

# *Easter Sunday*

## *Resurrection of the Lord*

*April 5, 2026*

**He has risen!**

He is not here. See the place  
where they laid him.

MARK 16:6

**Saint Simon Stock Parish**

*Berlin, New Jersey*

*office@StSimonStock.net*

*www.StSimonStock.net*

*856-767-2563*

Follow us on Social Media:



# PARISH BULLETIN BOARD

## PARISHIONERS INFORMATION UPDATE

### New Parishioners

#### Welcome to St. Simon Stock Parish!

We invite you to become active in the various ministries that the Parish offers. The easiest way to register is to go online at [www.StSimonStock.net/ParishRegistration](http://www.StSimonStock.net/ParishRegistration). If you prefer, you also can contact the Parish Office to schedule an appointment to meet with a priest for parish registration. Attending Mass does not automatically make you a registered member.

### Parishioners

If you have new contact information, new members in your household, or someone in your household has received a sacrament, please contact the Parish Office so that our records are updated. Adult children should register themselves separately from their parents. **If you have not been receiving your weekly envelopes**, again, please contact the Parish Office to ensure that your address is registered correctly. If you are moving away, please let us know. Parish Office: 856-767-2563 or email us at [office@stsimonstock.net](mailto:office@stsimonstock.net).

## Call to Prayer



Please join us as we pray the **Holy Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet** every day (Monday–Saturday) following the 8 AM Mass. **Join us also in praying the Holy Rosary for the unborn** in the church every Tuesday at 2 pm.

## All Day Adoration on April 8, 2026

### Holy Hour and Benediction at 6 pm

**Thank Jesus for His Resurrection giving us life!**



## Prayers to all who celebrate April birthdays

Teresa Hiteshew 4/01  
 Norm Spicer 4/01  
 Mary Garback 4/04  
 Nora Sauers 4/05  
 Jan Judge 4/09  
 Gladys Blaese 4/11  
 Helen Quammen 4/13  
 Eleanor Jevic 4/14  
 Loretta Bunoza 4/16  
 Santina Lang 4/22  
 Anna Bickerdyke 4/26  
 Hayley Coale 4/29



## Prayers to all who celebrate April Anniversaries

Chuck & Debbie Warrington 4/20



*Please call the Parish Office to add a birthday/anniversary. Special blessing for those celebrating in March will be given at all Masses this weekend, April 25/26, 2026.*

## Baptism Class

The next class Baptism class is scheduled for this Monday, **April 20, 2026, at 7 pm**, in the Parish Life Center. Please call the Parish office to register.

## SENIOR MINISTRY

Senior Ministry meets **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 am to 1 pm** (Lunch served at 12 noon) in the Parish Life Center. All are invited to come join in the fun!

April 5	Easter Sunday
April 6	Easter Monday – OFFICE CLOSED
April 12	Divine Mercy Sunday
May 2	First Communion – Faith Formation 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
May 3	First Communion – OLMC 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Students
May 10	Mother's Day
May 10	May Crowning at 12 pm Mass
May 14	Confirmation
May 16	Saint Simon Stock's Feast Day
May 25	Memorial Day 9 am Mass at Gate of Heaven



## Priest Schedule for April 12, 2026

### Divine Mercy Sunday

*(subject to change without notice)*

4/11 4pm Mass Fr. Joseph  
 4/12 8am Mass Father Michael  
 10am Mass Father Joseph  
 12pm Mass Father Michael

*Deacon preaches every third weekend*

## SANCTUARY CANDLE

Our Sanctuary Candle will remain lit during the week of April 4<sup>th</sup> at 4pm to 8am on April 11<sup>th</sup> in memory of **Michael Kopytko** requested by his loving wife, Marcia



## 2026 Special Collections

Apr. 26	Catholic Home Missions
May 17	Catholic Communication Campaign
June 28	Peter's Pence Collection
July 12	Pastoral Solidarity Fund for Church in Africa
Sept. 6	Catholic University of America
Oct. 4	Pro-Life Collection
Oct. 18	World Mission Sunday
Nov. 15	Catholic Campaign for Human Development
Dec. 13	Retired Religious Collection

## Special Request

Parishioners are asked not to leave in the church any materials, inserts, medals, rosaries, pamphlets, prayer cards, etc., received by you in the mail from various missionary orders. These items are not blessed and are sent to induce you to send money to the missionary. The church is not the place to dispose of these items, and leaving them in the church requires someone to clean up around statues and the back table to dispose of them. Please dispose of these items at home.

Thank you.

# PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

## He Is Risen! Alleluia!

On this holy and joyful Easter Sunday, we proclaim with hearts full of faith and hope: **Christ is risen! Truly, He is risen! Alleluia!** Easter is the Church's greatest proclamation—that sin and death do not prevail, that love has conquered all, and that life with God is our ultimate destiny.

The glory of Easter cannot be fully understood apart from the **Sacred Paschal Triduum**—those most holy days in which we journey with the Lord from the Upper Room, to the Cross, and finally to the empty tomb. **Good Friday—our remembrance of the Passion, Crucifixion, and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ—was not, and will never be, the end of the story.** The Cross, once a sign of suffering and shame, has been transformed into the ultimate sign of hope and victory. In Christ, love is stronger than death, mercy triumphs over sin, and life shines even in the deepest darkness.

As a priest and pastor, I have walked with families at hospital bedsides, celebrated funerals marked by both tears and faith, and listened to stories of loss, struggle, and longing. In those sacred moments, I have witnessed again and again how the **Risen Christ meets His people not by removing all suffering, but by remaining with us through it**, assuring us that death never has the final word. Easter reminds us that when everything seems finished, God is just beginning His greatest work of renewal and redemption.

This Easter joy is not meant to be lived alone. Our **families and our parish community** are places where the Resurrection becomes visible—around our tables, in shared prayer, in acts of kindness, in forgiveness offered and received. The Church is a living family of faith, called to walk together, especially in moments of doubt, grief, and transformation. United as one body in Christ, we become witnesses to the Resurrection in our daily lives.

In that same spirit of faith, community, and pilgrimage, I warmly invite you to consider joining a **parish pilgrimage** as a sacred journey of prayer and encounter:

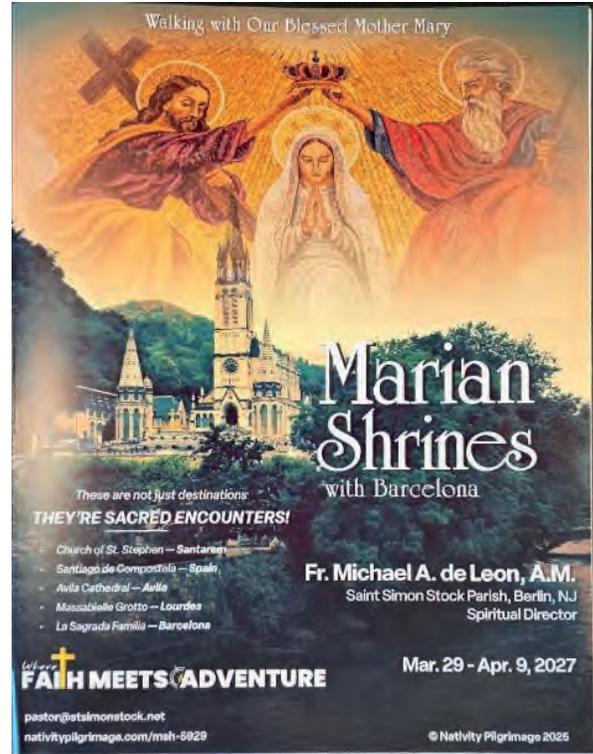
### Parish Pilgrimage | March 29 – April 9, 2027

Together, we will visit:

- Our Lady of Fátima (Portugal)
- Santiago de Compostela (Spain)
- Ávila Cathedral in Ávila
- The Massabielle Grotto in Lourdes, France

- La Sagrada Familia in Barcelona
- And many other sacred places

These are not merely destinations on a map—they are **sacred encounters**, places where heaven has touched earth and where countless souls have encountered God's grace, healing, and abiding presence. Pilgrimage is a powerful expression of our Easter faith: a people on the move, journeying together toward deeper communion with God and one another.



This pilgrimage will be a time of prayer, reflection, community, and renewal, inviting us to step away from the busyness of daily life and walk more deeply with Mary as she gently leads us ever closer to her Son. More details will be shared during Easter week, and I hope many of you will prayerfully discern joining this grace-filled journey.

For more information or to register, please see me personally or visit:

<https://www.nativitypilgrimage.com/msh-5929/>

May the light of the Risen Christ fill your homes, strengthen your families, and renew our parish with courage, compassion, and hope.

With prayers and Easter joy,  
Happy Easter! Alleluia!

Fr. Michael



# STEWARDSHIP OF WORSHIP AND LITURGY

## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>SAT 4/4</b>	<b>Easter Vigil – No Morning Mass</b>
<b>8 PM</b>	<b>Easter Vigil in the Holy Night</b>
L	Parishioners and Benefactors (Pro Populo)
<b>SUN 4/5</b>	<b>Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord</b>
<b>8 AM</b>	
L	Parishioners and Benefactors (Pro Populo)
<b>10 AM</b>	<b>LIVE STREAMED</b>
L	Parishioners and Benefactors (Pro Populo)
<b>12 PM</b>	
L	Parishioners and Benefactors (Pro Populo)
<b>MON 4/6</b>	
<b>8 AM †</b>	<b>Tom Brennan &amp; Marcella Williams</b> r/b Maureen Brennan
†	<b>Dominick Covone</b> r/b loving wife, Carmela & Sons
<b>TUES 4/7</b>	
<b>8 AM †</b>	<b>Leona P. Dacillo</b> r/b Marcia Kopytko
<b>WED 4/8</b>	
<b>8 AM †</b>	<b>Michael Kopytko</b> r/b his loving wife, Marcia
<b>THURS 4/9</b>	
<b>8 AM †</b>	<b>Joseph LaMonaca</b> r/b his loving sister, Adele Miller
<b>FRI 4/10</b>	
<b>8 AM †</b>	<b>Mary Saponaro</b> r/b Elizabeth & Rob
<b>SAT 4/11</b>	
<b>8 AM †</b>	<b>Gary W. Jack</b> r/b Jerrold Jack and Lisa Frattali
<b>4 PM</b>	<b>Divine Mercy Sunday (Vigil)</b>
†	<b>Kathy Siedlecki</b> r/b St. Vincent de Paul Conference
†	<b>Leona P. Dacillo</b> r/b St. Vincent de Paul Conference
<b>SUN 4/12</b>	<b>Divine Mercy Sunday</b>
<b>8 AM</b>	
†	<b>Mary T. Saponaro</b> r/b Anne Marie Saponaro
<b>10 AM</b>	<b>LIVE STREAMED</b>
L	Parishioners and Benefactors (Pro Populo)
†	<b>Edward P. DeFilippis</b> r/b his loving Wife
†	<b>Lisa J. Gish</b> r/b loving husband, Steve, & Children
†	<b>Leona Pontepedra Dacillo</b> r/b Betty Briles
†	<b>Herb Dalbow</b> r/b his loving wife, Rosemarie
<b>12 PM</b>	
†	<b>Leona P. Dacillo</b> r/b Leyden Family

L = Living † = Deceased

### Priest Schedule for April 5, 2026 Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord (subject to change without notice)

<b>4/4</b>	<b>8pm Mass</b> Fr. Michael, Fr. Joseph, Deacon Bob
<b>4/5</b>	<b>8am Mass</b> Father Philip
	<b>10am Mass</b> Father Joseph
	<b>12pm Mass</b> Father Michael

*Deacon preaches every third weekend.*

### Readings

#### Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord April 5, 2026

#### First Reading: Acts 10:34a, 37-43

In this passage, Peter testifies that he and his followers saw the miracles performed by Christ, witnessed His death, and believe in His resurrection. Now they will proclaim to all that Christ is the Son of God.

#### Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4

Paul tells the Colossians that they will appear with Christ in glory. They should be mindful of things above rather than things on earth.

#### Gospel: John 20:1-9

In vivid detail, John tells us that when Mary Magdalene visited Christ's tomb, the tomb was empty. She told the apostles, who ran to the tomb, and saw the "wrappings" on the ground. The disciple who entered first "saw and believed."

**Monday** Acts 2:14, 22-33; Mt 28:8-15

**Tuesday** Acts 2:36-41; Jn 20:11-18

**Wednesday** Acts 3:1-10; Lk 24:13-35

**Thursday** Acts 3:11-26; Lk 24:35-48

**Friday** Acts 4:1-12; Jn 21:1-14

**Saturday** Acts 4:13-21; Mk 16:9-15

### Stewardship

#### Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord April 5, 2026

#### Stewards Grateful

*"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." COLOSSIANS 3:2*

Do you put God first in all things? Possessions, money, power, ego can easily become gods to many of us. Do a quick check of what is important to you because of your Stewardship. Is God at the very top of the list? If not, your priorities need to be re-adjusted. Don't let earthly things become a god before God. This is also the first commandment – *I am the Lord your God, you shall not have any strange gods before me.*

### SAINT SIMON STOCK PARISH - BERLIN NJ

Easter 2026

#### EASTER VIGIL ON HOLY SATURDAY – APRIL 4, 2026

The Blessing of Easter Food Baskets **10 am**

Easter Vigil Mass at **8 pm**

#### EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 5, 2026

Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord at 8 & 10 am, 12 pm

#### DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY – APRIL 11/12, 2026

April 11 Confessions 3:00–3:45 pm; Mass at 4 pm

April 12 (Sunday) – Masses at 8 & 10 am, 12 pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with Confessions **2 pm**

Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Benediction **3 pm**



Let Us Pray for World Peace.

# STUDENT MINISTRY – MARCH 22, 2026

We congratulate the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Faith Formation students, Mrs. Lisa Frattali, who participated during Sunday Mass on March 22, 2026 at 10 am.

We congratulate the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Faith Formation students, Mrs. Wendy Bradley, who participated during Sunday Mass on March 22, 2026 at 12 pm.



# STEWARDSHIP OF COMMUNITY

## SICK AND HOMEBOUND

John Agyemang	Marilyn Kent
Julia Alessandrine	Patricia Knott
Robert Andreotta	Gary Koopman
Ted Baker	Kamal Leahy
Tina Belardo	Michael Liberatore
Paul Bilbrough	John Manes Sr.
Gladys Blaese	Ed & Sandy Markiewicz
Michelle Blaese	Philip Marzili
Rosalie Bowman	Janis Mayer
Kevin Brady	Connie McCusker
MaryBeth Bravman	Larry Meo Sr.
Baby Savannah Britt	Adele Miller
Irene Browne	Agnes Moore
Joe & Terry Bruno	Sister Marie Moore, IHM
Loretta Bunoza	Margie & Walter Moronski
Betty Butler	Chris Morrison
Carole Anne Conner	Francesco (Frankie) Nero
Benjamin Cuifolo	Marie Niceto
Terry Cunningham	Glenn Plisczak
Carol Defoney	Alfred Salvatore Sr.
Concetta DiFrancisco	Nora Sauers
Charles Dowd	Gale Schofield
Jean Ervin/Smith	Lori Singley
Joan Hagge	Kay Tedesco
Richard Herlihy, FSC	John F. Vece
Matthew Hernan	Carol Walter
Kim Hertzberg	John Werner
Elayne Hill	Grace Wisnewski
Teresa Hiteshew	Lisa Wisnewski
Jo Niece Holbig	Joseph Wisnewski
Janice Judge	

**Note:** To add or remove a name from the Sick and Homebound list, please call the Parish Office. Permission must be obtained to print someone's name. **Please let us know if a person listed has recovered from sickness.** Thank you

## PRAYER & YOGA SCHEDULE Through July 2026

All Classes Held in St. Simon Stock Parish Life Center  
Classes with asterisk (\*) indicate \$10 fee

Yoga is held the first through fourth Tuesday of each month at 4:30 pm in the Parish Life Center. This gentle practice begins with a reflection, gentle flows and stretches, and concludes with a relaxing Savasana. It is appropriate for all fitness levels. The schedule through July is as follows:

April: 7th Audrey\*, 14th Audrey\*, 21st Sue, 28th Sue  
May: 5th Sue, 12th Audrey\*, 19th Sue, 26th Audrey\*  
June: 2nd Audrey\*, 9th Sue, 16th Audrey\*, 23rd Sue  
July: 7th Sue, 14th Audrey\*, 21st Sue, 28th Audrey

### Urgent Need: Options for Her

Options for Her is in urgent need of formula, baby wipes, and 2T and 3T pullups. Formula types: Enfamil Neuropro (yellow container), Enfamil Gentle Ease (purple container), Similac 360 Total (blue container), Similac 360 Sensitive (yellow container)  
Any assistance offered to help Mothers and Babies would be greatly appreciated.

Donations can be dropped off in the back of church.



**Soar Into Spring  
With Generosity**

Parish Giving

To give online, visit  
**stsimonstock.net**

Parish Giving offers secure flexible Online Giving for our parishioners who would like to make their donations online using a credit card or bank transfer. You never have to bring cash or checks to church. Online Giving helps the church save money and plan the budget.

# STEWARDSHIP OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

## Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Regional School

Happy Easter! Today is a day to be joyful! We celebrate the Resurrection - Jesus' triumph of life over death. Today's psalm echoes that beautifully: "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad." All members of the Mt. Carmel community are looking forward to a healthy, restful holiday break.

Registration for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years is ongoing, with openings in all grades from pre-school through 8th grade. If you would like to learn more about the benefits of a Mt. Carmel education, please contact Principal Alice Malloy (amalloy@olmc-school.org) or Advancement Director Mandee DeHaven (adehaven@olmc-school.org) at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School for more information.

## Cremation and Scattering of Ashes: Catholic Teaching

The Catholic Church **permits cremation** but continues to **prefer burial of the body** as a sign of faith in the **resurrection of the dead** (cf. Code of Canon Law, can. 1176).

When cremation is chosen, cremated remains must be treated with the **same reverence as the human body** and are to be **buried or entombed in a sacred place** (cemetery, columbarium, or church crypt).

- ⊘ **The Church does not permit the scattering of ashes**—on land, in the sea, or in the air.
- ⊘ Ashes may not be divided or kept at home without special permission.

As the Church teaches: "The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground is not the reverent disposition that the Church requires." (*Order of Christian Funerals, no. 416*)

Families are encouraged to speak with a priest or parish staff member when planning funeral arrangements to ensure they reflect **Catholic faith, dignity, and hope in the resurrection.**



## Women's Book Club

The next gathering of the Women's Book Club is **Friday, April 24, 2026, at 7 pm**, in the Parish Life Center. The next book is *Walk in Her Sandals: Experience Christ's Passion through the Eyes of Women*, edited by Kelly M. Wahlquist, Published by Ave Maria Press 2016 (161 pages).

## Respect Life Ministry



## IN REMEMBRANCE

Please pray for those who have continued on their journey to the Kingdom of God:



**James and Mary McKay**  
**Funeral Mass April 17, 2026 at 11 am**  
*May they rest in peace.*



Youth Group News!

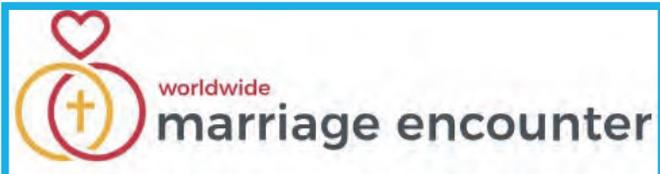


**NOVA Adventure Park Field Trip**

**Tuesday, April 7 |** **6:00 – 8:00 PM**

NOVA Adventure Park – 711 Evesham Ave. E, Ste. 1A, Somerdale, NJ 08083

**Open to youth in grades 5 through 12**



**MARRIED COUPLES:** Does gardening give you a sense of wonder and fulfillment? On your wedding day, you lovingly planted the seeds of a lifelong relationship. A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will give you the "gardening tools" you need to help your marriage grow and blossom.

The next weekend dates are Oct. 2-4 and Dec 4-6, 2026. Call 609-741-8012 for more information email applications@wwme-southjersey.org. Visit our website: wwme-southjersey.org.

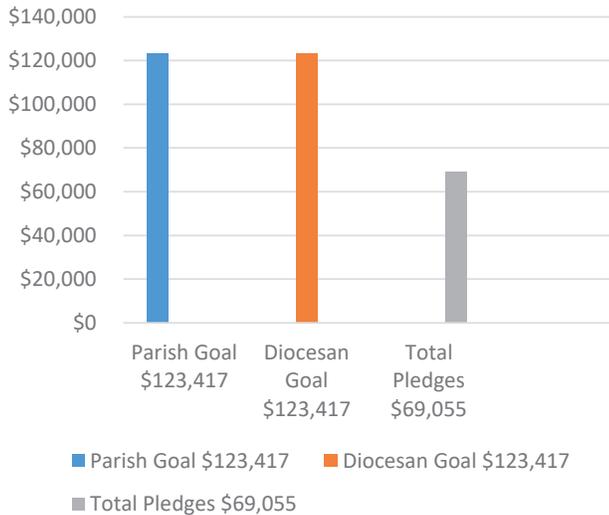
# STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE



## SOUTH JERSEY CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL

This year's theme for the South Jersey Catholic Ministries Appeal is **Missionaries of Mercy**. Let us join Bishop Joseph Williams in renewing our commitment to charity, which lies at the heart of our Catholic faith. When we give, we become instruments of God's mercy—walking alongside those who are struggling and reminding them that they are never forgotten.

### 2026 SJ Catholic Ministries Appeal March 31, 2026 Report



**Every donation, whether large or small, is deeply appreciated.** On behalf of those in need and all who benefit from the South Jersey Catholic Ministries Appeal (SJCMA), please consider making a monetary pledge today. **Your gift is tax deductible.** Thank you for your generosity and support!

### SOUTH JERSEY CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL PRAYER

O Merciful God, you are the provider of all that we are and all that we have.

You open wide your hand to provide for the needs of every living creature.

Make us always grateful for your loving mercy and grant that we may be faithful stewards of your gifts.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns God forever and ever.

Amen

### PARISH-WIDE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

#### An Extraordinary Opportunity to Double Your Gift!

As you know, two generous families have pledged to match every dollar you give—up to **\$60,000**—for our Capital Campaign! This campaign will support the expansion of our church, including:

- A welcoming vestibule (foyer)
- A small chapel for prayer and adoration
- A priests' sacristy
- An altar servers' room
- A handicapped-accessible confessional

#### Matching Gift Details:

- **Begins** Monday, December 1, 2025
- **Ends** July 1, 2026, or when we reach \$60,000
- **Applies only to new pledges**

At present, **41 parishioners (including spouses)** have contributed **\$55,000** toward the Capital Campaign through the Matching Gift Program. Remember: every gift made during this period will be doubled, helping us create a space that strengthens worship, community, and accessibility for all.

As Scripture reminds us:

*"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."*

— Luke 6:38



**Thank you for your continued support.**

**God bless you and your family.**

**May the maternal mantle of love of  
Our Lady of Mount Carmel embrace you!**

*Stewardship of Treasure for March 29, 2026, will appear in next week's Bulletin due to an early submission date*

**Thank you for your generosity.**

### Partnership with Volcano Steak and Sushi



St. Simon Stock Parish has formed a partnership with Volcano Steak and Sushi. For every parishioner who dines at Volcano on **Sundays only**, tell the service person that you are a parishioner and your Parish will receive a 20% donation on the total food bill before taxes. The Parish has already received donation checks. Cards from Volcano are available on the table in the back of the church.

# MARCH LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

April 11/12	4:00 pm	8:00 AM	10:00 AM	12:00 Noon
<b>EMs</b>	Barb Davis, Jim Gillespie, Terry Bongiovanni Bonnie Piontkowski Sally Rosenbaum Karen Talucci Terri Wetzel	Frank Epifanio, Jr. Jason Smith Jennifer Smith Robert Tartamosa Sheila Tartamosa	Beth Cattell Rich Cattell Nicki McNamara Jeff Salvatore Tracy Salvatore	Wendy Bradley Marie DiStefano Marie Leyden Sarah Leyden Toni Powers
<b>Lectors</b>	Samantha Covone	Aida Figueroa-Epifanio	Ed Bond	Wendy Bradley
<b>Music</b>	Lou/Liz	Lynne/Linda	Mike/Rich	Betty/Steve
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Vanessa Longo	Sopia Byrd Giulia Maimone	Trent Taylor Madison Grochal Gordon Schaeffer Gemma Schaeffer Gia Schaeffer Bryson Morton	Seraphina Schaber Madeline Smith Hailey Smith Ava Moran
<b>JrAltrSrv</b>		Liam & Lily Farina and Frankie Epifanio	Matthew Trant	Maddie Moran
<b>Ushers</b>	Tom Galen, Jim Pacifico, Rudy Perocho, John Lattuga, Bill Bansch, Jim Blackmore, Rich Grabowski, Mark Fahringer	Joe Adolph, Joe Karas, Joe Blasé Sr. & Jr., Bob Fahringer, Rick Danser, Bill Fox, Derrick Watkins, Dennis Consalvi	Chris Brisbin, Brian Fruit Tom Carey, Jeremiah McNamara, Mike McGee, Keith Jones, Chris Morris, Frank Flood, George Turner, Ed Bond Rich Cattell	Roger Strong, Frank Vein, Brian Leyden

## STEWARDSHIP COMPASSION AND COMMUNITY

### PRAYERS FOR THE MILITARY

#### Please Pray for the Welfare of our Military

Capt. Andrew Winters, USA; SSgt. Joseph R. Garback, USAR; SSgt. Nicholas R. Luthe USAF; Sgt. Adam Cutaia, USMC; Capt. Lewis Nicoletto; PO 2<sup>nd</sup> Russell Hagner, USN; Spc. Justin Scheuren, USA; PO 1<sup>st</sup> Class Damien Renzi, USN; Capt. Jason E. Healey, USAR; SSgt. David Sigwart, USAF; SSgt. Taylor Purvis, USAF; Sgt. Michael Franzini, USAR; PO 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Michael Angelow, USN; Pfc. Amanda Sylvester, USAR; Sgt. Tyler Fisher, USAR; Joseph Morris III, USAR; Matthew Angelow, USCG; Nadeem Sarwar, USAR; Sherri Mercier; SSgt. Nicholas R. Luthe USAF; MSgt. Jeremiah McNamara; Spc. Sean Gillespie, USAR; Capt. Bryan Gillespie, USAR; Cmdr. Luke Slizinski, USCG; A1C Jack Erikson USAF; PO2 Joseph Connell USN. To add or remove a name from our Military, please email Jim Gillespie Jr. at [gillespiejas@comcast.net](mailto:gillespiejas@comcast.net) and provide name, rank and branch of service.

### Society of St. Vincent De Paul

#### St. Simon Stock Conference

157 West White Horse Pike, Berlin, NJ 08009

#### Food Pantry Distribution:

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, 11 am–2:30 pm

**Thrift Store Open:** Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays 10 am – 3 pm; Saturdays 10 am – 1 pm

Store Donations Accepted On Days The Store Is Open Up To ½ Hour Before Closing. Phone Assistance Services at 856-767-7391 available On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays from 11 am – 2:30 pm. At other times, if you need immediate assistance, **dial 211**, which is the NJ State Help Line.



#### Easter Sunday

Today as we celebrate the feast of Easter, we find the challenge of also seeing and believing the resurrection that comes through our own lives of self-sacrifice. It is then that we are truly Easter people!

### SAVE THE DATE

Saturday November 7, 2026

### Diocesan Marian Pilgrimage



**To the Basilica of the  
National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception**  
Washington, D.C.

**As you place your gift in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Poor Box, know that you are a sign of God's love to those who are suffering, and you give them Easter hope and joy.**

If you are interested in learning more about us, getting involved, or if you have questions, contact us at 856-767-7391 during pantry hours, or come visit our Thrift Store during open hours. While you are there you can drop off donations and/or shop, as well!

If you or someone you know needs medical assistance items such as crutches, wheelchairs, walkers, shower chairs, and/or portable commodes, please contact us. We couldn't have done it without you! Thank you!

*"Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40*

# CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR VESTIBULE

Dear parishioners,

Peace and blessings to you and your families. As we continue to grow together in faith, I am grateful for the chance to share a more detailed update on our **Saint Simon Stock Parish Church Expansion Project**—a project that arises from prayer, discernment, and our shared desire to build a more welcoming spiritual home for everyone.

This expansion is not simply a construction plan; it is a pastoral response to the needs of our parish family. The project includes a dedicated **chapel for quiet prayer, meditation, and Eucharistic Adoration**, providing a sacred refuge for all who seek silence and closeness with the Lord. We will build **handicapped-accessible confessional rooms**, ensuring that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is truly available to all God's people. A new **sacristy** will better serve our liturgical ministers, while a spacious **vestibule (foyer)** will allow parishioners to gather, greet one another, and build community without disturbing those in prayer.

We will transform the current sacristy into a proper **Altar Server's Room** and renovate the cry room into a more welcoming **Family Room** for parents with infants and toddlers. One young family recently shared with me, "This project tells us that families with children are truly valued in our parish. It's a blessing to know there will be a place where our little ones can grow in the faith comfortably."

## Timeline of the Project

Our journey has followed a careful and prayerful process:

1. Approval from the Diocese to begin a capital campaign
2. Completion of a parish feasibility study
3. Signing a contract with the architectural firm that produced the plans
4. Launching our three-year Capital Campaign in May 2024
5. Ongoing collection of pledged gifts
6. Preparing for a competitive bidding process involving at least three construction companies
7. Choosing a reliable and mission-aligned contractor
8. Beginning the construction phase

## Where We Stand Today

By God's grace and your generosity, we have reached **approximately \$998,000 in pledges**, with **\$872,560 fulfilled in cash**. The estimated cost of the project—

including the required 10–15% contingency—is **\$1 million to \$1.2 million**.

We are blessed with **two families offering a matching gift**, doubling every donation up to **\$60,000**. To date, we have received about **\$55,000** toward this match. A longtime parishioner recently told me, "We give because we want our children and grandchildren to inherit a parish that is even stronger than the one we received." Their words echo the spirit of stewardship that has always defined our community.

## Next Steps

1. Meet with our architectural firm for final refinements
2. Invite multiple reputable construction companies to submit formal bids
3. Select the best-qualified contractor
4. Prayerfully aim to begin construction in late 2026 or early 2027

As we continue forward, I ask for your prayers for all who support this mission. Scripture reminds us, "*Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain*" (Psalm 127:1). May we remain faithful as "*living stones being built into a spiritual house*" (1 Peter 2:5).

If you would like more information or wish to help, please reach out to **any of our Parish Trustees, Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Church Expansion Project Committee, or to me personally**.

## A Prayer for Our Donors and Benefactors

*Loving and generous God*

*We thank You for the faithful stewards who support our parish with open hearts.*

*Bless our donors and benefactors with Your grace, reward their generosity, strengthen their families, grant them good health, peace, and spiritual joy. As they help build Your house, may You bless their homes.*

*Let their kindness bear fruit in our parish for generations to come.*

*May all we do be for Your glory and the good of Your people.*

*We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

With prayerful blessings,  
**Fr. Michael**



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