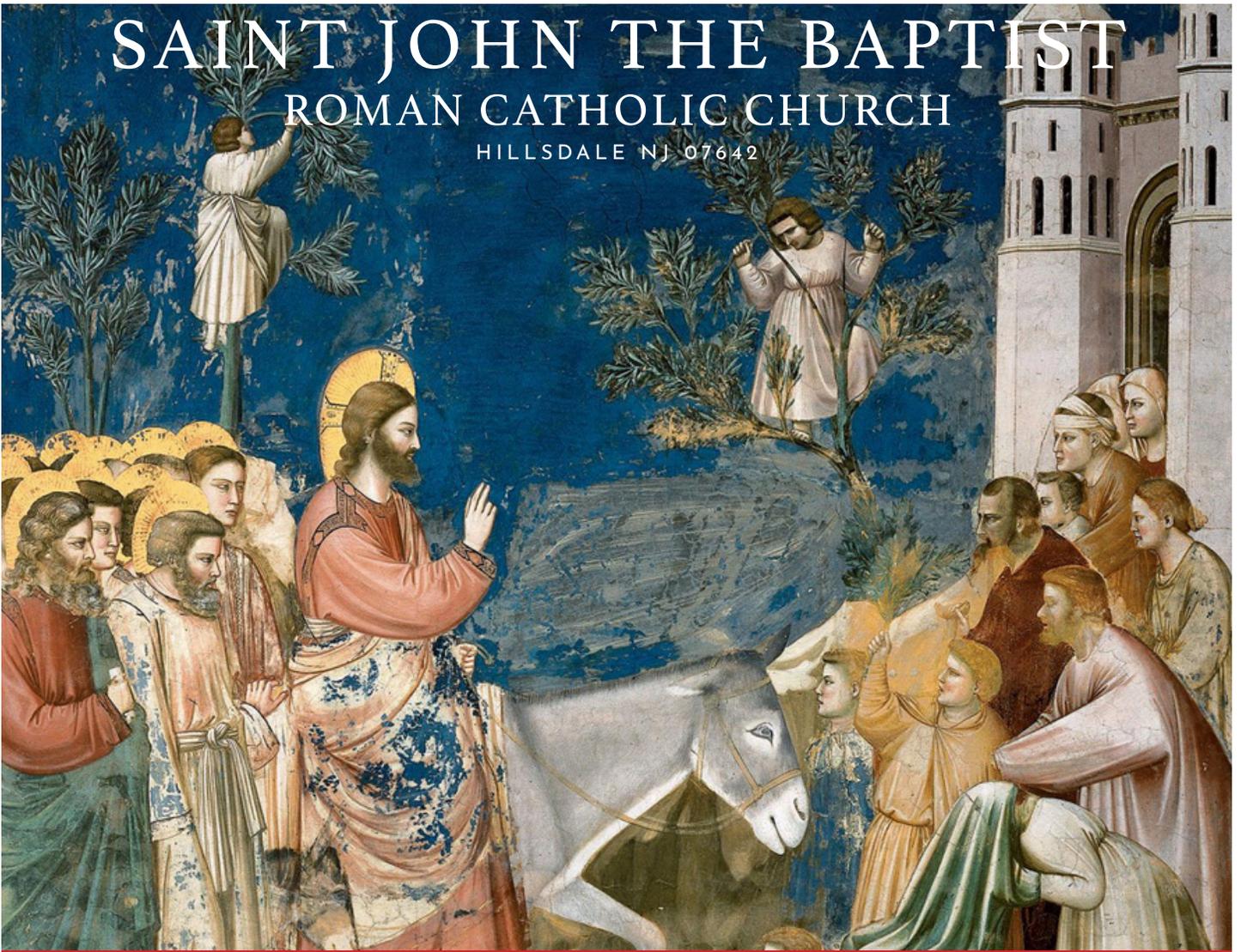


SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

HILLSDALE NJ 07642



MARCH 29, 2026 PALM SUNDAY

“Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.”— Matthew 21:9

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

Brothers and Sisters of the Saint John the Baptist Parish Family,
Friends of our Parish,

As we gather to celebrate Palm Sunday and as we begin Holy Week, I want to thank you for joining us, for your witness of faith and your love of our parish. Our liturgies today don't simply lead us to the celebration of God's redemptive work in the mysteries of His self-giving love - which we celebrate every Easter - but, in fact, every day allow us to experience His closeness through His grace and through our reception of the Sacraments of the Church.

In February 2021, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, Archbishop of Newark, published a Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist entitled "Returning to Grace." In the introduction he noted that outside of many other names we gave to the period of the pandemic, we, as faithful Catholics, who long to gather and celebrate the Eucharist, could also call it "the Great Eucharistic Fast." So many times, during that very challenging period, we all experienced that "fast" of staying away from, or not being together with, our family members and friends, and with other members of our parish. We painfully experienced that "Eucharistic Fast" by not being able to gather and receive the Eucharist.

That is one of the reasons why our liturgies and prayer gatherings today, during Holy Week and Easter, have such a special meaning for us, as a community of faith. The "fast" is long over. We will gather and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord, but also the countless graces received through that Resurrection unraveling in our present time. We will celebrate as a community of the Lord's disciples and friends who long to grow every day in our closeness to Him and our friendship with Him. And, while celebrating these holy mysteries and graces, we will all gather and symbolically embrace each other, sharing in our midst God's loving and eternal embrace.

May our loving Mother, the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph her protector and most chaste spouse, and our heavenly patron, Saint John the Baptist, continue to accompany us and intercede for all of us on our life journeys and throughout this Holy Week. Please be assured of my prayers for every one of you, as well as for all your loved ones.

— Fr. Peter

Prayers for Healing and Peace:

Kim Costa, Thomas Tobin, Anthony K., Peter Spaccarotella, Florence Sacco, Jim Derbyshire, James Carbone, Terry Medino, Anita Lawrence, Ann Walsh, Elaine McBreen, Baby Rocco, Edward Sandt, Jr., Caroline Bisi, Baby Nellie

Remembering Those Who Have Passed:

Patti Barone, Valerie Valko, Tommy Ivancich, Angela Armstrong, Gabriel Rohaidy, Brett Kelly

Mass Intentions

*We remember our loved ones
and community*

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

5:00 PM Angelo Carpentieri &
Pasquale Botta

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

8:00 AM James Farrell
10:00 AM Joan Driscoll
12:00 PM Kathleen Foley

MONDAY, MARCH 30

8:00 AM Fr. Larry Fama (Living)

TUESDAY, MARCH 31

8:00 AM Joel Harvey Gray

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

8:00 AM Bernadette Zacharda

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 2

8:00 AM Morning Prayer Service
7:00 PM Liturgy of the Lord's Supper

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3

8:00 AM Morning Prayer Service
3:00 PM Liturgy of the Lord's Passion
7:00 PM Stations of the Cross

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 4

8:00 AM Morning Prayer Service
12:00 PM Blessing of the Easter Baskets
8:00 PM Easter Vigil Liturgy/Eucharist

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 5

8:00 AM People of the Parish
10:00 AM People of the Parish
12:00 PM People of the Parish

The **Votive Candle** burns
in memory of

BERNADETTE ZACHARDA

at the request of
St. John's Rosary Society

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION?

CONFESSIONS ARE HEARD AT ST. JOHN'S:

- Saturdays, 2:00 - 3:00pm
(with the exception of Holy Saturday)
- Following the 8am weekday Mass
- Any time by appointment

There also will be a
**Deanery-wide Sacrament
of Reconciliation**

on Tuesday, March 31

7:00 - 9:00pm

at St. Andrew's Church
120 Washington Ave, Westwood

Prayer for Holy Week

*Lord, let everything I do in the coming
Holy Week be inspired by You.*

*Help me to remember
that nothing is important in my life
unless it glorifies You in some way.*

*It's so easy to get caught up in
the day to day of my life.*

*Help me to enter fully into your Passion
through my Lenten promises and always
be reminded that You went to the desert,
the garden and the cross for me.*

Amen.



GOOD FRIDAY AND HOLY WEEK— God Saved Us by Serving Us

Jesus “emptied himself, taking the form of a servant” (Phil 2:7). Let us allow these words of the Apostle Paul to lead us into these holy days, when the word of God, like a refrain, presents Jesus as servant: on Holy Thursday, he is portrayed as the servant who washes the feet of his disciples; on Good Friday, he is presented as the suffering and victorious servant (cf. Is 52:13). God saved us by serving us. We often think we are the ones who serve God. No, he is the one who freely chose to serve us, for he loved us first. It is difficult to love and not be loved in return. And it is even more difficult to serve, if we do not let ourselves be served by God.

But how did the Lord serve us? By giving his life for us. We are dear to him; we cost him dearly. Saint Angela of Foligno said she once heard Jesus say: “My love for you is no joke”. His love for us led him to sacrifice himself and to take upon himself our sins. This astonishes us: God saved us by taking upon himself all the punishment of our sins. Without complaining, but with the humility, patience and obedience of a servant, and purely out of love. And the Father upheld Jesus in his service. He did not take away the evil that crushed him, but rather strengthened him in his suffering so that our evil could be overcome by good, by a love that loves to the very end.

Dear brothers and sisters, what can we do in comparison with God, who served us even to the point of being betrayed and abandoned? We can refuse to betray him for whom we were created, and not abandon what really matters in our lives. We were put in this world to love him and our neighbors. Everything else passes away, only this remains. For life is measured by love. So, in these holy days, in our homes, let us stand before the Crucified One, the fullest measure of God's love for us, and before the God who serves us to the point of giving his life, and let us ask for the grace to live in order to serve. May we reach out to those who are suffering and those most in need. May we not be concerned about what we lack, but what good we can do for others. The path of service is the victorious and life-giving path by which we were saved.

*Pope Francis, Palm Sunday Homily, St. Peter's Basilica,
Rome, April 5, 2020*



WHY IS HOLY WEEK SO IMPORTANT FOR US AS CATHOLICS?



Holy Week is the most important week in Catholicism. This week of great reverence and reflection spans the final eight days of Jesus' life—from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. It is astounding how much wisdom, insight and inspiration are available to us during this one week. Here is just a sample of what happens during Holy Week:

- Palm Sunday, Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem
- Monday of Holy Week, Jesus clears out the temple with a whip
- Tuesday of Holy Week, Jesus is anointed with oil at Bethany and preaches on the Mount of Olives
- Spy Wednesday, Jesus is betrayed by Judas
- Holy Thursday, Jesus celebrates the Last Supper, prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, and is arrested
- Good Friday, Jesus is sentenced to death, scourged, beaten, crucified, and dies on the Cross
- Holy Saturday, Jesus is buried in the tomb and descends into hell
- Easter Sunday, Jesus rises from the dead

We are all trying to make sense of life. One way for us to understand our lives is to look at them through the great experiences that happen during Holy Week. Just try this exercise—at the end of every day, ask yourself, “What sort of day did I have today? Did I have an Ash Wednesday day, or did I have an Easter Sunday day? Did I have a Good Friday day, or did I have a Holy Saturday day?”

What defines those sorts of days? Good Friday is an easy one— it's a day of suffering and sacrifice. There are some days you get to the end of, and you feel like that's the kind of day you've had. What's Holy Saturday? It's a day of darkness, doubt, anxiety, confusion, and a day where faith is tested. What's Easter Sunday? It's a day of new life. Maybe there's a birth of a child in the family, and we see it as a miracle, a gift from God. We're trying to make sense of our lives, and God is constantly trying to help us make sense of them. These great moments in the life of the Church and the life of Jesus provide powerful lenses through which we can see our lives in a new way, expanding our understanding of ourselves and others.

Our Holy Week and Easter



PALM SUNDAY – MARCH 28/29

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.” Singing Hosannas we enter the holiest week of the year as we remember Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Liturgically, we follow Jesus through his passion and death through the reading of the Passion Gospel according to Luke.

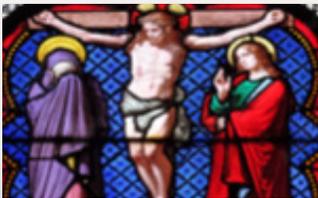


HOLY THURSDAY – APRIL 2

Morning Prayer Service – 8:00 am

Solemn Liturgy of the Lord’s Supper – 7:00 pm

Tonight begins the great Paschal Triduum or “three days.” This day we celebrate the institution of the great gift of Jesus’ Body and Blood to us in the Eucharist. We end tonight in the garden of Gethsemane with Jesus, as the Eucharist is processed to the Tabernacle and we are invited “To watch and pray.”



GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 3

Morning Prayer Service – 8:00 am

Solemn Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion – 3:00 pm

Stations of the Cross – 7:00 pm

We solemnly recall the death of Jesus. Our focus is on the cross of Christ - the Cross which became for us the sign of our salvation from sin and death. As we venerate the cross, we are reminded that we have been invited to share with Christ in carrying our own cross.



HOLY SATURDAY – APRIL 4

Morning Prayer Service – 8:00 am

Blessing of the Easter Baskets – 12:00 pm

Solemn EASTER VIGIL Liturgy & Eucharist – 8:00pm

This evening is the “most noble of all solemnities, when the faithful, with lamps burning, should be watchful for the Lord’s return.” (Roman Missal) It is the privileged time for Baptism. This night starts with the service of Light, with the Easter Fire, and lighting of the great Paschal candle. We hear again the stories of God’s saving power and we celebrate the great Alleluias of the Lord’s victory over death in the Resurrection and celebrate Eucharist.



EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 5

8:00 am, 10:00 am and 12:00 pm

The great victory of the Lord over death “I am risen and with you still.” (Roman Missal entrance antiphon) We are filled with wonder and joy. Today we renew our own Baptismal promises and commit ourselves anew to the task of working toward and spreading the good news of the reign of Christ. We look forward in joyful hope to the promise of new life over death for ourselves and all creation.

OUR PARISH STEWARDSHIP

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026

	2025	BUDGET
Envelope & In Pew Giving:	\$ 8,616	\$ 7,900
Online Giving via ParishSOFT:	<u>5,241</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
TOTAL	\$13,857	\$12,900

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

PARISH OFFICES CLOSED

The Parish Office will close at noon on Holy Thursday, April 2, and remain closed all day on Good Friday, April 3 and Easter Monday, April 6. May all of you have a blessed Holy Week & Easter!

EUCCHARISTIC MIRACLES EXHIBIT AT ST. PETER'S

The Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit will be at St. Peter the Apostle Church in River Edge from April 1-12. This traveling display explores reported Eucharistic miracles — extraordinary events in which the consecrated host and wine have visibly transformed or exhibited unexplained properties — building off the work of Saint Carlo Acutis. All are invited to reflect on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist through this free exhibit. Details and viewing times:

www.saint-peter.org/exhibit

FIRST COMMUNION OUTFITS THANK YOU

The 2026 First Communion Outfits collection at St. John's was a great success! We were able to dress about 150 children with the beautiful dresses, suits, jackets, shirts, headpieces, shoes and monies that were so generously donated to make their day one to cherish! We want to especially thank Rose Brue of Washington Township, who made and donated beautiful, lace-trimmed Communion veils! Outfits were first distributed to needy children in the local area. Then we distributed them in Newark to St. Rose of Lima Parish and Sacred Heart Cathedral. Thank you for your continued support, caring, and generosity. You have made a HUGE difference in the lives of so many children. May God bless you!



As we all celebrate at Easter the boundless GENEROSITY OF GOD towards us, let us be - as a community of faith and as the Lord's disciples - GENEROUS TO OUR DEAR PARISH. Thank you!

May OUR LOVING AND ETERNAL GOD, THE GIVER OF ALL GIFTS, bless you and reward you!



PLEASE HELP US REACH OUR GOAL!

So far we have received \$66,006 in pledges and donations for the 2026 Archdiocesan Annual Appeal. We are very grateful to the 151 families and individual parishioners who have helped us with this campaign. Every donation gets us closer to our goal of \$98,750.



Please complete a pledge envelope — they are at the doors of the church. The envelopes may be returned in the collection basket or to the Rectory Office or even mailed directly. You may also make your pledge online by using the QR code or by visiting www.rcan.org/sharing. **Please indicate on all pledges and donations that you are a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Hillsdale.**

May God bless you always for helping those less fortunate than ourselves.

The washing of the feet and the sacrament of the Eucharist: two expressions of one and the same mystery of love entrusted to the disciples, so that, Jesus says, "as I have done... so also must you do."

— St. John Paul II (1920 - 2005)



WeAreHisWitnesses.org
for updates, timelines
and resources.