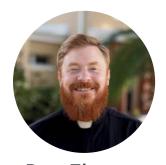


# WHO WE ARE



Rev. Thomas Kennell, Pastor



Dcn. Timothy Warner



Don. Earl Mirus



Sr. Grace Ford, Er. Dio - Principal

#### **Mass Schedule**

Weekend Masses Saturday Vigil | 4:30pm Sunday | 8:15am & 10:45am

**Daily Mass** 

Monday, Wednesday, Friday | 8:15am Tuesday, Thursday | 5:30pm First Saturdays | 9:00 Latin *Novus Ordo* 

**Adoration** 

First Fridays | 9am-5pm

Confession

Tuesdays and Thursdays | 4:30-5:20pm Saturdays | 3:00-4:15pm Second Sundays | After Each Mass To schedule a confession, email confession@saintjohnpc.org. Emails are confidential and go directly to Fr. Kennell

**Flocknote** 

Text STJ to 84576

Receive text message or email announcements

**Parish Council** 

Christine Macejka Diane Skoriak Steve Shea Olivia Clemons Marilyn Percy Rob Griffith John Maceluch Jr. Lonn Blankenship Register as a Member Visit the parish office

To register as a parishioner, contact the parish office for a registration card

**Parish Staff** 

Parish Office - 850-763-1821 saintjohnpc@saintjohnpc.org Open Mon-Thurs 9am-3pm

Grace Griffith | Secretary
Lynn Sokoloski | Facilities Manager
Heather Hanna | Event Coordinator
Jera Blanchard-Towns | Family & Children's Catechesis
Dot Wagner | Coordinator of Youth Formation
Nick Labrie | Director of Mission Operations
Me-Gan Vu | Director of Sacred Music

Bulletin Requests: Please email bulletin@saintjohnpc.org. Submissions are due by noon on Mondays.
Bulletin Ad Requests: To publish an ad in the back of our bulletin, contact Mary Frericks at 404-771-2564 or MFrericks@Diocesan.com

**Finance Council** 

Chris Brooks | Finance Council Chair

Jackie Fowler Dcn. Earl Mirus Sean McNeil Tim Wheeler Sr. Grace Ford Donna Couchigian

# **SACRAMENTAL QUESTIONS?**

#### Children | Through 5th Grade

Jera Blanchard-Towns | Children's Catechesis jera.blanchard-towns@saintjohnpc.org

Contact for questions regarding Baptism, First Communion, First Reconciliation, & Living Liturgically (formation program for grades K-5)

#### Youth | Grades 6-12

Dot Wagner | Youth Formation youth@saintjohnpc.org

Contact for Confirmation and questions regarding Catholic Student Ministries (CSM)

#### Adults | 18+

Fr. Thomas Kennell | Pastor catholicism@saintjohnpc.org

Contact for questions regarding Adult Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion

**Visiting the Sick/Homebound** - please call the parish office to set up a visit with a priest or lay person to bring communion or check on a homebound person

Anointing of the Sick - call the parish office at any time

**Holy Matrimony** - contact the parish office six months prior to your anticipated wedding date

\*The Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee encourages anyone who may have been abused by any clergy person, employee, or volunteer in ministry with the Church, or who knows of such abuse, to contact local law enforcement or the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873) and Shannon D. Mullen, Ph.D. CSAT at 229-233-8009. Español - Dcn. Santiago Molina, 850-222-6482

# MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Holy Day of Obligation, Thursday January 1st

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, celebrated on January 1, honors one of the Church's most profound and ancient truths: that the Virgin Mary is truly the Mother of God because her Son, Jesus Christ, is fully divine and fully human. This title, affirmed at the Council of Ephesus in 431, safeguards our faith in the Incarnation: God truly entered human history, not as an idea or symbol, but as a person born of a woman. By honoring Mary under this title, the Church ultimately proclaims who Christ is: Emmanuel, God-withus.



Vigil Mass | 7pm, Wednesday December 31st Jan 1st Masses | 8:15am, Noon, 5:30pm

#### Celebrating the Whole Christmas Season

Many people are surprised to learn that Catholics celebrate Christmas not just a single day but as an entire season. The Christmas Season begins with the **Nativity of the Lord** on December 25 and continues until the **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord**, which is celebrated on January 11th this year. This extended season allows the Church to linger over the mystery of the Incarnation, rejoicing that God has entered our world and remains with us.

At the heart of the Christmas Season is the **Christmas Octave**, the eight-day period from December 25 through January 1. During these days, the Church celebrates Christmas as one continuous feast, as if every day were Christmas Day itself. Each day of the Octave highlights a different aspect of the mystery.

Within the Octave, the Church celebrates the **Feast of the Holy Family**, usually on the Sunday after Christmas, today. This feast invites families to look to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as a model of love, patience, and faithfulness in everyday life. It is a beautiful opportunity to pray together as a family, ask God's blessing on the home, and reflect on how Christ dwells in the ordinary moments of family life.

The Octave concludes with the **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**, on January 1<sup>st</sup>, a Holy Day of Obligation. This feast is not placed on January 1 to mark the civil new year, but liturgically as the culmination of the Octave of Christmas. On this day, Catholics honor Mary's unique role in God's plan of salvation and reflect on her faithful response to God in bearing His Son.

Catholics are invited to celebrate and live the Christmas Season from December 25th through the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord by keeping the joy and wonder of the Nativity alive in their homes and hearts. How can we do this? During the Octave of Christmas, December 25th through January 1st, the Church encourages feasting and rejoicing each day as if it were Christmas itself. You might also leave up Nativity scenes and decorations until the Baptism of the Lord on January 11th and continue to pray with Christmas devotionals and scheduling time to perform acts of charity and hospitality.

By intentionally savoring this extended celebration, we allow the mystery of the Incarnation to deepen in our lives, bringing the light, peace, and love of Christ into ordinary daily moments and strengthening our relationship with God and with others.

# ON THE COVER

The Nativity of Jesus, Caravaggio, 1609

Caravaggio's *The Nativity of Jesus*, painted in 1609, presents the birth of Christ with striking humility and theological depth. Unlike idealized Renaissance depictions filled with celestial splendor, Caravaggio places the mystery of the Incarnation firmly within the poverty of the real world. The scene unfolds in deep shadow, illuminated only by a soft light, reminding us that Christ enters history quietly, without spectacle, yet with saving power. This visual restraint invites the viewer into both adoration and contemplation.

At the center of the painting lies the Christ Child, resting not in a manger but directly on the ground, laying on simple cloth. This powerful detail reflects the Catholic understanding of *kenosis*, Christ's self-emptying love (Philippians 2:6–7). The ground beneath Him symbolizes the world He comes to redeem, while His vulnerability foreshadows the sacrifice of the Cross. Caravaggio thus unites Christmas and Calvary, reminding us that the Child born in Bethlehem is the same who will offer Himself for our salvation.

Hovering above the scene, an angel descends bearing a banner inscribed with the words "Gloria in excelsis Deo"... Glory to God in the highest. This heavenly proclamation contrasts with the poverty below. The angel's presence reminds us that the Nativity is both an earthly event and a cosmic one, and that God's presence and activity abound even in the most hidden and humble places and moments.

Mary is depicted not as a queen but as a weary young mother. Seated low, her posture is subdued and reflective. Her quiet presence embodies the humility and obedience of the "handmaid of the Lord." St. Joseph stands protectively nearby, partially in shadow, representing faithful guardianship and trust in God's plan. Also present are St. Francis of Assisi and St. Lawrence, saints known for their radical poverty and service to the poor, reinforcing the Gospel message that Christ is most clearly encountered among the lowly.

The use of chiaroscuro, Caravaggio's dramatic contrast between light and darkness, carries rich theological meaning. The darkness surrounding the figures evokes a world wounded by sin, while the gentle light falling upon Christ signifies the true Light that "shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5).

As we reflect on this sacred image, we are invited to seek Christ not in grandeur, but in humility, simplicity, and loving service, where God still chooses to dwell.





St. Francis of Asissi (L) and St. Joseph (R)





# **UPCOMING & NOTEWORTHY**

#### Joseph Elmore at St. John

#### **Visiting over Christmas**

Our parish's seminarian, Mr. Joseph Elmore, is joining us over Christmas. Welcome back, Joseph! Our parish is praying for you!

#### Office Holiday Schedule

#### Office closed | Dec 23 - Jan 2

The parish office will be closed December 23-January 2 to allow staff time with their families over the holidays. Emails and phone messages will be checked periodically. In case of urgent need of the Sacraments, select 1 on the phone prompt to be connected to the emergency line. Thank you and enjoy this Christmas Season!

#### **January Women's Social**

#### Jan 3 | 10am-12pm

Join us for our next Women's Social on the first Saturday of January at 10am in the parish hall! Our event will be a dance lesson, led by Amanda from PC Kicks. Wear comfy clothing as we learn to dance. All experience levels welcome!

#### **Piece Makers Crafting Group**

#### First Meeting | Jan 10

A new group will be meeting on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month in the parish hall from 10am-1pm. All interested crafters (age 18+) are welcome! Woodworking, ceramics, sewing, quilting, knit, crochet, or other needle crafts, paper crafts, card or wreath making, painting, art...the list goes on! Come and join us! Contact: Susie Prather at (281) 844-0844.

#### **Catholic Charities Food Pantry**

#### Your generosity helps local families!

Thank you to all who have donated! Food items may be brought to the wagon in the church entryway. To make a gift or learn more about our Food Assistance Programs, please scan the code, or visit ccnwfl.org/food-assistance

#### 2026 Jubilee Mass Dates

#### **Celebrate with Bishop Wack**

Sacramentally married couples celebrating their 1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th or any year beyond 50, are invited to a special liturgy with the Bishop. Register below:





Tallahassee

Pensacola

#### **Events this Week**

#### Sunday, December 28

\*\*OCIA Class - does not meet today

Coffee & Donuts - In parish hall after both Masses

#### Tuesday, December 30

**6:15pm** - Catholic in Recovery in parish office

\*\*Encounter on break until January

#### Wednesday, December 31

**7:00pm** - Vigil Mass for Holy Day of Obligation for Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

#### Thursday, January 1 - Holy Day of Obligation

8:15am - Mass, Mary Mother of God

12:00pm - Mass, Mary Mother of God

5:30pm - Mass, Mary Mother of God

#### Friday, January 2

9:00am-5:00pm - First Friday Adoration in church

#### Saturday, January 3

8:30am - Fishers of Men at St. Dominic

9:00am - First Saturday Latin Novus Ordo Mass

10:00am - Women's Social in parish hall

#### Sunday, January 4

9:30-10:30am - OCIA In parish office

Coffee & Donuts - In parish hall after both Masses

#### **First Communion Preparation**

#### Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

Our First Communion program is for all families with a (baptized) child in grades 2-5. The program includes date nights for parents, family time, community events and a day retreat. To register or learn more, contact Jera at jera.blanchard-towns@saintjohnpc.org.

#### **Order of Christian Initiation of Adults**

#### Sundays 9:30-10:30am | Parish Office

Considering becoming Catholic or learning more about the Catholic Faith? Contact Deacon Tim Warner at (850) 596-2974 to learn more!

**Note:** There will be **no** OCIA class today, December 28.

#### **Choir Interest**

#### **Music Ministry**

Interested in participating in parish life through our choir? Please scan the codes below! For minors (17 & under), please contact music@saintjohnpc.org directly before scheduling an audition.



Music Ministry and Choir Interest Form https://forms.gle/g3gM rLkwPJese9jp8



Open (Informal) Choir Auditions Sign-Up https://calendly.com/musicsaintjohnpc/choir-auditions

# **BIBLE STUDIES**

#### **Men's Bible Study**

In the Parish Office

Meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month. Contact Warren Phillips at (850) 896-0801. We are on break for the holidays after December 10<sup>th</sup>. 2026 schedule coming soon!

#### **Women's Bible Study**

Starting Again January 7th | Parish Office

Contemplate the Life of Jesus through our study based around "The Chosen". Join us to watch, discuss, and grow closer to the Lord! Contact Kathy Kidd: (850) 814-7747, or Martha Cordell: (850) 814-4619 for more info! Join us when we meet again after the holidays on January 7th.

#### Men's Coffee & Bible Study in PCB

Mondays | 7-7:50am

Starbucks on US-98 & R. Jackson

Join the men of St. John for fellowship and Bible Study before the workday starts! For more information, contact Curt Simmons at (615) 617-9119. We continue to meet during the holidays.

# ST. JOHN CATHOLIC ACADEMY PRESCHOOL REARIENCE EXPERIENCED PRESCHOOL TEACHER Do you have a heart for children and a gift for teaching? We're looking for an experienced preschool teacher to join our community. Share your skills, creativity, and love of learning while helping little ones grow in knowledge and faith. Preschool/early childhood teaching experience required Passion for nurturing children in a faith-filled environment Strong communication and classroom management skills Apply today by scanning the QR code below or emailing to employment@sjseagles.org.

#### Join us in Prayer

To add anyone to the prayer list, please visit saintjohnpc.org/prayer-request. Prayer requests will be in the bulletin for a month/as requested.

#### Repose of the Soul

†Robert Garcia, †Paul Schmidt

#### **Healing**

Cora Smith, Louis Sexton, Kathleen McDermott, Robert Bazemore, Richard LeFils

#### **Mass Intentions**

To request a Mass for a loved one, please call or visit the parish office

Saturday, December 27, 2025

4:30pm.....People of the Parish

Sunday, December 28, 2025

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

8:15am.....Ken & Anita Thomas -Happy Anniversary!

10:45am....Lucy Rodriguez & Steven Rodriguez by their mother, Lucy Rodriguez

Monday, December 29, 2025

8:15am....†Jimmie Carroll by Jennie Phillips

Tuesday, December 30, 2025

5:30pm....†Al Kidd by Jennie Phillips

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

8:15am....†Doris Fisher by Cindy Vitter

7:00pm....People of the Parish

Thursday, January 1, 2026

8:15am...†Jack Nelson by

James & Laura McManus

12:00pm..Fr. Kennell & Diocesan Clergy by CCW

5:30pm...†Zoe Fidelis Labrie

Friday, January 2, 2026

8:15am.....Sanctification of Priests

Saturday, January 3, 2026

9:00am....†Amber Catalano Smith by Martha Cordell

4:30pm....†Bill Cordell by Martha Cordell

Sunday, January 4, 2026

The Epiphany of the Lord

8:15am.....Clint Mayo by Theresa & James Garcia 10:45am...People of the Parish

Scripture Readings, Week of Dec 28, 2025

Sun The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

**Mon** 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35

**Tues** 1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-8a; 8b-9, 10; Lk 2:36-40

Wed 1 Jn 2:18-21; Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13; Jn 1:1-18

Thur Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Num 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7;

Lk 2:16-21

Fri Memorial of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church

1 Jn 2:22-28; Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Jn 1:19-28

Sat 1 Jn 2:29-3:6; Ps 98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6; Jn 1:29-34

Sun The Epiphany of the Lord

Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13; Mt 2:1-12

#### The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

December: For Christians in areas of conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope.



# DIRECTORY OF MINISTRIES

#### **Adoration (St. Dominic)**

St. Dom Parish Office....850-785-4574 St. Dominic's has a perpetual adoration chapel. Contact their parish office for the door code or to sign-up for a weekly hour

Association of St. Jude

Don Rauscher.....850-271-3365

**Carmelites** 

Angie Cirabisi......317-526-8614

**Catholic in Recovery** 

Diane.....850-541-3326 Wayne.....850-532-0421

Open for all who are in recovery from any form of unhealthy attachment

Council of Catholic Women

Susie Prather.....281-844-0844

Fishers of Men (St. Dominic)

Stephen Butler...............850-832-6434
Twice monthly breakfast on the first and third Saturdays of each month from 8:30-10:30am at St. Dominic's MC3 building.
Breakfasts will resume in January.

**Knights of Columbus** 

Mike Tierney......850-319-1945

**Lending Library** 

Located in the parish office (M-Th 9-3)

Men's Club

Lee Fry.....850-867-3916

#### Men's Bible Study

Warren Phillips......850-896-0801

#### Ministry to the Sick

Contact the parish office to arrange for the Eucharist to be brought to anyone who is sick or homebound

#### Mission 850

#### 850mission@gmail.com

Provides disaster relief services and hosts service projects every 2nd Saturday of the month

#### **Morning Rosary**

Every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday from 7:30-8am (before Mass)

#### **Music Ministry**

Me-Gan Vu.....music@saintjohnpc.org

Scan the code to fill out the interest form for joining the choir/music team. Email Me-Gan directly for minors interested in joining.



#### Rachel's Vineyard

904-221-3232......rachelsvineyard.org Retreats for women and men looking to renew hearts broken by abortion

#### **The Third Option**

A program for couples & individuals to help their relationships flourish. Fall schedule coming soon.

#### Women's Morning Bible Study

#### Women's Socials

heather.hanna@saintjohnpc.org
Typically on the first Saturday of the
month, from 10am-noon in the parish hall.
The next social will be January 3rd.

# Young Professional Fellowship

Scan the QR code to join the GroupMe to stay up-to-date on bible studies & gatherings





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