

PASTORAL TEAM

Rev. David Monteleone
Pastor
frmonteleone@stphilip.org

Rev. Emerson Francisco
Parochial Vicar
efrancisco@stphilip.org

Rev. Frank Lennie
In-Residence

Dcn. Nicholas Veliky
Deacon
nveliky@stphilip.org

Dcn. Robert G. Ayers
Deacon
deaconbob@stphilip.org

Mrs. Barbara Zito
Principal
PrincipalZito
@stphilipprep.com

Mrs. Denise Pannullo
Faith Formation
dpanullo@stphilip.org

Ms. Vicky Velasco
Confirmation Program
vvelasco@stphilip.org

Mr. Frank Hydash
Director of Music
frankhydash@rocketmail.com

Mr. Carlos Arias
Maintenance Supervisor
carias@stphilip.org

Mrs. Patricia Pinke
Business Office, LYPC
ppinke@stphilip.org

Mrs. Debbie Neglia
School Secretary, LYPC
Debbie.neglia
@stphilipprep.com

Ms. Linda Siluk
Lay Trustee

Mr. James Marrocco
Lay Trustee

St. Philip the Apostle Parish

797 Valley Road, Clifton, NJ 07013

www.stphilip.org ~ (973) 779-6200



@StPhilipClifton



@StPhilipClifton



Third Sunday of Advent December 14, 2025



CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday Evening 5:30 PM
Sunday..... 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM (Broadcast) & 12:00 PM
Monday thru Saturday..... 9:00 AM

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Every Saturday 4:30 PM

HOLY HOUR

Every Friday 9:30 to 10:30 AM

For a Communion visit and/or
Anointing of the Sick,
please contact the Parish office.



My Dear Parishioners,

Think about the person you miss most in your entire life. Picture them. And then think of the time you missed someone more intensely than you've ever missed anyone—during a deployment, a long trip, when a child moved away, whenever it was. Recall the longing, and the joy of reunion.

This longing is the engine behind half the books and movies on the market—every Nicholas Sparks plot runs on it. Two people fall in love, circumstances wrench them apart, they pine for one another, obstacles arise, twists unfold, but the pull of the relationship wins in the end. Why does that story sell? Because we're made for relationship. Something in us comes alive when the one we love is present, and something in us aches when they're gone.

Hold that person in your mind, the one whose absence unsettles you, whose presence brings you peace.

Here's the real question, and I mean this sincerely: Is your longing for Christ anything like that? Would you describe your desire for the presence of Jesus the way you describe missing that person?

For many of us, the honest answer is no. We often reduce our faith to "going to church," because that's how many of us were raised. And going to church is essential. But how many of us would describe our relationship with Christ as an intense longing? How many of us speak of him the way we speak of the person we miss most?

My greatest fear is that Jesus has become for many of us a distant memory or a distant judge—someone who lived 2,000 years ago, is now far away, and is mainly concerned with handing out verdicts. My fear is that our faith becomes duty alone: "I go to church because you're supposed to. If I don't, I might go to hell."

But my greatest hope is the opposite: that you would encounter Jesus Christ as alive, present, active—a real person who knows you and can transform your life. That your faith would move from obligation to relationship.

That was my own journey. I was the good Catholic kid doing everything right, avoiding sin out of fear, even entering seminary out of a sense of duty. On the outside it looked perfect, but inside there were fractures, because my faith had never become a real, personal relationship with the living Christ. The question that changed everything for me—and the question for each of us this Advent—is simple but life-altering: How real is the person, the presence of Christ to me? If the answer is "not

very," then faith becomes ideas, rules, customs—true, but unable to change us.

This brings us to our readings and to John the Baptist. He dominates Advent because he prepares us for the Messiah. His first words are: "Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Shouldn't he say, "Bake cookies and clean the house—my cousin Jesus is coming"? No.

The Fathers of the Church insist the "kingdom" is not politics, laws, or social programs. The kingdom is Jesus himself. Origen even coined a word for it: *autobasileia*—"the kingdom-in-person." Jesus is the kingdom. John isn't announcing a movement; he's announcing a person.

Think again of the person you miss. When they're absent, life feels off; when they're present, everything steadies. So too with Christ. When our relationship with him is real and healthy, peace and wholeness reign, even amid chaos. That's what Isaiah poetically describes: wolves with lambs, leopards with goats—inner places of conflict finally at peace. In Christ's presence, everything changes.

So, what holds us back? John tells us in one word: repent. Not just "stop sinning," but turn around. Turn your heart away from the things you've decided will give you happiness and toward the One who can. We all cling to idols—finish the sentence: "I can't imagine my life without..." Repentance is loosening our grip on those things so we can turn toward Christ.

The same things that ruin relationships with people also ruin our relationship with Christ: taking him for granted, growing distant, investing our time elsewhere, breaking trust, letting someone or something else become more important. If those things break earthly relationships, why wouldn't they break our relationship with Jesus? John calls us to repair what's broken—through confession, prayer, adoration—through renewing time and attention.

So, ask yourself this Advent: How real is Christ to me? Do I long for him the way I long for the people I miss most? If I lost Christ's friendship, would it hurt me more than losing a friend—more even than losing a spouse or a child? Is my relationship with him in need of repair? If so, please come and talk to me. I want to help.

We look forward to Christmas for cookies, gifts, and music. But maybe this Christmas we can desire something deeper: to experience Christ as he truly is—real, present, alive, active. Maybe this year, our longing for him could outweigh everything else.

Peace,
Fr. Monteleone

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2025

Filipino Simbang Gabi

Friday, December 19
6:30 PM

Christmas Eve Masses

Wednesday, December 24
4 PM, 7 PM and 10 PM

Christmas Day Masses

Thursday, December 25
8 AM, 10 AM and 12 PM

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Vigil Mass,

Wednesday, December 31
5:30 PM

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Thursday, January 1
9 AM

GIVING TREE

Thank you for helping with our annual **Christmas Giving Tree**! If you have not already returned your gift, make sure to drop it off in the vestibule by the 12:00PM Mass on Sunday, December 14. Don't forget to attach the tag to the gift! If you are making an online donation, please do so by this evening!



ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

This week in Pre-K 4, we're learning and celebrating all at once! Our Advent calendar helps us practice counting and number recognition as we wait for Jesus' birthday. Our letter of the week is **J**, and we're building letter-sound skills with lots of joyful **J** words.

We're also reading the candy cane story to practice listening and talking about story details.



Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and remember—Jesus is the reason for the season!

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

COLUMBIETTES

The next Columbiette meeting will be held on Thursday, December 18th. We will enjoy a shared evening of fun with our Columbiette sisters at our annual Christmas party instead of the regular meeting. Arrive at 6:00 pm.



Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm.

The Columbiettes wish our priests, staff and all members of our parish family a Christmas graced with God's blessings of love, peace, joy.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

LIFE MINISTRY



"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." Lk. 1:45

Advent 2025

SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES

FILIPINO-AMERICAN GROUP OF ST. PHILIP'S



St. Philip the Apostle Parish
797 Valley Road
Clifton, NJ 07013

Simbang Gabi

A Filipino tradition of nine-day novena Masses during Advent in preparation for the Nativity of Jesus Christ.

All are welcome to join the fifth day of the Novena Mass for our diocesan and parish-sponsored Simbang Gabi 2025

Friday | December 19, 2025 | 6:30 P.M.

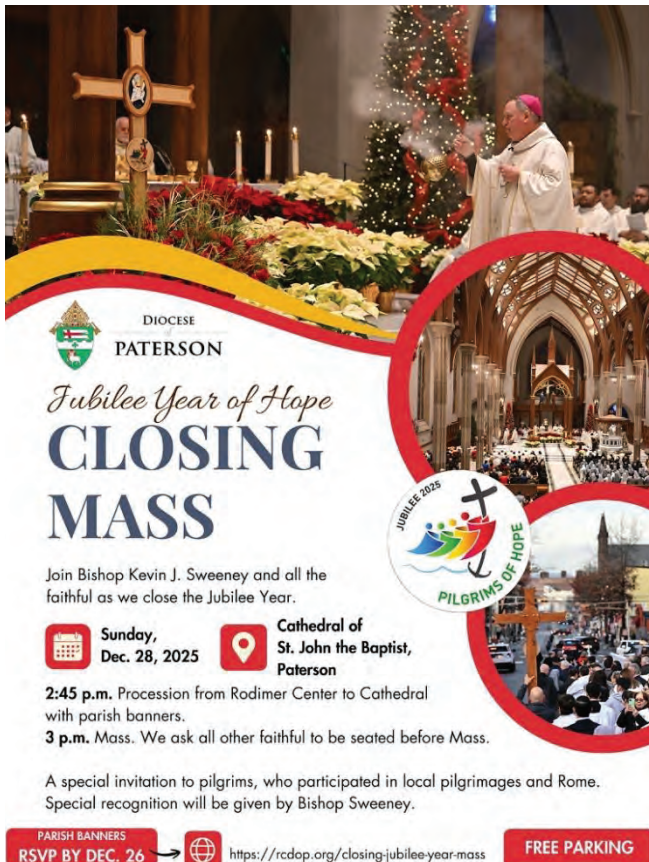
Fr. Emerson Francisco
Main Celebrant

Fr. David Monteleone
Homilist

Join us for fellowship immediately following Mass in the Auditorium

For information, please contact the Parish Office at 973-779-6200 or Raquel at 973-563-6924

DIOCESAN EVENTS



DIOCESE
PATERSON

Jubilee Year of Hope CLOSING MASS

Join Bishop Kevin J. Sweeney and all the faithful as we close the Jubilee Year.

Sunday, Dec. 28, 2025

Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Paterson

2:45 p.m. Procession from Rodimer Center to Cathedral with parish banners.

3 p.m. Mass. We ask all other faithful to be seated before Mass.

A special invitation to pilgrims, who participated in local pilgrimages and Rome. Special recognition will be given by Bishop Sweeney.

PARISH BANNERS
RSVP BY DEC. 26

<https://rcdop.org/closing-jubilee-year-mass>

FREE PARKING

"WHY, FATHER?" by Fr. Emerson

Q: Father, why is the Third Sunday of Advent called "Gaudete Sunday," and how does today's Gospel (Matthew 11:2–11) help us understand its meaning?

A: Gaudete Sunday is one of Advent's most joyful surprises! After two weeks of quiet preparation and waiting, the Church suddenly calls out: **Gaudete!—Rejoice!** 🌸 This comes from the ancient Latin antiphon: "*Gaudete in Domino semper*" — "*Rejoice in the Lord always.*" Even in a season of waiting, **joy breaks through** like dawn 🌅.

This is why we light the **rose candle** today 🕯️ 🌸 — a symbol of "joy in the waiting." And yes, the priest wears rose vestments too (not PINK!) 🌸 — a cheerful reminder that Christianity is not a gloomy religion. Joy is the mark of hearts that know the Messiah is near.

Historically, Gaudete Sunday was meant to "lift" the penitential tone of Advent for a moment of encouragement. Advent is still a season of conversion—but today the Church gives us a breath of hope 💖 ✨.

In the Gospel, John the Baptist—now imprisoned—sends disciples to Jesus with a haunting question: "**Are You the One who is to come?**" 🗝️ 🤖 Even the greatest prophet experiences uncertainty. Jesus responds not with theory but with **evidence**: "*The blind see* 👁️, *the lame walk* 🦿, *the deaf hear* 🦻, *the dead are raised* 🕯️ ➡️ ✨, and *the poor receive Good News* 📖."

Notice this: Jesus doesn't say, "Believe Me just because." He points to **miracles**, **prophecy fulfilled** 📖, and **transformed lives**. Christianity stands on real events, not vague spirituality. Our faith is historical, verifiable, and alive with power 🔥.

And Jesus praises John as the greatest born of woman—yet even John needed reassurance. This means faith is not the absence of questions but trusting God's works, even in darkness 🌑 ➡️ 🌞. Gaudete Sunday erupts with joy because **the signs are clear: the Messiah is here**. His works shine. His mercy heals. His Kingdom advances.

So today, in the middle of Advent's waiting, the Church invites us to **rejoice with courage** 🌸 🕯️ — because Christ is closer than ever, and joy is the only fitting response to the God who saves. 💖 ✨

KIDS KORNER

KID'S KORNER Year A

Gospel Today
Third Sunday of Advent / Matthew 11:2-11

Jesus told the people John the Baptist had been sent ahead of Him to prepare for His coming. Jesus continued preaching the Good News and helping the poor, sick and dying. By His lessons we are taught to help others by our good words and actions.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Directions

- [1] Color the tree green, write your good deeds on the ornaments and color them in.
- [2] Cut out and fold at right angle to stand up by itself.
- [3] Each week of Advent complete the tree and repeat steps 1-2.
- [4] After you have 4 weeks of trees colored, filled in and cut out, attach week 1 to week 2 by matching the corner letters and gluing or taping halves together up to the fold line. Do the same for week 3 and week 4, which will then attach to week 1 and 2 to complete.

Color tree and fill in good deeds, then color ornaments and cut out.

Weeks 1 & 2 together.

Week 3

Different angles of completed tree.

All of God's children are blessed with a variety of time, talents and treasures. This Advent, make a "gift to others" of your abilities, then write what you do on the ornaments on your "Share Me" tree.

There will be a tree for each week of Advent, and the 4 stand alone pieces will be joined together into a 3-D tree; just in time for Christmas!

Your finished tree is a wonderful gift to baby Jesus on Christmas! (Jesus loves when we help everyone around us.)

GOD BLESS THE NEWLYWED



Stephen and Andrea

LESSONS AND CAROLS

Bell Choir



Youth Choir

Adult Choir



Lectors

Fr. Monteleone



GOD BLESS THE NEWLY BAPTIZED



Valentina Carmelina and Mariella Teresa



Campbell Jade

PARISH GIVING

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| SUNDAY COLLECTION: DEC. 8, 2024 | \$16,572.00 |
| SUNDAY COLLECTION: DECEMBER 7, 2025 | |
| WEEKLY COLLECTION | \$ 13,337.00 |
| ONLINE GIVING DONATION | \$ 6,073.00 |
| TOTAL | \$ 19,410.00 |
| 2ND COL.-RETIRED REL | \$ 3,560.00 |

WE PRAY FOR...

Recently Deceased...

Gloria Toma

A Time to be Healed...

Marge Sikora, Robert Rup, Fran Kobernick, Rosanna Hampton, Philip Kutzenko, Angelo Torres, Nina Sova, Nicholas Magrogan, Antonio Bussanich, Rosemarie Carlee, James Jablonowski, Terry Kolenc, Wilson Torres, Arlene Pompeo, Tom Wilkinson, Lee Welch, Maya Hilario

MASS INTENTIONS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025

| | |
|-------|---|
| 8:00 | All the People of the Parish |
| 10:00 | Elena Parillo Bridi Thomas Mullin Deceased Members of Sieminski and Farrelly Families Stanislawa Skorupa |
| 12:00 | Deceased members of the Kerner Family Torquato and Mary Trasente |

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025

| | |
|---------|---|
| 9:00 AM | Seraphia McCormick Jessica Castrillone |
|---------|---|

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

| | |
|---------|---|
| 9:00 AM | Candido Palacalpanag Doloroso Ipanag |
|---------|---|

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025

| | |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 9:00 AM | Fredric Cheon Jim Loftus |
|---------|-----------------------------|

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 9:00 AM | Antonio Volonnino Josephine Pagano |
|---------|---------------------------------------|

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 9:00 AM | Eugene Byrne Sr. Theresa Gallagher |
|---------|---------------------------------------|

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2025

| | |
|---------|---|
| 9:00 AM | Emma Melicia Elizabetta Porta |
| 5:30 PM | Claudia Pugliese Robert P. Hammer- 23 rd Anniversary Marguerite H. VanWowk |

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

| | |
|-------|--|
| 8:00 | Dot Cervine Rosanna Hampton |
| 10:00 | Catherine "Kitty" Makowski Irene Marschalk Emily and Andrew Sokerka Edward Kovacs |
| 12:00 | All the People of the Parish |

CANDLE FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 14th

In memory of Frank and Lori Meany
- From the Fitzpatrick Family



ALLWOOD FUNERAL HOME

973-773-6666

660-670 ALLWOOD ROAD - CLIFTON, NJ

973-546-4700

Michael E. Porter, Manager, N.J. Lic. No. 3011, Scott D. Porter, N.J. Lic. No. 4070 & Andrew J. Messineo, N.J. Lic. No. 5285, Directors



Ranked #1 Realtor®
in Clifton

m Mahmoud Ijbara
Realtor®

646.764.9599

mahmoud@ijbaragroup.com

www.cliftonsold.com

#1 Most Sold Homes in Clifton

Diane DeCarolis, APN
Psychiatric Mental
Health Practitioner
25 YEARS EXPERIENCE
Medication • Psychotherapy
917-751-8700
MOST INSURANCE PLANS ACCEPTED UPPER MONTCLAIR

**NEED A LAWYER?
INJURED?**

★ Call For A Free Legal Consultation ★

MARC J. BRENNER ESQ.

973-326-8902
• Personal Injury
• Workers' Compensation
• Social Security Disability
Center Of The Sunbelt
Court in New Jersey As A
Women's Cooperation
Law Attorney
lawmarchbrenner.com • marc@lawmarchbrenner.com

222 RIDGEDALE AVENUE - CEDAR KNOLLS, NJ 07927

BUYING OR SELLING?

CALL MR. & MRS. REAL ESTATE

A Husband and Wife Team...
Must be a Dream!



Rickey DiMaria
Broker/Owner
973-714-9606
Rickey@RickeyDiMaria.com

Joseph Siano
Licensed NJ Real Estate Agent
973-563-1449
JosephSianoJr@gmail.com

JK REALTY
NEW JERSEY LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKERS
270 Collax Ave, Clifton, NJ 07013

WWW.JKREALTY.COM

973-472-7000

**ROOFING • CHIMNEYS
MASONRY • GUTTERS**

We Find & Fix Leaks!



\$1100 OFF
Any New Roof Replacement

20% OFF
Any Roof, Chimney, Gutter,
Masonry Repair & SENIORS

Family Owned/Operated • 20 Plus Years Experience
Lic. #13VH0934200, Bonded & Insured

732-589-9967 Serving All of New Jersey

**GOD BLESS
AMERICA**

PLEASE
SUPPORT OUR
ADVERTISERS
THEY SUPPORT
OUR PARISH

Bluejay Pharmacy
& MEDICAL SUPPLY

Pharmacy Services

- Personalized Pharmacy Service
- Blister Pack Medication Preparation
- RX Copay Assistance Programs
- Medication Therapy Management
- Immunization Services
- **FREE RX Pickup and Delivery**

Ask us how we
can help you
**SAVE ON YOUR
PRESCRIPTIONS**

Compounding Services • Veterinary Medications

377 Valley Road, Clifton, NJ 07013

Call us at 973-278-8876

www.TheBluejayPharmacy.com

Chirag S. Taylor Pharm D RPh - Owner & Pharmacist-in-Charge



Ameti's Pizza

FRESH FAST FREE DELIVERY

PIZZA • SANDWICHES • SALADS • ENTREES

1162 Broad Street • Clifton, NJ 07013

973-272-6080

view/order online at Ameti's Pizza Clifton

**SELLING YOUR HOME? LET'S MAKE IT
EASY — AND SENSATIONAL.**

Work with an Award-Winning Real Estate Agent
Who Gets Results.

STUNNING MARKETING & PRO PHOTOS

HASSLE-FREE PROCESS & PAPERWORK

PLATINUM AWARD-WINNING SERVICE

TOP DOLLAR FOR YOUR PROPERTY



Tanya Bressel

PHONE
C 973 777 4228
O 866 201 6210 X 1263

EMAIL
tanya.bressel@exp Realty.com

exp
REALTY

Call or text today for your **FREE** home value consultation and let's turn your move into a smart, seamless success.

If You Are Currently Listed With Another Broker, Please Disregard. This Is Not An Attempt To Solicit.



Shook
FUNERAL HOME, INC.

639 Van Houten Avenue | Clifton, New Jersey | 07013

Roy B. Garretson, Manager | NJ Lic. No. 3550

(973) 471-9620 | ShookFuneralHome@gmail.com | www.ShookFH.com

BIZUB- QUINLAN

F U N E R A L H O M E



1313 VAN HOUTEN AVENUE • CLIFTON, NJ 07013

www.bizubquinlan.com

973-546-2000

TIMOTHY J. BIZUB, MANAGER
N.J. Lic. No. 4022

WAYNE P. MARSTON
N.J. Lic. No. 4494

THOMAS J. BIZUB, SR.
N.J. Lic. No. 2732

EDWARD C. RICH
N.J. Lic. No. 3562

JEFFREY POMPEO

Parishioner



DiFrancesco Bateman
ATTORNEY
908-757-7800
jpompeo@newjerseylaw.net
CLIFTON: 1200 ROUTE 46 WEST (AT CORNER OF ST. PHILIP DRIVE)
WARREN: 15 MOUNTAIN BLVD • POINT PLEASANT: 1521 BEAVER DAM ROAD



Compliments Of

RAY GRABOWSKI

LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

Clifton • New Jersey

"Light the Way to Catholic Education"

Your tax deductible donation will benefit the:
Monsignor Peter J. Doody Permanent Scholarship Fund
To benefit Catholic Education for the students of St. Philip the Apostle School
Donations can be sent to:
St. Philip's Knights of Columbus Scholarship Fund • 797 Valley Rd., Clifton, NJ 07013
Ask your employer about matching gifts!

BARTLETT GREENHOUSES & FLORIST INC.

Cut Flowers, Plants & Floral Designs
Specializing In Funeral Arrangements & Weddings
471-6480
814 GROVE STREET • CLIFTON

FASTSIGNS SECAUCUS

255 Route 3 E. • 201-902-8640
Angelo Masino
angelo.masino@fastsigns.com
fastsigns.com/153



**Be a friend.
Give blood.**

PEANUTS x American Red Cross

PHILIP SALVATORIELLO GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Residential & Commercial
Fully Insured

ADDITIONS, KITCHENS & BATHROOMS
ELECTRICAL & PLUMBING
TRIM, PAINTING, DECKS & DOORS
WINDOWS, SIDING & ROOFING

973.747.9812
philsal2025@gmail.com

1600+ HOMES SOLD
\$575+ MILLION
26+ YEARS EXPERTISE

PHONE

C: 973-886-6258

O: 973-594-4312

MAIL

Pina@PickPina.com

WEBSITE

www.Pina.PickPina.com



COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY

PICK PINA GROUP
FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS



PINA NAZARIO

JULIAN NAZARIO PETER NAZARIO

THE BARROW HOUSE

PARLOR • BAR • RESTAURANT

BRUNCH
•
LUNCH
•
DINNER

HAPPY HOUR M-F 3-7PM

The Law Offices of ROBERT C. HESS

973-778-9310

840 Van Houten Ave. Clifton, NJ 07013
Parishioner, Lector

1296 VAN HOUTEN AVE.
CLIFTON, NJ 07013

THEBARROWHOUSE.COM

OVER 30 YEARS IN PRACTICE

ANTHONY N. BARBIERI, PC Attorney at Law

Wills • Real Estate • Bankruptcy
Motor Vehicle Offenses

832 CLIFTON AVENUE • CLIFTON, NJ 07013
973-204-9266

A.BARBIERI@OUTLOOK.COM

House and weekend visits available.
Free Consultation • \$50 Discount with this Ad

No one likes a distracted driver.

STOPTEXTSSTOPWRECKS.ORG

NHTSA



FITNESS

THE BEST GYM IN TOWN!

895 PAULISON AVE • 973.553.9470 • CRUNCHCLIFTON.COM [f](https://www.facebook.com/crunchclifton) [i](https://www.instagram.com/crunchclifton) CRUNCHCLIFTON

James J. Marrocco
Senior Director ~ Parishioner
NJ Lic. No. 3320

Michael A. Waller
Director ~ Parishioner
NJ Lic. No. 3017

Brian J. Warner
Manager
NJ Lic. No. 4587

Marrocco

MEMORIAL CHAPEL

~ Serving The Public Since 1899 ~

Member
International
Order of the
GOLDEN
RULE

973-249-6111 • 470 COLFAX AVENUE • CLIFTON, NJ 07013 • MARROCCOS.COM