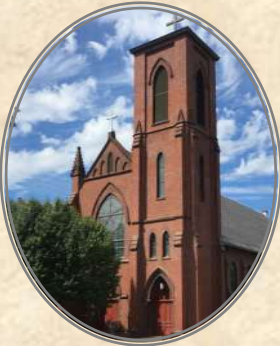


# Mary, Mother of the Church Parish

## ST. MARY

45 Crosswicks Street  
Bordentown, NJ 08505



REV. MARTIN O'REILLY, Pastor  
REV. CESAR R. ANSON, Parochial Vicar  
REV. J.C. GARRETT, Weekend Assistant

### Deacon

Gary T. Richardson

Parish Office: 609-298-0261

Fax: 609-298-7178

Email: [info@mmtcp.org](mailto:info@mmtcp.org)

### Retired Deacons

Lawrence W. Finn Thomas F. Shea

## HOLY ASSUMPTION

1290 Hornberger Avenue  
Roebling, NJ 08554



Parish Emergency # 609-203-5617 (Please Use for Emergencies Outside of Normal Business Hours)

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

# ARE YOU NOT THE CHRIST?

— LUKE 23:39 —

NOVEMBER 23, 2025

## Readings for the Week

### Sunday:

2 Sm 5:1-3/Ps 122:1-2,  
3-4, 4-5 (see 1)/Col 1:12-  
20 /Lk 23:35-43

### Monday:

Dn 1:1-6, 8-20/Dn 3:52,  
53, 54, 55, 56/Lk 21:1-4

### Tuesday:

Dn 2:31-45/Dn 3:57, 58,  
59, 60, 61/Lk 21:5-11

### Wednesday:

Dn 5:1-6, 13-14, 16-17,  
23-28/Dn 3:62, 63, 64, 65,  
66, 67/Lk 21:12-19

### Thursday:

Dn 6:12-28/Dn 3:68, 69,  
70, 71, 72, 73, 74/  
Lk 21:20-28

### Friday:

Dn 7:2-14/Dn 3:75, 76, 77,  
78, 79, 80, 81/Lk 21:29-33

### Saturday:

Dn 7:15-27/Dn 3:82, 83,  
84, 85, 86, 87/Lk 21:34-36

### Next Sunday:

Is 2:1-5/Ps 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-  
5, 6-7, 8-9/Rom 13:11-14/  
Mt 24:37-44





## PARISH INFORMATION

### MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil: Holy Assumption—**4:00 PM**  
St. Mary—**5:30 PM**  
Sunday: Holy Assumption—**8:00 AM**  
St. Mary—**10:00 AM and 11:30 AM**

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Holy Assumption—Saturday - **3:00-3:45 PM**  
St. Mary—Saturday - **4:30-5:15 PM**  
(Also by Appointment)

### WEEKDAY MASS: MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

Holy Assumption—Roebbling **9:30 AM (Tues., Wed., & Fri.)**  
St. Mary—Bordentown **12:30 PM (Mon.-Fri.)**  
Holy Days: See Mass Schedule in Bulletin for Mass Times

**BAPTISMS:** Contact Debbie Ullmer-Phillips at the Parish Office, Ext. 112. Baptisms are celebrated on the **1st & 3rd Sundays** of the month at **1:00 PM at St. Mary Church** and the **4th Saturday** of the month at **2:00 PM at Holy Assumption**. Please call the Parish Office to register, provide the required documents, and schedule a Baptism Prep Class.

**MARRIAGES:** Contact Debbie Ullmer-Phillips at the Parish Office, Ext. 112. Arrangements are to be made at least 1 year in advance.

### SICK CALLS/COMMUNION FOR THE HOMEBOUND

Arrangements for Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion for those confined to the home are to be made by contacting the Parish Office. Urgent calls any time during the day, contact the Parish Office, after hours, use the emergency line 609-203-5617.

### HOURS FOR PRAYER

- St. Mary Church, Bordentown, is open daily from 7:00 AM to 6:30 PM. (Use Chapel entrance through the side door.)
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel of Saints, Wednesdays from 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM. (Use Chapel entrance through the side door.)
- Holy Hour every Wednesday at 7:00 PM, St. Mary (Main Church), Bordentown.

### PARISH REGISTRATION

We welcome new parishioners to the parish, and we ask them to register as soon as possible. If you are not registered, we are not able to issue letters for sponsorship for the Sacraments or character references to schools or for employment. If you move from the parish please notify the rectory.

**Wish to join us? Please complete the New Parishioner Contact Form found on the parish website: [mmotcp.org](http://mmotcp.org), under the ABOUT US Tab, "How to Join Us"**

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am-3:00 pm  
Friday, 9:00 am-12:00 noon



## PARISH MINISTRIES & SUPPORT AGENCIES

### Alcoholics Anonymous

Bob H. – 609-784-3233

### Altar Linen Ministry

Rose Troyanovich (HA) - [charo.troyanovich@att.net](mailto:charo.troyanovich@att.net)  
Helene Shea (SM) - [hdshea@icloud.com](mailto:hdshea@icloud.com)

### Altar Servers

Paula Bisson - [altarservers@mmotcp.org](mailto:altarservers@mmotcp.org)

### Annulment Ministry

Deacon Tom Shea - [annulment@mmotcp.org](mailto:annulment@mmotcp.org)

### Bereavement Ministry

Joseph Whitty - [bereavement@mmotcp.org](mailto:bereavement@mmotcp.org)

### Catholic Charities (Diocese of Trenton)

1-800-360-7711

### Church Ushers

Dominick Cipriano – 609-634-2482 (HA)  
Frank Scharibone – 609-298-1898 (SM)

### Dignity of Life

Heni Scharibone - [dignityoflife@mmotcp.org](mailto:dignityoflife@mmotcp.org)

### Food Pantry

Sue Oros (HA)  
Mike Novalis (SM)  
[foodpantry@mmotcp.org](mailto:foodpantry@mmotcp.org)

### Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers

Sean Alphonse - [salphonse@mmotcp.org](mailto:salphonse@mmotcp.org)

### Music Ministry

Jesús Alfonso Gonzalez & Tina Fernandes, Coordinators  
[musicdept@mmotcp.org](mailto:musicdept@mmotcp.org)

### OCIA

Nick Chilelli - [OCIA@mmotcp.org](mailto:OCIA@mmotcp.org)

### TEEN OCIA

Pat Baylog - [pbaylog@mmotcp.org](mailto:pbaylog@mmotcp.org)

### St. Vincent de Paul Society

Margaret Rizzo – 609-298-1414

### Welcome Ministry

Anne Egan - [welcometoourparish@mmotcp.org](mailto:welcometoourparish@mmotcp.org)

### Youth Ministry

[youthgroup@mmotcp.org](mailto:youthgroup@mmotcp.org)



**St. Mary – Ramp Access  
(Off Crosswicks Street)**

**Holy Assumption  
Elevator Access  
(Main Parking Lot)**



**Office Staff**

Fr. Martin O'Reilly, Pastor.....**ext. 116**  
 .....**frmoreilly@mmotcp.org**  
 Fr. Cesar Anson, Parochial Vicar.....**ext. 110**  
 .....**revanson@mmotcp.org**  
 Margaret Zola, Business Manager & CRE.....**ext. 118**  
 .....**mzola@mmotcp.org**  
 Patty Baylog, Parish Pastoral Coordinator.....**ext. 115**  
 .....**pbaylog@mmotcp.org**  
 Cathy Alphonse, Accounts Payable/Receivable .....**ext. 114**  
 .....**calphonse@mmotcp.org**  
 Sean Alphonse, Administrative Assistant.....**ext. 111**  
 .....**salphonse@mmotcp.org**

Julie Ann Evano, Front Desk Secretary.....**ext. 110**  
 .....**info@mmotcp.org**  
 Tina Fernandes, Music Coordinator.....**ext. 132**  
 .....**musicdept@mmotcp.org**  
 Jesús Alfonso Gonzalez, Music Coordinator.....**ext. 132**  
 .....**musicdept@mmotcp.org**  
 Tim Hoyt, Maintenance.....**ext. 125**  
 Roy Kerstetter, Maintenance.....**ext. 125**  
 .....**rkerstetter@mmotcp.org**  
 Carol Schulz, Bulletin Coord. & RE Assistant.....**ext. 117**  
 .....**cschulz@mmotcp.org**  
 Debbie Ulmer-Phillips, Parish Secretary.....**ext. 112**  
 .....**dulmer-phillips@mmotcp.org**

**ST. MARY****HOLY ASSUMPTION****Monday, Nov 24—12:30pm**

Jack Higham (Mass for the Living) rb/Carleen Michaels  
 Dennis Spunderell rb/Diane Walker

**Tuesday, Nov 25—12:30pm**

James Zavacky rb/Margaret & Joseph Vasil  
 Joseph Callahan (Mass for the Living) rb/Karen Bromirski

**Wednesday, Nov 26—12:30pm**

Veronica Hustak rb/Brother George  
 Kathleen White rb/Marie Thompson

**Thursday, Nov 27—12:30pm Thanksgiving Day**

Madeline H. Ryan Targonski (A) rb/The Ryan Family  
 Barbara Giurdanella rb/Husband & Son

**Friday, Nov 28—12:30pm**

Tom Cummings (A) rb/Dave & Stephanie Salewski  
 Daniel S. Fillinger rb/Don Fillinger, Sr.

**Saturday, Nov 29**

**5:30 pm Celebrant: Fr. Martin**

Clelia Marciniak rb/Theresa Pietrafesa  
 Joseph & Rose Marie Lynch rb/Their Children

**Sunday, Nov 30**

**10:00 am Celebrant: Fr. Anson**

Beth Bell rb/Kathy & George Fisher  
 Richard Langan rb/Jim & Gail O'Brien

**11:30 am Celebrant: Fr. Martin**

Richard Langan rb/Janice & Joe Caloiaro  
 Helen Gravatt rb/The Family

**Tuesday, Nov 25—9:30am**

Virginia Foulks rb/David & JoAnn Foulks  
 James Pennacchi rb/Harry & MaryAnn Warner & Family

**Wednesday, Nov 26—9:30am**

James Pennacchi rb/Barb & Dave Boldizar

**Friday, Nov 28—9:30am**

Jack Jobes rb/Betty Bunnick

**Saturday, Nov 29**

**4:00 pm Celebrant: Fr. Anson**

Jim Pennacchi rb/Dominick & Elana Cipriano

**Sunday, Nov 30**

**8:00 am Celebrant: Fr. Anson**

James Pennacchi rb/The Oros Family  
 Beatrice Hamilton rb/Marge Lukens

**Offertory Gifts**

If you have booked a Mass for a loved one and would like to bring up the offertory gifts, please inform an usher before mass begins.

**Low Gluten Hosts & Other Special Needs**

Low-gluten hosts are available for those who have difficulties with Celiac Disease and other similar disorders. Please approach the priest or an usher 15 minutes prior to the beginning of Mass to be directed as to how you can receive safely. If you or a family member have a special need when attending Mass, please let us know by calling our Parish Office at 609-298-0261.

**Pope's Prayer Intentions for November 2025 - For the Prevention of Suicide**

Let us pray that those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts might find the support, care, and love they need in their community, and be open to the beauty of life.





Dear Friends in Christ,

### Thanksgiving

May you and all your family and friends have a wonderful, joyful Thanksgiving, filled with wonderful, happy memories. With all the challenges and difficulties life throws at us, we need a day like Thanksgiving. This is an opportunity to stop and take stock, to look around and see all the people in our lives that make us happy, safe, fulfilled, and appreciated. Sometimes those closest to us, those who mean the most to us, can often be taken for granted or we presume they know how we feel about them, why would they think otherwise? To show appreciation, or to be thankful towards family or friends is as much of a benefit to oneself as it is to the other person. To take the time to think about who it is I appreciate, who it is that makes my life meaningful, who it is I love, is to realize you are loved by them, you are a loved person. If we can believe people love us, then we can be very sure God loves us, who possess the greatest love of all. A love that renews, refreshes, and completely consumes us. To have so much love from family, friends, and God, is something for which to be truly thankful, so let us share that love with everyone we meet.

I am also conscious that Thanksgiving can be a very difficult time for people. A lot can happen in a year—loss of one's job, break-up of a relationship, the passing of a loved one, or simply holidays are so much trouble. So, what should one do? Breathe, simply breathe and realize you are alive, and because you are alive you can set about making changes that will make life better for you. Simple changes, small changes, manageable changes, changes that will make a difference. But it is also important to know that you are not alone in making these changes. If help is needed, help is here. God provides us with everything we need to achieve full, productive lives. One of our greatest challenges is letting others help us. In not seeking help or allowing others to help us is what often traps us in our own isolation. Christ said to us, **"I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly."** Jn 10:10. Christ desires that we have a full, happy, and love-filled life. Where you feel you are now is real, but if it's not where you want to be, turn to Christ, and seek his strength and guidance to help you get to where it is you want to be. Now believe and breathe!

*It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness at night. For you have made me glad, O Lord, in all you have done, and I sing for joy at the works of your hands. Ps 92:1-2, 4*

May you have a wonderful, grateful and love filled Thanksgiving.

### Feast of Christ, the Universal Savior

Dear Friends, we have come to the end of another liturgical year, and next weekend we begin our journey through Advent and the beginning of a new liturgical year. So, how was last year? Did you achieve the goals you set for yourself? Did you do something new, learn something new, meet someone new, or join something new? Did we answer yes to some or all the above, well done you! If no, then the wonderful thing about God is that God continually gives us the opportunity to begin anew again. Let us not waste the opportunity to keep trying to grow, change, learn, and grow closer to God. What are you going to do personally, what are you going to do as a family, what new year resolution are you going to make that will not make you richer, but get you closer to God whose blessings truly makes us rich.

God's love and blessings always

*Fr. Martin*

### Meetings & Events of the Week

**Nov 24**

7:30pm K of C—Parish Office, Upstairs

**THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON  
NOVEMBER 27 & 28, 2025 FOR THE  
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**



### Inspiration for the Week

Our king wears a crown of thorns, not a crown of gold. His glory is not in riches but in suffering. His law is written in his own blood, shed for the love of us. Do we understand the gift that it is, to be subject to such a king?





**For the Sick...**

Nichole Lynn Cochran, , John & Amy Oldham and Baby J.T. Oldham, Robert Sobon, Kelly Sobon, Neil Jantos, John Oros, Rebekah Henderson, David Bemiss, Carlos Jayme, Walt Szazvay, Jillian Ruffini, Anne Darrow, Zhi Han Chen, Zhi Ying Jin, Stephen Lueckel, Andrew Lisanti, Susanne Hallas, Walter Schleher, Caitlyn S., Arlene Chaty, Teddi Millerline, and all the sick of the parish.

*Please Pray for Our Deceased*

*Edward Gernhardt  
Nancy Nelson*

**PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR HOLY HOUR**

If you would like someone added to the new prayer list read at the Wednesday evening Holy Hour, please call the parish office (609-298-0261), stop by in person during regular business hours, or email: [info@mmotcp.org](mailto:info@mmotcp.org). New intentions will be read beginning December 3, 2025.

**Recitation of the Rosary**

**St. Mary Church:** Monday thru Friday, 12:00 pm

**Holy Assumption Church:**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday - 9:00 am  
Saturday 3:00 pm (Except 1st Saturday of the Month)

**First Saturday Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary**  
First Saturday of each month—Holy Assumption—2:30 pm

PLEASE BE MINDFUL OF OTHERS AND REMEMBER TO TURN YOUR CELL PHONE OFF OR SWITCH TO SILENT MODE BEFORE MASS BEGINS. THANK YOU!

**OFFERING**  
AN ACT OF WORSHIP

**THE NOVEMBER 16, 2025 COLLECTION TOTALS WERE NOT AVAILABLE WHEN THIS BULLETIN WENT TO PRINT. THEY WILL BE PUBLISHED IN A SUBSEQUENT BULLETIN**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND SUPPORT.**

**Upcoming Donation Designations**

**Nov 23 Weekly**

**Campaign for Human Development:** This special collection is the domestic anti-poverty program of the Catholic Church and has two objectives: empowering the poor, and educating others about the root causes of poverty.

**Nov 27 Thanksgiving Donation for the Food Pantry**

**Nov 30 Weekly**

**Dec 7 Weekly**

**Building Maintenance:** Keeping our places of worship warm, dry and comfortable.

**Retirement Fund for Religious:** This collection helps religious communities care for senior members today and tomorrow. Proceeds help underwrite the retirement and health-care needs of aging members of these communities throughout the United States.

**Dec 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception:** Holy Day honoring the pure and sinless conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary without Original Sin.

**CONSIDER ON-LINE GIVING**

To Sign Up go to [www.mmotcp.org](http://www.mmotcp.org), scroll down to the On-Line Giving lock, and follow the instructions.

**2025 Annual Catholic Appeal Progress**

**There are only two (2) additional new donors** needed to receive the maximum benefit back to the parish. If you haven't pledged thus far, please consider even a minimal one-time donation (\$25-\$50) to help us reach this new donor goal.

**Chapel of Saints**

**Open Daily 7:00am-7:00pm for Personal Prayer**

**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**  
**Wednesday—1:00pm to 7:00pm**

**HOLY HOUR**

**ST. MARY CHURCH—WEDNESDAYS—7:00PM**

ROSARY, NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL, BENEDICTION







Today as we celebrate Christ the King, may we open the door of our heart so wide that we may listen to the voice of Jesus calling us to help build his kingdom here on earth.

In the months of October and mid-November, through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was able to help build the kingdom of God by assisting 10 families, providing over \$7200 for utility and rent bills. We also distributed grocery store gift cards donated by you to 29 families to help them with their Thanksgiving meals. Thank you for your wonderful generosity during these challenging times.

With Thanksgiving approaching, our SVDP members wish to express heartfelt gratitude to our parish for being a constant support to our organization throughout the year, allowing us to fulfill our mission statement: We are "a network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need." We wish all of you a blessed Thanksgiving.

If you or anyone you know in our local communities needs assistance, call our Confidential Helpline at 609-298-1414.







## .....Religious Education News.....

### *November is National Vocation Awareness Month*

**November 23.....**Sunday RE Classes and Mass 8:45-10:45am

**November 25.....**Tuesday RE Classes 6:00-7:15pm

**December 1.....**Monday Monthly RE Classes 6:00-7:30pm

**December 2.....**Tuesday RE Classes 6:00pm, Mass for students and their families 6:30pm

**December 7.....**Sunday RE Classes and Mass 8:45-10:45am

**December 9.....**Tuesday RE Classes 6:00-7:15pm

**December 14.....**Sunday RE Classes and Mass 8:45-10:45am

**December 16.....**Tuesday RE Classes 6:00-7:15pm

**December 21.....**Sunday RE Classes and Mass 8:45-10:45am

**December 24.....**Christmas Eve Mass 4:00pm – RE students act out the Gospel reading

### **NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS**

God has a special plan for each of us!

A **vocation** is more than just a job or career — it's the unique way God calls you to love and serve Him and others. Every person has a vocation, and each one is important in building up the Church. Some people are called to be **priests or deacons**, serving God through the sacraments. Others are called to **religious life** as sisters or brothers, giving their lives completely to God in prayer and service. Many are called to **married life**, raising families in faith and love. And some are called to **single life**, living out God's love through service and witness in the world. Whatever your path, God invites you to listen and respond with an open heart. Take time to **pray**, **listen**, and **trust** that God will lead you where you are meant to be.

### **MASS ATTENDANCE**

Mass attendance with your children is essential each week and on Holy Days of Obligation. Our Religious Education program is a partnership between the Church and parents to help raise children in the Catholic faith. Bringing your children to Mass regularly allows them to see, hear, and experience the faith they are learning about in the classroom. The Eucharist is the heart of our Catholic life — where we come together as a community to worship, give thanks, and grow closer to Jesus. By attending Mass as a family, you give your children the greatest gift: the experience of God's presence and love.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The Church emphasizes the vital role of parents in their children's religious formation. As the Church teaches: "Parents are the first and most important educators of their children, and they also possess a fundamental competency in this area: they are educators because they are parents." It is the sacred responsibility of parents to introduce their children to Jesus Christ and to help them grow in a deep, personal relationship with Him.

In Religious Education, we are dedicated to partnering with parents in this beautiful mission — to nurture faith, build disciples, and guide children ever closer to the heart of Christ.

**Reminder:** Faith begins at home — pray together, attend Mass weekly, and keep Christ at the center of your family life.

**Phone #:** 609-291-8281

**M. Zola x118, Email:** [mzola@mmotcp.org](mailto:mzola@mmotcp.org)

**C. Schulz x117, Email:** [cschulz@mmotcp.org](mailto:cschulz@mmotcp.org)

**Promise to Protect:** To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children, call your local law enforcement agency or Child Abuse Hotline: 1-888-296-2965 or via email at: [abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org](mailto:abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org)





**BORDENTOWN ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH**  
**7:00 P.M.**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
**420 Farnsworth Ave., Bordentown NJ**

Join us as we celebrate and give thanks for the blessings in our lives. An offering will be taken to support the Good Neighbor Guild which provides emergency hotel vouchers for our neighbors in need.

*"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

### *Thanksgiving Table Prayer*

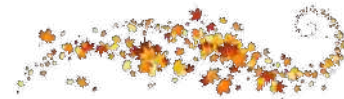
*Lord God and Giver of All Good Gifts,  
 we are grateful as we pause before this  
 Thanksgiving meal for all the blessings of  
 life that You give to us. May this light of  
 gratitude burn brightly in our hearts and  
 around this table, not only on  
 Thanksgiving, but every day.*

*Let us also be mindful of those who are  
 without food and a home this day, and let  
 us remember those whom we love who are  
 not now present at our table.*

*Come, Lord of Gifts, bless our table  
 and all the food of this feast.*

*Let us thank the Lord  
 today and all days,  
 forever and ever.*

*Amen.*



### **Pancake Breakfast *with Santa***

**Sunday, December 7, 2025**

**9 am to 12 pm**

***ALL YOU CAN EAT!***



**Pancakes, Bacon, Sausage  
 includes Coffee, Tea, and Juice**

**Location:**

**St. Mary School Hall  
 45 Crosswicks Street  
 Bordentown, NJ 08505**

#### **Tickets at the Door**

**\$15 – Adults and Teens**

**\$8 - Children ages 6-12**

**Free - Children aged 5 and under**

#### **Tickets In Advance**

**\$12 – Adults and Teens**

**\$6 - Children ages 6-12**

**Free - Children aged 5 and under**

**Call Robert L. Pecht  
 609-865-0014**



Proceeds benefit the charitable programs of the  
 Knights of Columbus Bordentown Council 570

Our parish's very own Cantor and Music Coordinator, Tina Fernandes, has released a sacred music album with voice and piano titled: "Faith with God's Grace". The \$20 CD will be available for purchase in the Parish Office during business hours.



Tina's vocal specialties include sacred music, classical, solo, and choral performance. She especially enjoys singing as a cantor, where she leads congregations in the tristate area and beyond. Her vocal talents began as a child singing in choir with her parents, then she continued her passion for music, to study formally in college. Tina earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Music Education with a major in vocal performance. As a vocal coach, Ms. Fernandes has led choral programs and musical theatre, cultivating a love of music with various students. She performs at cathedrals and churches in music ministry. She tells a story through song with heartfelt sincerity that evokes profound emotion to audiences. This album has been a dream for Tina and she hopes you feel a deeper connection to God when you listen to this sacred music album and songs of hope.





## RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

**The King Who Hangs Beside Us**

We love to hate the bad thief.

Ancient Christian tradition has called him by the name "Gestas." In contrast to Dismas, "the good thief" who recognized and repented of his own sins, Gestas goes down bitter and swinging. With his last breaths he taunts Jesus, poking fun at the absurdity of a deity who allows himself to be crucified by mortals. "Are you not the Christ?" he sneers.

But his final words betray an undercurrent of desperation. Of terror. In the end, Gestas just wants Jesus to save him.

It's taken me a few hundred read-throughs of this Gospel passage to finally understand a painful truth: I am Gestas. I hang from my own cross — we all do, in this life. But I'm lucky enough that my cross is right beside Jesus, because the sacraments bring him as close to me as he was to Gestas — closer, even. How unfathomable is the mercy of God.

And yet, I am not grateful. I don't rejoice at my proximity to my Lord, to the flesh and blood that have bought my salvation. I don't do what I should do, and what Dismas does. I don't say, "Wherever you are King, please, let me be your subject. Wherever you are going, please, take me with you."

"Are you not the Christ?" I say instead. And what I mean is exactly what Gestas meant: "Get me down. Take this cross away. I don't want it. I can't take it."

What a tragedy it would be, if all Christ had to offer us was an easier life.

None of this looks like anyone thought it would. The long-foretold Messiah, whose majesty and might would eradicate violence and establish peace. The guy who was going to make everything okay again. The King of the Jews. And here he hangs: bleeding and dying and doing what looks like nothing. Staring at Gestas. Staring at me. Staring at you.

What will you say to him?



The Society of St. Cecilia  
at the  
Oratory Church of St. Anthony of Padua  
presents

Handel's  
**Messiah**

The Society of St. Cecilia  
presents  
Handel's Messiah  
followed by a  
Christmas Carol Sing Along  
at the  
Oratory Church of  
St. Anthony of Padua  
28 Oratory Way  
Red Bank, NJ 07703

December 5, 2025 - 7:30pm

Admission  
A Free Will Offering

Use Chestnut St. Entrance  
Handicapped Accessible

For information contact the parish  
[www.web.stanthonysofredbank.net](http://www.web.stanthonysofredbank.net)

SCAN ME

DOOR PRIZES & RAFFLE

PRESENTED BY THE SHS PTA

**Sacred Heart School**  
**HOLIDAY BAZAAR**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH**  
**9AM - 2PM**

Shop for unique items featuring handmade arts and crafts, apparel for children and adults, jewelry, gifts for pets, home accessories, specialty foods, skin care, holiday ornaments

250 High Street  
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060

OVER 40+ VENDORS





**Offerings at Francis House of Prayer**  
 Trenton Diocesan Spiritual Center and Retreat House  
 84 Wainford Road • Allentown, NJ 08501  
 609-877-0509 or [FHOP@verizon.net](mailto:FHOP@verizon.net)

#### ADVENT RETREAT DAY

**Monday, December 1 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

We will travel through Advent this year with *Advent and Christmas with Thomas Merton*. What a perfect companion for this busy and stressful season! Again, we begin this holy season together doing what we can to make it more peaceful and prayerful. Donation: \$35, includes lunch and the book. Zoom: \$20

#### ADVENT: LEARNING TO WALK IN THE LIGHT

**Wednesday, December 3 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

Advent's beginning calls us to be attentive, to wait and watch, to learn to walk with God and with each other in the light. Our time will be filled with scripture and song, silence and shared faith as well as some of the stories of our lives. Together, we will prepare to encounter the Christ at Christmas. Donation: \$35, includes lunch. Zoom: \$20

#### CHILDLIKE FAITH-BIG THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

**Monday, December 8 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

Childlike faith is asking God to help us in living in true humility, wonder, trust and hope. This retreat focuses on our Blessed Mother and how these 4 values draw us all deeper into receiving love and giving love in relationship with God. Retreat will conclude with Liturgy. Donation: \$25, includes lunch. Zoom: \$20

#### PERSONAL RETREAT DAY

**Wednesday, December 10 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM**

Take a day away from the busyness of your life to rest a while in the Lord and experience God's presence. Come to Francis House for silence, personal prayer, and optional spiritual direction. The day begins and ends with a brief prayer together. Please bring your lunch. Donation: \$10; \$40 with spiritual direction.



**SCAM ALERT:** Scammers are targeting parishioners once again, asking them to buy gift cards, scratch off the numbers, and send them. Please do not respond to these requests—they are fraudulent. If you're unsure about any message, contact the Parish Office directly. **You would never be asked to send gift cards or money through an email or text at any time!**

## ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

### Altar Rosary Society

Donna Frappolli—609-221-1957

### Holy Name Society

Paul Ordog - [pordog29@gmail.com](mailto:pordog29@gmail.com)

### Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County

609-393-9922

### Knights of Columbus

Ron Scully - [grandknight@kofc570.org](mailto:grandknight@kofc570.org)

609-760-6637

### Legion of Mary

Kathleen Fetch - [lom@mmotcp.org](mailto:lom@mmotcp.org)

### Secular Franciscan Order

Maria Schultes - [FranciscanorderHA@mmotcp.org](mailto:FranciscanorderHA@mmotcp.org)

### Word of Life Prayer Group

Ginny Olsen—609-947-3336



**BINGO NIGHT**

DOORS OPEN AT 4:00PM  
 EARLY BIRD GAME 5:50PM  
 REGULAR GAMES START 6:00PM

**Sunday Evenings**

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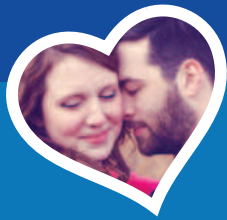


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