# The Church of St. Bernard of Clairvaux & St. Stanislaus Kostka

Phone: 908-756-3393
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E-mail: office@bestchurch.net

Website: www.bestchurch.net

The people of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Stanislaus Kostka are a "Living Mosaic of God's People," who seek salvation through worship, education, stewardship and service, proclaiming our faith in God and in our heritages.

#### **PARISH STAFF**

Rev. Marcin Fuks *Pastor* 

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Rev. Bernardo Garcia Parochial Vicar vicar@bestchurch.net 908-756-3393 Ext - 102

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CHURCH ADDRESS

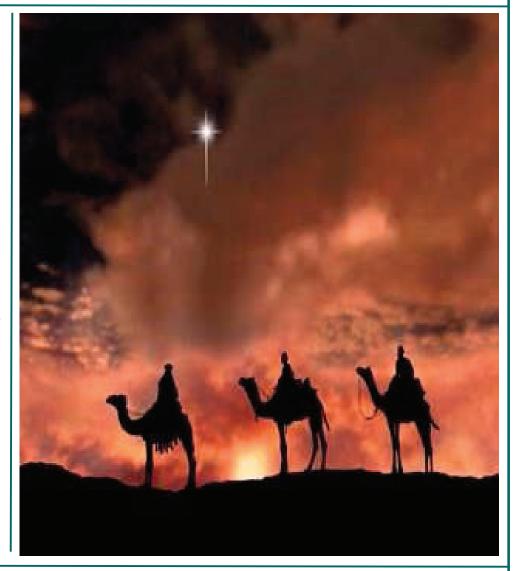
1235 George Street Plainfield, NJ 07062

#### OFFICES & MAILING ADDRESS

1232 George Street Plainfield, NJ 07062

#### **OFFICE HOURS**

Sunday: Closed or by appointment Monday - Friday: 10:00 am-2:00 pm Saturday: Closed or by appointment



**BAPTISM:** Celebrated throughout the year in accordance with the policy of the Archdiocese and to accommodate the needs of our Parish Family. Attendance at a preparation session may be required. You must be a registered and active family for at least 90 days before a date for Baptism will be scheduled. Please call the Parish Office for an appointment.

MARRIAGE: Arrangements should be made with a priest as soon as possible. One year prior to marriage or as soon as engagement is announced is recommended.

#### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Levels 1 - 8:** Wednesday, 6:30 - 7:45 pm

#### MINISTRY TO THE SICK: In

the event of serious illness or when someone is hospitalized, the parish office should be notified. The Eucharist and the Sacrament of the Sick will be celebrated with anyone requesting them. Remember, the Hospital cannot notify us on their own.

#### **CHOIR**

We are fortunate enough to have a Parish Choir that has a full multi-lingual repertoire; English, Polish and Spanish. The Choir rehearses on Thursday at 7:00 PM. Instrumentalists are welcomed, either to play solo or with our choir. A parish orchestra made up of adults performs several times during the year. If you are interested in joining or for more information or just to volunteer, contact the office at (908) 756-3393.

#### **PARISH REGISTRATION**

New parishioners are most welcome and are encouraged to call the parish office and make an appointment to register. When you are moving from the parish, please notify the parish office.

#### **SPONSOR CERTIFICATES**

Call the Office during regular hours.



**Saturday – January 4... St. Elizabeth Ann Seton** 9:00AM...+ Margaret Todd. req. Johanna Merkle 5:00PM...+ Anthony Tierno,

req. Mr. & Mrs. Michael Barrow

Sunday – January 5 ...Epiphany of the Lord 9:00AM...+ Jożef and Maria Lechowski, req. Son Eddie 11:00AM..+ Janina i Piotr Blażejowicz, reg. Teresa Blażejowski

1:00AM... People of the Parish

Monday – January 6...St. Andre Bessette 9:00AM... + Maria Riello, req. Simeone Family

**Tuesday – January 7...St. Raymond** 9:00AM... + Angie Esolda, req. Family

Wednesday – January 8... Christmas Weekday 9:00AM....+ Antonio and Lucia Simeone, req. Family

Thursday – January 9 ... Christmas Weekday 9:00AM...+ Bob Chanda (1st Anniv.), req. Al and Barbara St. Louis

Friday – January 10... Christmas Weekday 9:00AM...+ Rose and Onofino Lella, req. Johanna Merkle

**Saturday – January 11... Christmas Weekday** 9:00AM...+ People of the Parish 5:00PM...+ Bob Chanda, req. Wife Mary Ellen

Sunday – January 12 ...Baptism of the Lord 9:00AM...+ Leonard Pacio, req. Family 11:00AM..+ Janina i Piotr Blażejowicz, req. Teresa Blażejowiczi 1:00AM... People of the Parish

#### STEWARDSHIP AND TITHING

Stewardship calls us to freely give of our time, talent, and treasure for the good of our parish family and community. God gives us everything! I give Him back my tithe. Tithing is God's plan to support His Church. Full tithing means 10% of gross income to God - 5% for your parish church and 5% for other charities.

#### **VOCATIONS**

Those who are recognizing the call to the priesthood, deaconate, or the religious life are invited to speak to a priest or contact the Archdiocesan Vocations Office at 973-497-4365,or on the website www.rcan.org/vocation/index.htm

#### ST. BARTHOLOMEW ACADEMY

2032 Westfield Ave., Scotch Plains NJ 908-322-4265 OR WWW.STBACADEMY

The Tabernacle Candle will burn this week in **Memory of Cecilia Torres at the request of sister.** 

The Bread and Wine for the Month of January is in Memory of Ann Marie LaPata at the request of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Barrow.

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED for those whose health is challenged in any way especially Cathy and Jack Rooney, Marian Parcinski, Frank Kazmierski, Olivia Schiffer, and Al Caraldo.

**OUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED** for all the **Faithful Departed**.

#### **EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Isaiah rejoices over the light and glory that will shine upon Jerusalem. He describes how the wealth of nations will be brought to Jerusalem, and travelers will arrive bearing gifts and praising God.

**Second Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6**Paul explains to the Ephesians that the Gentiles are now

co-heirs with the Jews. Through Jesus, they became members of the same body. Therefore, they would receive everything God had promised the Jewish converts if they followed Christ's teachings.

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Astrologers from the east came looking for the newborn king of the Jews, which greatly disturbed King Herod. Herod wanted to kill Jesus, and asked the astrologers to return and tell him where Jesus was. The astrologers found Jesus and brought him gifts, but received a message in a dream telling them not to return to Herod.

The Saint of the Week

#### St. Andre Bessette

(January 6)

When Alfred Bessette came to the Holy Cross Brothers in 1870, he carried with him a note from his pastor saying, "I am sending you a saint." The Brothers found that difficult to believe. Chronic stomach pains had made it impossible for Alfred to hold a job very long: since he was a boy he had wandered from shop to shop, farm to farm, in his native Canada and in the United States, staying only until his employers found out how little work he could do. The Holy Cross Brothers were teachers, and at 25 Alfred still did not know how to read and write. It seemed as if Alfred approached the religious order out of desperation, not vocation.

Alfred was desperate, but he was also prayerful and deeply devoted to God and Saint Joseph. He may have had no place left to go, but he believed that was because this was the place he felt he should have been all along.

The Holy Cross Brothers took him into the novitiate but soon found out what others had learned -- as hard as Alfred, now Brother Andre, wanted to work, he simply wasn't strong enough. They asked him to leave the order, but Andre, out of desperation again, appealed to a visiting bishop who promised him that Andre would stay and take his vows.

After his vows, Brother Andre was sent to Notre Dame College in Montreal (a school for boys age seven to twelve) as a porter. There his responsibilities were to answer the door, to welcome guests, find the people they were visiting, wake up those in the school, and deliver mail. Brother Andre joked later, "At the end of my novitiate, my superiors showed me the door, and I stayed there for forty years."

In 1904 he surprised the Archbishop of Montreal by requesting permission to build a chapel to Saint Joseph on the mountain near the college. The Archbishop refused to go into debt and would only give permission for Brother Andre to build what he had money for. What money did Brother Andre have? Nickels he had collected as donations for Saint Joseph from haircuts he gave the boys. Nickels and dimes from a small dish he had kept in a picnic shelter on top of the mountain near a statue of St. Joseph with a sign "Donations for St. Joseph." He had collected this change for years, but he still had only a few hundred dollars. Who would start a chapel now with so little funding?

Andre took his few hundred dollars and built what he could ... a small wood shelter only fifteen feet by eighteen feet. He kept collecting money and went

back three years later to request more building. Eventually, the Archbishop granted him permission to keep building as long as he didn't go into debt. He started by adding a roof so that all the people who were coming to hear Mass at the shrine wouldn't have to stand out in the rain and the wind. Then came walls, heating, a paved road up the mountain, a shelter for pilgrims, and finally a place where Brother Andre and others could live and take care of the shrine and the pilgrims who came. Through kindness, caring, and devotion, Brother Andre helped many souls experience healing and renewal on the mountaintop.

Despite financial troubles, Brother Andre never lost faith or devotion. He had started to build a basilica on the mountain, but the Depression had interfered. At ninety-years old he told his co-workers to place a statue of St. Joseph in the unfinished, unroofed basilica. He was so ill he had to be carried up the mountain to see the statue in its new home. Brother Andre died soon after on January 6, and didn't live to see the work on the basilica completed. But in Brother Andre's mind it never would be completed because he always saw more ways to express his devotion and to heal others. As long as he lived, the man who had trouble keeping work for himself, would never have stopped working for God.

#### **OPLATEK**

#### TO BE CELEBRATED JANUARY 5th

Following the 11AM Mass on Sunday, January 5th,
Opłatek and Kolenda will be celebrated. In the gym
followed with Opłatek and singing Traditional Polish
carols, which is fellowship as a way of wishing
health and happiness to each other.
All are invited to attend!

#### **Advent Prayer Tree**

Your Prayer intentions on the Advent Tree will be shredded and put into a translucent ornament ball marked 2024 which will be placed on the tree next Advent. We would like to continue this prayer journey as a tradition from year to year.



#### Uroczystość Objawienia Pańskiego

Jak niespokojni poszukiwacze, bądźmy stale otwarci na Boże niespodzianki. Pragnijmy, szukajmy, adorujmy. Razem z Mędrcami ze Wschodu jestesmy zaproszeni, aby podażać ku Jezusowi, który jest gwiazda polarna na firmamencie życia i kieruje kroki ku prawdziwej radości.

Magów do wyruszenia w podróż skłoniło głebokie pragnienie światła i tesknota za nowymi perspektywami. Byli oni ludźmi niespokojnego serca i poszukiwaczami Boga. Pragnąć oznacza podtrzymywać ogień, który płonie w nas oraz akceptować życie jako tajemnicę, która nas przerasta, ponieważ ono jest nie "tylko tutaj", ale jest także "gdzie indziej". Jesteśmy tym, czego pragniemy. To właśnie pragnienia poszerzaja nasze spojrzenie i wzywają do pójścia dalej: poza zapory nawyków, poza wiarę powtarzalną i znużoną, poza lęk przed podjęciem ryzyka i zaangażowaniem się na rzecz innych i na rzecz dobra.

Tak jak w przypadku Mędrców, podobnie i nasza droga życia i droga wiary potrzebują pragnienia, wewnętrznej energii. Czasami nasz duch żyje na «parkingu», w stanie zaparkowania, bez tego porywu pragnienia, który niesie nas naprzód. Warto, abyśmy zadali sobie pytanie: gdzie jesteśmy na drodze wiary? Czy nie utknęliśmy zbyt długo, zastygli w konwencjonalnej, zewnętrznej, formalnej religii, która nie rozpala już serca i nie przemienia życia? Czy nasze słowa i rytuały wyzwalają w sercach ludzi pragnienie podążania ku Bogu, czy też są «martwym językiem», mówiącym tylko o sobie i do siebie? To smutne, kiedy wspólnota wierzących nie żywi już pragnień i znużona snuje się, jedynie zarządzając sprawami, zamiast dać się oczarować przez Jezusa, przez rozsadzająca i niepokojącą radość Ewangelii.

Kryzys wiary w naszym życiu oraz w naszych społeczeństwach ma związek z zanikiem pragnienia Boga. Kiedy w człowieku zostaje uśpiony duch, zaczyna się on zadawalać życiem z dnia na dzień, bez zadawania sobie pytań, czego Bóg ode mnie oczekuje. Zadawalamy się wieloma rzeczami, a brakuje nam tęsknoty za czymś więcej. To nieuchronnie prowadzi do smutku i obojetności.

Przede wszystkim jednak spójrzmy na siebie i To jest pytanie, które dzisiaj możemy sobie postawić, każdy z nas. Jak przebiega moja podróż wiary? Czy moja wiara jest «zaparkowana», czy w drodze? Wiara, aby wyruszać na nowo, musi być pobudzona przez pragnienie zaangażowania się w przygodę ożywiającej relacji z Bogiem. Ale czy moje serce jest nadal ożywione pragnieniem Boga? Czy też pozwalam, by

przyzwyczajenia i rozczarowania je gasiły? Dzisiaj, drodzy bracia i siostry jest dzień, aby zadać sobie te pytania. Dziś jest dzień, aby powrócić do ożywienia pragnienia. Jak to uczynić? Pójdźmy z Mędrcami do «szkoły pragnień». Oni nas nauczą, w swojej szkole pragnień. Przyjrzyjmy się krokom, jakie podejmują i wyciągnijmy z nich pewne nauki."

Pierwszą decyzją Magów było wyruszenie w drogę. Wiara jest fascynującą podróżą, ciągłym poszukiwaniem Boga. Pytając o Dzieciątko Magowie wskazują nam, że trzeba stawiać pytania, słuchać uważnie serca i sumienia. Ważne jest także, aby pozwolić innym, aby niepokoili nas swoimi watpliwościami i pragnieniami. Mędrcy rzucają również wyzwanie Herodowi. Pokazują przez to, że potrzebujemy odważnej i profetycznej wiary, która nie boi się przeciwstawić mrocznej logice władzy i staje się ziarnem sprawiedliwości i braterstwa. Magowie wracają do ojczyzny inna droga. Nowe drogi sa owocem kreatywności Ducha Świętego, który wskazuje sposoby niesienia Ewangelii ludziom naszych czasów.

"U końca wędrówki Mędrców następuje jednak moment przełomowy: po przybyciu do celu «padli na twarz i oddali pokłon Dzieciątku». Adorują. Pamiętajmy o tym: droga wiary znajduje bodziec i spełnienie tylko w obecności Boga. Tylko wtedy, gdy odzyskamy smak adoracji, odnowi się pragnienie. Pragnienie prowadzi nas do adoracji, a adoracja pozwala odnowić pragnienie. Ponieważ pragnienie Boga wzrasta tylko w obecności Boga. Bo tylko Jezus uzdrawia pragnienia. Od czego? Uzdrawia z dyktatury potrzeb. Serce staje się bowiem chore, gdy pragnienia pokrywają się tylko z potrzebami. Bóg natomiast uwzniośla pragnienia; oczyszcza je, uzdrawia, leczy z egoizmu i otwiera nas na miłość do Niego i do naszych braci. Dlatego nie zapominajmy o adoracji, modlitwa adoracji, która nie jest wśród tak bardzo powszechna: adorować, w milczeniu. Dlatego, nie zapominajmy o adoracji."

Papiez Franciszek, 06 stycznia 2022 r.

#### Szkoła Polska Dokształcająca

Zajęcia w Polskiej Szkole działającej przy naszej Parafii odbywają się w każdy poniedziałek w okresie roku szkolnego od godz. 5:30 do 8:00PM. Kontakt: polskaszkolaplainfield@outlook.com Dyrektorka Szkoły: Beata Benewiat Tel. 732-266-4310

Papiez Franciszek, 06 stycznia 2022 r

## **KOLĘDOWANIE i OPŁATEK 5 STYCZNIA 2025**

po Mszy Niedzielnej na Sali gimnastycznej

Szkolenie Protecting God's Children 13 Stycznia 2025, o 5:30 PM

#### **Jubilee 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope**

The Christian life is a journey calling for moments of greater intensity to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps towards the goal of our encounter with the Lord Jesus".

- Spes non confundit, 5

In May of 2024, Pope Francis announced that a Holy Year of Jubilee, entitled Jubilee 2025 Pilgrims of Hope, will open in Rome on the eve of the Nativity of the Lord, December 24, 2024, and conclude on the Epiphany of the Lord, January 6, 2026.

Jubilee 2025 promises to be a time of grace for the Universal Church. In the Archdiocese of Newark each of the parishes and the entire Catholic community—clergy, those in consecrated life, and the lay faithful—should have many opportunities to share in this grace.

Pope Francis has directed that "on Sunday, 29 December 2024, in every cathedral and co cathedral, diocesan bishops are to celebrate Holy Mass as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year" (Spes non confundit, 6).

All of the priests, religious, and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of Newark were invited to join Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin on Sunday, **December 29, 2024**, the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, for the opening Mass at **12:00 Noon** at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark.

For <u>Union County</u> our jubilee church is **St. Helen's Parish in Westfield. On Dec 29**<sup>th</sup>,
Bishop Elias Lorenzo opened the jubilee year at
St. Helen's at **the 6:00 PM Mass**.



#### ROSARY SOCIETY NEWS

The Rosary is prayed every day before the 9AM Mass, including praying the Divine Mercy.



On Thursdays the Blessed Sacrament is exposed after 9AM Mass concluding with Benediction at 10:45AM.

# Liturgy of the Word January 12th

Liturgy of the Word is at the 9AM Mass on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month for grades K-2, in the Church Chapel. We need assistants to help with our Liturgy.



This is also open for our Confirmation students to assist for Service Hours.

If you are interested or can give a little help with the Liturgy at Mass one Sunday a month, please contact

Fr. Marcin for more information.



Religious Education classes are on a break and will resume January 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.

All Religious Education children **are required** to attend Sunday Mass every weekend and have their Mass Attendance Books signed.

On Wednesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> there will be a retreat and Reconciliation for the **First Communion children** at 6:30pm.

#### **BestChurch Seniors**



The BestChurch Seniors will be on a Winter Break in January and February and back on **Thursday, March 20**<sup>th</sup>

#### Celebrating ..... St. Joseph's Day!

We meet in the Parish Community Room on George Street, using the side entrance.

If you are a Senior or almost a Senior
Citizen and would like to join us in
fellowship, entertainment, or just ordinary
fun, all are welcome to attend. Let us know
you are coming and invite a friend.



### **ALTAR SERVERS**

Be joyful to serve at the altar, to be closer to Jesus!



Altar Servers make a difference! If you are interested in participating at Mass as an Altar Server, boys as well as girls – please contact Fr. Bernardo.

#### **CHOIR**

Have you thought of



becoming a member?

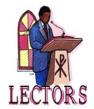
Regular rehearsals -7:00PM Thursdays.
If you are interested in joining the choir, please contact the office, or simply just come to one of our rehearsals at 7PM in the church

#### **Gift Card Donations**



Thank you for your kind generosity in donating Gift Cards. We collected \$1,625 in gift cards to be distributed throughout the Plainfield area. Your gift cards will truly help families in need, especially in this Blessed Holiday Season.





Are you interested in serving God as a Lector or Eucharistic Minister?

Contact Bill Shlala wgshlala@gmail.com or call (908) 755-8560.

## NON-PERISHABLE FOOD COLLECTION

We collect food for Starfish to be distributed throughout the Union County area. Food can be left in the open area of the church. Dates should be current and food non-perishable. The staff at Starfish would like to thank you all for your continued support.

Starfish will now continue to collect egg cartons.



#### **STEWARDSHIP**

#### The Epiphany of the Lord

"... They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (MATTHEW 2:11) Cardinal Joseph Tobin C. S.s. R - What gifts do you give to the Lord? Pope St. Gregory said that these three gifts represent what we should give God every day. Gold – we should reflect Christ's wisdom in all our relationships. Frankincense – represents our daily prayer and adoration to God. Myrrh – is a symbol of our daily sacrifices that we unite with Jesus for the sake of others.





COLLECTION FOR DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> 29<sup>TH</sup> AND JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup> WILL BE POSTED SOON.

ONLINE GIVING

It is possible to automate your Faith Giving to our Parish Giving. SIMPLY GO TO OUR PARISH WEBSITE.



- Visit: www.formed.org/signup
- Find St. Bernard and Stanislaus by parish name, address, or zip code
- Enter your email and you are in.

#### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available on a regular basis on Saturdays at 4:15PM and on Sunday mornings after Masses as well as after weekday Masses simply by requesting a celebration of the Sacrament.

#### From Fr. Marcin's Desk

#### Dear Brothers and Sisters.

In the Gospel we heard the Magi begin by stating the reason why they have come: "We have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." Worship is the end and goal of their journey. Indeed, when they arrived in Bethlehem, "they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him." Once we lose the sense of worship, we lose our direction in the Christian life, which is a journey towards the Lord, not towards ourselves. The Gospel warns us about this risk, for alongside the Magi it presents others who are incapable of worship.

King Herod uses the word worship, but only to deceive. He asks the Magi to tell him where the child is to be found, "so that I too may come and adore him". The fact is that Herod worshiped only himself; that is why he wanted to rid himself of the child through a lie. When we do not worship God, we end up worshiping ourselves - Christians who do not know how to worship, who do not know how to pray by worshiping. This is a grave risk: we use God instead of serving Him. How many times have we confused the interests of the Gospel with our own?

In addition to Herod, other people in the Gospel are incapable of worship: they are the chief priests and the scribes. They tell Herod with great precision where the Messiah is to be born: in Bethlehem of Judea. They know the prophecies and can quote them exactly. They know where to go, but they do not go there. In the Christian life, it is not enough to be knowledgeable: unless we step out of ourselves, unless we encounter others and worship, we cannot know God. Once we worship, we come to realize that faith is not simply a set of fine doctrines, but a relationship with a living Person whom we are called to love. It is in encountering Jesus face – to - face that we come to see Him as He is.

Worship means going to Jesus without a list of petitions, but with one request alone: to abide with Him. It is about discovering that joy and peace increase with praise and thanksgiving. In worship, we allow Jesus to heal and change us. In worship, we make it possible for the Lord to transform us by His love, to kindle light amid our darkness, to grant us strength in weakness and courage amid trials. Worship is an act of love that changes our lives.

In worshiping, we too will discover, like the Magi, the meaning of our journey. And like the Magi, we too will experience "a great joy."

In the Love of God,

Fr. Marcin Fuks

E-mail: pastor@bestchurch.net



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