

# SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

69 VALLEY STREET, HILLSDALE NJ 07642 • STJOHNHILLSDALE.ORG



**FEBRUARY 1, 2026**

## 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. — Matthew 5:7-8*

### 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 Sebastiani, 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

8:00 AM

#### HOLY DAYS

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

#### CONFESIONS

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

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

Thank you for joining our family of faith in celebration of this Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time. I am happy and grateful to the Lord that we together “survived” such a major snowstorm this past weekend, as well as this very cold weather. Over 400 of us gathered in our Spiritual Home (obviously most of us at the 5PM Mass on Saturday - over 340), and every one of the Masses was prayerful and filled with our community’s warmth.

The beautiful passage from the Fifth Chapter of Mark’s Gospel, which we know and cherish under a heartwarming title “The Beatitudes,” provides a fitting spiritual “background” for two special events of this past week: Catholic Schools Week and the beginning of the 2026 Annual Appeal. Both of these occasions certainly give us - as a family of the Lord’s disciples - an opportunity to live the Beatitudes in our own personal and spiritual lives, and, to be, in these modern and often challenging times, kind, generous, meek, merciful, loving, caring, clean of heart.

The Parish Community of Saint John the Baptist is proud of our Saint John’s Academy and grateful for the wonderful service of education, faith formation, spiritual and personal growth which the Academy continues to provide to our communities, our country and the entire world. We are profoundly grateful to all of you who have been and will continue to be - in any way - a part of this magical story of faith, education, love, dedication and Christian witness.

The Annual Appeal, which is being announced now (Pledge Weekend will occur the first weekend in March), offers an opportunity for a caring community like St. John’s to support a broad variety of charitable efforts of our local Catholic Church. It funds essential programs and ministries at the heart of our Catholic mission - namely to proclaim the Gospel, to pass on the faith to future generations, particularly through the celebration of the sacraments, and to care for the poor and those on the margins. You may have received a letter from Cardinal Tobin inviting you to make a gift to the Appeal. So far 41 of our parishioners have already done so. I encourage all of you to review the letter and prayerfully consider making a pledge. If you do choose to participate, please be sure to include on the envelope that you are a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Hillsdale.

Please know that I am very grateful for all your kindness, witness of your faith, and the goodness of your hearts.

— Fr. Peter

### **Prayers for Healing and Peace:**

Kim Costa, Rose Lyons, Thomas Tobin, Anthony K., Peter Spaccaretta, Frank Angioletti, Ryan Artinger, Ronnie Verra, Florence Sacco, Daniel Tintle, Jr., Jim Derbyshire, James Carbone, Terry Medino, Anita Lawrence, Nick Hodgman, Deacon Jack Gray, Ann Walsh

### **Remembering Those Who Have Passed:**

Rev. John Howren, Ramona Suarez-Rose, Florence Conti, Stephen Rose, Carol Gunby, William Geier, Chuck Wintermute

## **Mass Intentions**

**We remember our loved ones and community**

### **SATURDAY, JANUARY 31**

5:00 PM Jozef Smutelovic

### **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1**

8:00 AM Joseph McDonald  
(30th Anniversary)

10:00 AM Eugene Fagnano

12:00 PM Nicholas Festa

### **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2**

8:00 AM Patti Bonomolo

### **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

8:00 AM Mike Delehanty

### **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

8:00 AM Patti Bonomolo

### **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5**

8:00 AM Joe Felice

### **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6**

8:00 AM Mary Schubert-Schultz  
(1st Anniversary)

### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7**

8:00 AM Donna Tinsley  
(1st Anniversary)

5:00 PM Ciro Jimenez

### **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8**

8:00 AM People of the Parish  
10:00 AM Robert & Florence Conti  
12:00 PM T.J. Farrell

The **Votive Candle** burns  
in memory of  
**SOPHIE KUDLA**

at the request of *The DiGregorio Family*

The **Bread & Wine** are offered  
in memory of  
**NICHOLAS FESTA**

at the request of *The Festa Family*

# ANNUAL APPEAL 2026



The 2026 Annual Appeal has begun! This is an opportunity to support essential ministries and programs of our Archdiocese. Your sacrificial support makes it possible for the Archdiocese to carry out the important work that we are all called to do as missionary disciples of Jesus. Please make a gift online today by visiting [rcan.org/sharing](http://rcan.org/sharing) or by scanning the QR code. Be sure to list St. John the Baptist, Hillsdale as your parish!

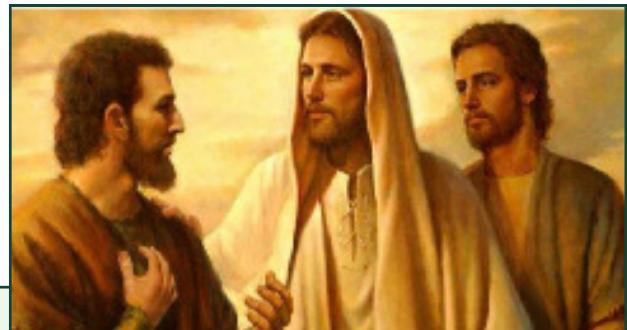
## FEAST OF ST. BLAISE TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Please join us at the 8:00am Mass on Tuesday for the individual Blessing of Throats.

We will then bless all of you, in a special way, on the following Sunday.



**WHOEVER  
IS PRAYING  
FOR SNOW,  
PLEASE STOP!**



## WE ARE ONLY CHRISTIANS IF WE ENCOUNTER CHRIST

In the ancient Church Baptism was also called “illumination”, because this Sacrament gives light; it truly makes one see. In Paul what is pointed out theologically was also brought about physically: healed of his inner blindness, he sees clearly. Thus St Paul was not transformed by a thought but by an event, by the irresistible presence of the Risen One whom subsequently he would never be able to doubt, so powerful had been the evidence of the event, of this encounter.

Paul never spoke of this event in detail, I think because he presumed that everyone knew the essentials of his story: everyone knew that from being a persecutor he had been transformed into a fervent apostle of Christ. And this had not happened after his own reflection, but after a powerful event, an encounter with the Risen One. The clearest text found is in his narrative of what constitutes the centre of salvation history: the death and Resurrection of Jesus and his appearances to witnesses (cf. 1 Corinthians 15). In the words of the ancient tradition, which he too received from the Church of Jerusalem, he says that Jesus died on the Cross, was buried and after the Resurrection appeared risen first to Cephas, that is Peter, then to the Twelve, then to 500 brethren, most of whom were still alive at Paul’s time, then to James and then to all the Apostles. And to this account handed down by tradition he adds, “Last of all... he appeared also to me” (1 Corinthians 15: 8). Thus he makes it clear that this is the foundation of his apostolate and of his new life.

Turning now to ourselves, let us ask what this means for us. It means that for us too Christianity is not a new philosophy or a new morality. We are only Christians if we encounter Christ. Of course, he does not show himself to us in this overwhelming, luminous way, as he did to Paul to make him the Apostle to all peoples. But we too can encounter Christ in reading Sacred Scripture, in prayer, in the liturgical life of the Church. We can touch Christ’s Heart and feel him touching ours. Only in this personal relationship with Christ, only in this encounter with the Risen One do we truly become Christians.

*Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, Vatican, 3 September 2008*

# Our Seminarian Joseph Grabowski

## *My Journey with the Lord, Toward the Sacrament of Holy Orders*

A warm greeting of grace and peace to all my fellow parishioners at St. John the Baptist. As I start a new semester in my fourth year of priestly formation, I want to provide an update on how this year has gone so far and some of the milestones that I have made.

On October 5th, I was instituted to the Ministry of Acolyte. This ministry is a prerequisite to receiving Holy Orders and must be conferred by a bishop, in this case, newly appointed Auxiliary Bishop Bismark Chau. As an acolyte, I have a special responsibility to assist priests and deacons in carrying out their ministry and to act as a special minister of Holy Communion, especially to the sick and the shut-in. This ministry has been particularly advantageous as I have been ministering once a week at St. Joseph's University Medical Center in Paterson, NJ.



On November 23rd, I received the Rite of Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders. This is the final step taken by a seminarian as he moves towards ordination. In this rite, Auxiliary Bishop Elias Lorenzo, O.S.B., formally recognized that the Archdiocese of Newark finds that I have a true vocation to the priesthood. In this liturgy, Bishop Lorenzo asked the Lord to pour out a special blessing upon me, and my fellow candidates, that we may be able to persevere in vocation and, "clinging to Christ the Priest with sincere charity, may be able to take up apostolic office worthily."

It is still a little early to make any definite plans, but God-willing, it looks like I would receive ordination to the diaconate in May 2027 and to the priesthood in May 2028.

As we begin 2026 and quickly approach Lent beginning on February 18th, I am looking forward to remaining a visible presence at St. John's when my 18-credit schedule allows, and to once again serve at the Sacred Paschal Triduum and on Easter Sunday.

Thank you for your persistent prayers and support, they mean the world to me as I navigate this path toward priesthood. Please continue to pray for more vocations to the priesthood, permanent diaconate, and religious life. I promise you are in my prayers as well.

Faithfully yours in Christ,  
Joseph

# St. John's Academy

FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE

Our children, young people, and families

FROM OVER **50** DIFFERENT ZIP CODES IN NJ & NY

already know what a special community of learning,  
faith, growth, and service we are.



Join us for our **Catholic Schools Week**

## OPEN HOUSE

**Sunday, February 1 • 11:30am – 1:30pm**



[sjahillsdale.org](http://sjahillsdale.org)

St. John's Academy | 460 Hillsdale Ave | Hillsdale, NJ



**It feels different because it *is* different.**

# OUR PARISH STEWARDSHIP

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026 (Snowstorm)**

Envelope & In Pew Giving:	\$4,181
Online Giving via ParishSOFT:	5,241
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,422</b>

**2025**

\$ 8,097
\$ 4,813

**BUDGET**

\$ 7,900
\$ 5,000

\$ 12,910

\$ 12,900

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

## 2026 Wedding Anniversary Masses

The Office for Family Life Ministry will honor couples celebrating their 5th, 25th, 50th or 60th+ wedding anniversary with a Mass celebrated by Cardinal Tobin on Sunday, May 3, at 3 pm at the Cathedral Basilica in Newark. Registration deadline is April 14. Please contact the rectory at 201-664-3131 during office hours to register.

## 2026 WOMEN'S CORNERSTONE RETREAT – March 6 & 7

Step away, unplug, and do something just for you. You'll be uplifted, inspired, and surrounded by women walking through the same everyday challenges, growing in faith together, and forming friendships that feel like a breath of fresh air. Every need is taken care of - simply show up, rest, reflect, and soak in God's presence. Come alone or bring a friend.

The retreat is **Friday, March 6 - 7pm to 10pm and Saturday, March 7 - 7:00am to 8:00pm** in the parish center. Take an invitation at the door and pray on it. You'll be so grateful you said yes!

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Suzanne Pearson: 201.267.7502;  
Stefanie Streeter: 201.415.2577 or  
email SJWCornerstone@gmail.com

## ST. JOHN'S ACADEMY'S RED & WHITE GALA

St. John's Academy in Hillsdale, NJ is thrilled to host the 26th Annual Red & White Gala on Thursday, March 19, 2026 from 6-10pm at the beautiful Edgewood Country Club located at 449 Rivervale Road in River Vale, NJ! The SJA Red & White Gala is a tremendously popular annual event that draws people from far and wide for a night of fun, food and prizes! Tickets go on sale on February 2nd! Tickets are \$125 if purchased before March 2nd, after March 2nd tickets will cost \$150. To register to attend, please visit: <https://sjahillsdale.org/gala/>. The night includes a cocktail hour, sit-down dinner and hundreds of amazing prizes!

Sponsorships are also available! Questions? Please contact Christina Uzzi and Andrea Scirocco, St. John's Academy Red & White Gala Co-Chairs: [sjaredandwhitegala@gmail.com](mailto:sjaredandwhitegala@gmail.com) or contact St. John's Academy at (201) 664-6364.

## The Blessed Mother loves her children's visits.



**Mother's doors are  
open 365 days a year**

**7am - 7pm**

- ✖ Stop by
- ✖ Say a prayer
- ✖ Light a candle

“The Beatitudes show us the path that leads to the Kingdom of God and to happiness: the path of humility, compassion, meekness, justice and peace. To be a saint is to walk on this road.”

— Pope Francis (1936 - 2025)



Visit [WeAreHisWitnesses.org](http://WeAreHisWitnesses.org)  
for updates, timelines and resources.