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# St. Philip the Apostle Parish

797 Valley Road, Clifton, NJ 07013  
www.stphilip.org ~ (973) 779-6200



@StPhilipClifton



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## Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 15, 2026



### 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.



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

One of my greatest fears—one that returns to me often, sometimes daily—is not failure, suffering, or even persecution. It is something much subtler and far more dangerous. My fear is that I will say, quietly and confidently, *“I’m good.”*

I have been Catholic my entire life. I have studied Scripture, prayed with it, taught it, and been entrusted with it. At my ordination as a deacon, the bishop placed the Book of the Gospels into my hands and said, “Believe what you read. Teach what you believe. Practice what you teach.” Those words haunt me—in the best possible way. Because the more I read the Gospel honestly, the more I realize how often Jesus unsettles the comfortable and warns the convinced.

Jesus speaks again and again about judgment, about the narrow gate, about the possibility that those who *think* they know Him may discover they never truly did. That possibility should sober us. Not terrify us into despair—but awaken us from complacency.

There is a tension we must hold. On the one hand, it would be cruel to assure someone of salvation if they are living in a way that contradicts the Gospel. On the other hand, it would be equally cruel to burden faithful disciples with constant fear. But Scripture leaves no room for casual confidence. Jesus’ words are unmistakable: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father.”

What is striking is *who* Jesus is addressing. Not atheists. Not enemies of religion. But people who prayed, who worshiped, who ate and drank with Him, who heard Him preach. People who assumed proximity was enough. People who assumed sincerity was sufficient. People who said, “I believe in God. I’m a good person.”

And Jesus says, “Depart from me. I never knew you.”

That should stop us in our tracks.

We live in a culture that desperately wants reassurance without repentance, mercy without conversion, love without truth. We repeat mantras like, “God doesn’t judge,” forgetting that the same God who is infinite mercy is also perfect justice. Scripture does not allow us to erase judgment simply because it makes us uncomfortable. From Genesis to Revelation, God consistently reveals Himself as One who takes our choices seriously—so seriously, in fact, that they echo into eternity.

The greatest deception is not open rebellion against God, but quiet self-satisfaction. The belief that being “basically good” is enough. Even worse, we

pass this belief on to our children, teaching them—explicitly or implicitly—that faith is optional, sacrifice excessive, and holiness extreme.

But Jesus never called anyone to comfort. He called them to follow.

One image helps clarify this: imagine your life as a rope stretching endlessly in both directions. Now imagine a small section—just a few inches—colored red. That red portion is your life on earth. Everything else is eternity. What’s astonishing is how much time, energy, and emotion we pour into that tiny red section, as if it were all that existed.

We plan, spend, worry, and obsess over things that will not last—while neglecting the one decision that shapes everything that follows. How we live this brief moment determines how we will live forever.

Jesus invites us to something radically different. He asks us to keep His commandments—many of which we hear in the Gospel today—not as a burden, but as a path to freedom. He reminds us that no sacrifice compares to what God has prepared for those who love Him: “What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard...what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

The Christian life is not about securing a dream house, dream job, or dream retirement. Those dreams fade quickly. Even the best of them disappoints. But holiness does not disappoint. Eternal life does not expire.

If we come to the Eucharist merely for comfort, we miss its purpose. We come to be strengthened—for sacrifice, endurance, and fidelity. We come to place our entire lives into God’s hands, holding nothing back.

My hope is that one day we will be able to pray honestly: *“Lord, I don’t care what I drive. I don’t care what I wear. I don’t care what I lose—if I can have You.”* And Jesus, who never allows Himself to be outdone in generosity, will respond as He promised: “There is no one who has left everything for my sake and for the Gospel who will not receive a hundredfold now...and in the age to come, eternal life.”

And when that day comes, may we hear the only words that truly matter: *“Well done, good and faithful servant.”*

Peace,  
Fr. Monteleone

## PLEASE NOTE

In observance of Presidents’ Day, regular daily Mass will be celebrated at 9 AM on Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. The church will be closed immediately after Mass and the parish office will be closed.

## ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENT

**FEBRUARY 18, 2026**

*“Remember that you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return”*

**7 AM Mass**

**9 AM Mass**

**4 PM Prayer Service**

**7 PM Prayer Service**

**Please Note** that we will add a 7 AM Daily Mass Monday through Friday during Lent beginning Thursday, February 19 through Friday, March 27th.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday evening in Church at 7 PM beginning Friday, February 20th through Good Friday, on April 3rd.



## ST. PATRICK'S DINNER DANCE

St. Philip the Apostle Parish  
14th Annual

# St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance

ALSO CELEBRATING  
*St. Joseph*

**SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH**  
**6:30 - 10:30 PM**  
St. Philip Auditorium

TICKETS ONLY \$50 PER PERSON  
\*21 + ONLY | BYOB  
Entertainment by:  
**The Alan Quinn Orchestra**

Corned Beef & Cabbage, Penne Vodka, Salmon Oreganata,  
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Soft Drinks, Coffee/ Tea

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## ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The students, faculty and staff of SPPS wish the St. Philip's community a Happy St. Valentine's Day weekend and Happy Presidents' Day. February is an exciting month for the school where we can foster love, patriotism, equality and independence.

The students throughout all grades have created fun artistic Valentine's designs, learned more about President Washington and President Lincoln fostering an appreciation for freedom and democracy, and celebrated Black History Month realizing the many contributions made by African Americans regarding innovation, invention, and discovery.

**Applications for New families for the 2026-2027 School year** are being accepted now. Applications can be found and submitted at [stphilipprep.com](http://stphilipprep.com) under New Student Application.

Completed applications include:

- Standardized Test Scores
- Current Academic Records
- Current ISP/ IEP, if applicable
- References

Academic Records and References need to be uploaded and attached to the application. There is a \$75 non-refundable application fee. Applicants will be contacted regarding the status of the application.

Upon acceptance copies of the child's birth certificate, Baptismal certificate and Immunization record will need to be provided.

All detailed information regarding the school can be found on our website [stphilipprep.com](http://stphilipprep.com) under **2026-2027 Registration**

Any questions please contact the school at (973) 779-4700

\*\*Registration for each class will be ongoing until the capacity of students has been reached, which is 25. At that time, waiting lists will be generated.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Save the dates for our Vacation Bible Fun

Mark your calendar July 27- 31  
8:45 AM – 12 Noon

This year's theme is  
**“Rainforest Falls”**

Stay tuned for more information regarding registration dates.



## HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Monte Carlo Night Tricky Tray will be held on March 20, 2026. Enjoy an evening of elegance, excitement and extraordinary prizes.

Our Tricky Tray fundraiser is St. Philip Preparatory School's biggest fundraiser of the year, and we need your help to make it a great success.

As we prepare, here are some opportunities:

- **Become a sponsor.** If you own a business or you would like to sponsor the event as a family. Email Sadiki Christie, HSA president at [sadikichsa@gmail.com](mailto:sadikichsa@gmail.com).
- **Invite businesses** to become sponsors or donate services and goods.
- **Donate items** from our Amazon Wish list.
- **Donate** baskets and other gift-wrap items.
- **Volunteer.** Active and Partial Involvement families will be contacted shortly. However, all families are invited to volunteer. Email us if interested.
- **Attend** and invite family and friends. Ticket sales coming soon. New this year: Choose your seat and VIP packages for a premium experience.

Thank you for your support. Email us with questions, [hsa@stphilip.org](mailto:hsa@stphilip.org).



## SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Christmas is over (except for the bills) and Lent is just around the corner (Feb. 18, 2026) only about a month away so it's time to think about that Lenten menu. Our Knights of Columbus Council will have our annual fish-fry, catered by Tastefully British, on Sunday March 8th from 1pm to 3pm.

Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, fish prices have sky-rocketed and our costs are up 20% from last year so tickets will be \$25 in advance and \$30

at the door since we only have a limited number of door-sales tickets available. Brother Knights will be selling tickets after Masses in the church vestibule on the weekend of February 28-March 1.

Tickets can also be purchased on-line at [kofc1167.org](http://kofc1167.org), you can use your smartphone and the QR code here or you can contact Mike Cervine at (973)472-7505.



### KOC MOVIE NIGHT

The St. Philip the Apostle K of C Council 11671  
**Family Movie Night**

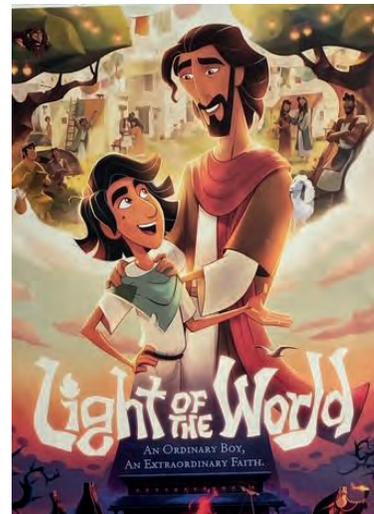
**Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM**

St. Philip Preparatory School Auditorium

Adults \$15 & Children \$10

Each ticket receives a hot dog, water and ice cream cup.

**Each child must be accompanied by an adult**  
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Tickets: <https://knights-of-columbus-11671-specialevents.square.site/>

Or use the QR Code



## COLUMBIETTE BLANKET MINISTRY

The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 10am in the Molloy Center. All crafters are welcome. For more information or donations, contact Cathie Murtha. (973-471-1265)

## PRIME TIMERS

The Prime Timers next regular Meeting will be on Friday March 6th at 1:30pm (coffee/and 1pm) in Marian Hall. Our guest speaker will be from the Passaic County Department of Senior, Veterans and Disabled Services talking about the services available to seniors from Passaic County.

The following trips are planned for 2026:

April 1, La Greci's Staaten – DOO-WOP to Disco Party – Cancelled for insufficient interest

May 27, Delaware River Cruise -Filled

June 18, Hunterdon Hills – Johnny Cash Review \$140 still a few seats available

Dec. 2, Hunterdon Hills – 50th Anniversary Christmas Show \$140 – Seats Available

### All trips require a minimum of 35 people.

Full payment for Delaware cruise – OVERDUE ! We have a waiting list for this. If you haven't paid by Feb. 27 th your place will be given to those on the waiting list.

Full Payment for Johnny Cash show due by March 31. You needn't be a Prime Timers member to go on our trips; they're open to everyone however, Prime Time Members do get priority.

While there's still room on each of these trips they're filling rapidly. If you want to join us contact Mike Cervine (973)472-7505.

There will not be a Prime Timer's meeting in April due to the easter Triduum and school closure Easter week.

Prime Timers membership is open to anyone age 50 and over. Meetings are held the first Friday of every month Sept. through June in Marian Hall at 1:30pm, coffee/and at 1pm. Dues are \$15 per person per year due prior to Jan.1.

## PARISH GIVING

SUNDAY COLLECTION: FEB 9, 2025	\$ 13,947.00
SUNDAY COLLECTION: FEBRUARY 8, 2026	
WEEKLY COLLECTION	\$ 8,370.00
ONLINE GIVING DONATION	\$ 6,879.00
TOTAL	\$ 15,249.00
SECOND COLLECTION-	\$ 2,603.00

UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTION  
FEBRUARY 22- PROJECT FAITH

## THANK YOU

The students of the Confirmation Program are very thankful to the parishioners of St. Philip's for the overwhelming support of the Souper Bowl of Caring! We were able to donate \$1,380.99. to Father English Center to support their ministry of helping thousands of individuals throughout our diocese keep their home pantries stocked. In addition, the Confirmation students were able to prepare over 175 toiletry kits that will be donated to Mercy House. You continue to serve as an example to our students of our Opus Christi, Christ's Work, and what it means to be "Love in Action" as we help our neighbors in need!

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### FR. ENGLISH CENTER COLLECTION

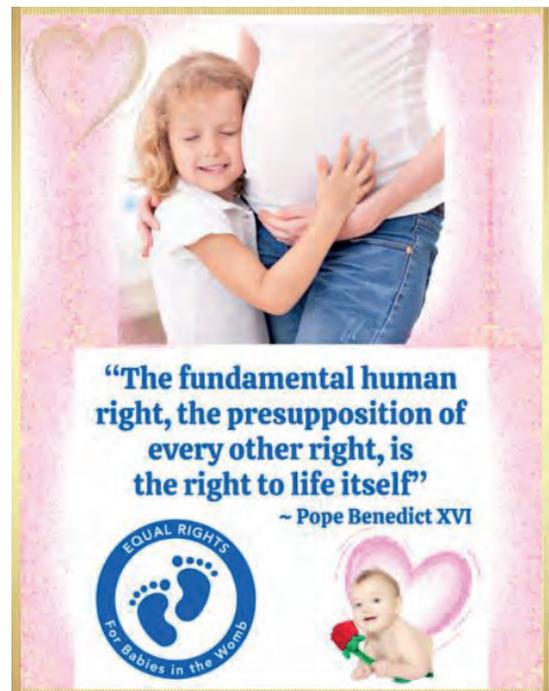
Fr. English is in need of non - perishable items to help our neighbors in Paterson. And we have the best opportunity to share our blessings by donating the following items: pasta, pasta sauce, canned chicken and tuna, peanut butter/jelly, soups, rice, beans and boxes of Oatmeal packages. Many bring huge shopping bags full of food items, but it everyone else can even bring one item, it would be so helpful. After all the Thanksgiving donations have been depleted, our shelves are bare again. Our next collection will be **February 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

*"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."*

-Aesop

Thank you!

## LIFE MINISTRY



## "WHY, FATHER?" by Fr. Emerson

**Q:** *Father, why do Catholics place ashes on their foreheads on Ash Wednesday? 🙄 Isn't this just an old ritual—or does it actually mean something important?*



**A:** The ashes we receive on Ash Wednesday are not superstition or empty ritual—they are a **biblical and deeply Catholic sign** 📖 ✝️. In Scripture, ashes represent **repentance, humility, and mortality**. When the priest says, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return,” we are being reminded of a powerful truth: **this world isn't our final home**.

The ashes come from blessed palms of last year's Palm Sunday 🌿 ➡️ 🌿, showing that even moments of triumph must lead to conversion. The cross traced on our forehead is public—not to show off holiness—but to **confess our need for God's mercy**.

From an apologetics perspective, ashes preach what words alone cannot: we are sinners in need of grace, and salvation begins with humility ❤️. Ash Wednesday does not shame us—it frees us. By admitting our weakness, we open our hearts to God's transforming mercy.

The ashes fade by the end of the day—but the call to repentance should remain all season long. ✝️ 🔥

**Q:** *Father, why do Catholics fast and abstain from meat during Lent? 🙄 Why meat specifically—and who is actually required to fast and abstain? 📖 ✝️*

**A:** Fasting and abstinence are not punishments—they are **spiritual training** 🙌 ✝️. By fasting, we learn self-control. By abstaining from meat, we willingly give up something good to remember something greater: **our hunger for God** 🙌.

Meat was traditionally a sign of celebration and feasting 🍖 🎉. Abstaining from it is a simple but meaningful act of penance, reminding us that Lent is a season of sacrifice and conversion ❤️.

The Church is very clear and reasonable about requirements 📖:

- **Abstinence from meat** is required on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent for Catholics **age 14 and older** 🙌.
- **Fasting** (one full meal, two small meals) is required on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday for Catholics **ages 18 to 59** 🙌.

Why does the Church still insist on this today? Because the body and soul are connected. When we discipline the body, the heart becomes more attentive to God ✝️ 🔥.

Fasting makes room. Abstinence sharpens desire. Together, they prepare us to celebrate Easter with renewed freedom and joy 🎉 ✨.

## WE PRAY FOR...

### *For the Recently Deceased*

Jean Jolly, Carmela Cannizzaro

### *A Time to be Healed...*

Fran Kobernick, Rosanna Hampton, Philip Kutzenko, Angelo Torres, Nina Sova, Nicholas Magrogan, Antonio Bussanich, James Jablonowski, Terry Kolenc, Wilson Torres, Arlene Pompeo, Tom Wilkinson, Lee Welch, Maya Hilario, Charles Nisivoccia, Sally Conselyea, Margaret Sikora, Maria Torres

## MASS INTENTIONS

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026

8:00	All the People of the Parish
10:00	Mike and Dot Cervine -57 <sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Tina and David Reilly Jill Festa Maura and Hugo Loor
12:00	Lee and Pete Bartolo Anthony Borgese

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2026

9:00 AM	Annette C. Russo- 3 <sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Mary Gonnello
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### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026

9:00 AM	Dorothea Anthony- 5 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
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### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026

7:00 AM	All the People of the Parish
9:00 AM	Sean V. Hughes- 4 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Joan Hughes

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026

7:00 AM	Renee Good Alex Pretti
9:00 AM	Donald Lane

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2026

7:00 AM	Jozefa Gil
9:00 AM	Jean Jolly

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2026

9:00 AM	Jozefa Gil
5:30 PM	Jill Festa Yolanda Divino Victor Manuel Lopez

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2026

8:00	Anita Lipari Jozefa Gil
10:00	John Francis McMahon Andrew Canavan Ana and Manuel Santana Andres Besaro Tapia and Rosa Ruth Besazo
12:00	All the People of the Parish

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