

# GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH



**4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**FEBRUARY 1, 2026**



# Blessed



## Mission Statement

“Good Shepherd Parish, under the guidance of the true Shepherd Jesus Christ, is a Catholic faith based community seeking to proclaim and live the gospel message. Recognizing our diversity, we strive to bring together a church family, welcoming all people as we grow together in faith, hope and love.”

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**SERVED BY**  
Rev. Valentine Ugwuanya Pastor  
Denise Perry Secretary

For more information on our parish  
please go to:  
[Goodshepherdnj.com](http://Goodshepherdnj.com)  
Or email us at  
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## **Pastor's reflection on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ord. Time [A] Feb. 1, 2026.**

We have come to the 4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME of Year A. Last Sunday we heard about the beginning of Jesus' ministry which happened in Capernaum, a fishing village where he also called Peter, Andrew, James and John. Behind Capernaum is a mountain where Jesus preached the 'Sermon on the Mount'. The Sermon on the Mount is also called the 'Beatitudes' which is the subject of our gospel this Sunday. The Sermon on the Mount has a parallel in the gospel of Luke which is called the Sermon on the Plain. Essentially the 'Beatitudes' is the gem of the New Testament because it is a beautiful collection of Jesus' teachings. It happened in the mountain for two important reasons: practical and spiritual.

On the first hand, it is practical because it is easier to preach in an elevated terrain where Jesus' voice can be more audible aside from its quiet condition. On the other hand, it is spiritual because in biblical time the mountain is considered a sacred place where God communicate with man. In fact, it was in the mountain where Moses received the tablets containing the Ten Commandments. It is also in the mountain where Jesus can find solace whenever he would pray and commune with the Father. The 'Beatitudes' describes who are the real blessed. They are basically the people who are poor in spirit.

The term blessed which literally means happy is pointing to someone who because of being poor in spirit recognizes that he has no power and therefore shows dependence on God. Anyone who is poor in spirit recognizes his fragility or vulnerability and therefore relies solely on God. He depends, hopes and trusts in God more than in material things. Similarly, being poor has nothing to do with being miserable but its opposite. The Sermon on the Mount leads us into a more profound and deeper relationship with God because we acknowledge our human limitations but recognize the magnanimity of God. They also teach us to be strong in times of sufferings so that we can remain faithful even during the most trying times of our lives.

Thus, the first recipients of the Beatitudes are, in fact, the 'poor in spirit', an expression that indicates those who have their hearts and consciences directed intimately to Our Lord. They are the expression of the just who are tried by moments of suffering and difficulties. However, they are called 'blessed' and 'happy' because God's merciful and compassionate gaze rests on them. These are the poor that the Bible text really refers to. The poor in the Bible are the humbled, called the '*anawîm*', who bear a burden on their shoulders. They are given God's favor and because of this the Word identifies them as just, meek and humble. All kinds of attitudes are included in the eight beatitudes. This way the true significance of the 'just poor' is revealed; the ones who don't confide mainly in themselves but in God. The poor are those who detach themselves concretely and interiorly from the possession of persons and things and above all of themselves. The poor don't find security in the gods of this world like success, power or pride but the true Lord God in Heaven.

Thus, the poor, meek and humble become a scandal before the world because they witness that one can find our lives on God, with the same certainty of His constant presence and so they confirm the existence and works of God. Each one of us is invited to verify where our certainty rests and if our daily life and actions proclaim God's efficacious presence in the world.

The Beatitudes are a restatement of the values mentioned in the **First reading**. The Lord will protect those living honest and just lives: people of integrity and humility.

The **Psalmist** sings of the Lord's faithfulness and kindness, praising God for his care of 'those who are oppressed': the hungry, the imprisoned, the blind and the stranger. St Paul's second letter to the Corinthians reminds us why they have been chosen by God. Their gift of faith is entirely due to God's generosity: in God they have found wisdom, holiness and freedom.

This week, we may pray to recognize all the blessings the Lord has given us, so that we might walk more closely with Jesus in his work, just as he walks with us in our lives.

### **Good Shepherd Parish Schedule for Mass & Worship (schedules are subject to change)**

Saturday (anticipated) 5:30pm  
Holy Day TBD.

Sundays —9:00am, 11:00am  
Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:45-5:15pm

National Holidays —9:00am  
Adoration Mo-Fri 7:30am-5:00pm

Mass Intentions For the week of Jan 31– Feb 7, 2026

Saturday 5:30pm For God's Guidance and Protection of Judy Kuzma

Jan 31

Sunday 9:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Theresa Persons

Feb 01 11:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Debra Chapman

Monday 7:00am For God's Guidance and Protection of Galloway Perilla

Feb 02

Tuesday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Phyllis Hailes

Feb 03

Wednesday 7:00am For God's Guidance and Protection of James and Lucy Manzella

Feb 04

Thursday 7:00am For God's Guidance and Protection of Deborah Rollack

Feb 05

Friday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Elizabeth and Margaret Cassata

Feb 06

Saturday 8:30am For God's Guidance and Protection of Gabriel Garcia

Feb 07 5:30pm For God's Guidance and Protection of Gregory Fitzgerald

*Kindly keep our parishioner's family, with health and other challenges, in your prayers*

Let us always remember in our prayers the sick members of our Parish

Paul Kocum Sandi Mosley Debbie Watson Rihanna Scott Venus Matthews

Curtis Richards Carlos Quinones John Valfour Corizon Abuzied Margarete Victor

Bob and Barbara Nezlick Patrick Roylance Graylan Banks Aloysius Patrick Osuji Avenelle Samaroo

\* Please advise if any names should be added or delete from the list

Hospital Privacy | Please remember that current privacy laws regarding patients in hospitals do not allow hospitals/ pastoral care offices to contact parishes. If you or a loved one are in the hospital and want a priest to visit, please call the office at (973)375-8568

We will be getting new Missal/Hymnal books on the week of November 30th First Week of Advent)

Please, take this opportunity to honor a loved one (living or deceased) or commemorate a special event, like the birth of a child, anniversary, etc., by sponsoring a Missal book for just \$20.00

**Ministries:** If you're interested in ministries of service either as a Lector or Eucharistic Minister, please call the rectory at 973-375-8568 or fill out the information below and place in the collection basket.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Lector \_\_\_\_\_ Eucharistic Minister \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNIVERSARY LITURGY FOR COUPLES:**

**Sunday, May 3, 2026 at 3 p.m. at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark.**

Cardinal Tobin, will be celebrating one mass for all married couples. Please use the QR Code to register.



Please Contact Fr. Valentine or call the office, if you are interested in requesting mass intentions, intentions of a Sanctuary Lamp, Chapel Lamp, Altar Bread, Sacramental wine or Altar Flowers.

Collection Report	Jan 11 & 18, 0226
Weekly Target	\$6,500.00
Collection (Offering+ Fuel & Energy)	\$ 2,980.00
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 3,520.00
<b>Fiscal Year to Date</b>	
Budget:	\$379,864.00
Actual:	\$ 60,253.00
Surplus (Deficit)	\$319,611.00
Rolling 4 Week Average	
Average Collection:	\$1,822.75
Average Surplus (Deficit)	\$4,677.25

## GSP EVENT CALENDAR

Sunday Feb 01

Monday Feb 02

The Presentation of the Lord

Tuesday Feb 03

St Blaise and Saint Ansgar

Wednesday Feb 04

Thursday Feb 05

Saint Agatha

Friday Feb 06

Saint Paul Milki and Companions

Saturday Feb 07

Blessed Virgin Mary

## Good Shepherd Parish Information

RECTORY HOURS: Monday Thru Wednesday 10:00AM-2:00PM; Thursday / Friday 9:00AM-12:00PM

Parish Registration Forms can be found at the back of the church or call the rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION Saturday 4:45PM - 5:15PM

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM In order to have your child baptized at Good Shepherd, the parents must be registered and active members of our parish. Godparents or sponsors must meet qualifications as to have received both sacraments of Communion and Confirmation, attend Mass regularly and been a registered parishioner at a Catholic Church. Baptisms will be held the third Sunday of the month. For more information please call the Rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY Couples who are planning a wedding should call the parish office to meet the priest, to choose the date of the wedding and before any other arrangements are made call (973)375-8568

PASTORAL OF THE SICK Notify a priest of all who are hospitalized, home-bound, or Emergencies call (973)375-8568

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS, RCIA. Adults interested in becoming members of the Catholic Church and Catholics in need of Sacraments, Confirmation or Eucharist; inquire at the Rectory. To register please call the rectory at (973-375-8568

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Sunday of October-April from 10:00-11:00 am in the Church building. For more information please call the Rectory at (973-375-8568. Children's mass will be every second Sunday of the month, at the 11AM mass.

**02.02.14 Vatican Basilica Feast of the Presentation of the Lord - Year A**

**18th World Day for Consecrated Life.**

The Feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple is also known as the Feast of the Encounter: the Liturgy says at the beginning that Jesus goes to meet his people. Thus, this is the encounter between Jesus and his people, when Mary and Joseph brought their child to the Temple in Jerusalem; the first encounter between Jesus and his people, represented by Simeon and Anna, took place.

It was also the first encounter within the history of the people, a meeting between the young and the old: the young were Mary and Joseph with their infant son and the old were Simeon and Anna, two people who often went to the Temple.

Let's observe what the evangelist Luke tells us of them, as he describes them. He says four times that Our Lady and St Joseph wanted to do what was required by the Law of the Lord (cf. Lk 2:22, 23, 24, 27). One almost feels and perceives that Jesus' parents have the joy of observing the precepts of God, yes, the joy of walking according to the Law of the Lord! They are two newlyweds, they have just had their baby, and they are motivated by the desire to do what is prescribed. This is not an external fact; it is not just to feel right, no! It's a strong desire, a deep desire, full of joy. That's what the Psalm says: "In the way of thy testimonies I delight.... For thy law is my delight" (119 [118]:14, 77).

And what does St Luke say of the elderly? He underlines, more than once, that they were guided by the Holy Spirit. He says Simeon was a righteous and devout man, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and that "the Holy Spirit was upon him" (2:25). He says that "it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit" that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (v. 26); and finally, that he went to the Temple "inspired by the Spirit" (v. 27). He says Anna was a "prophetess" (v. 36); that is she was inspired by God and that she was always "worshipping with fasting and prayer" in the Temple (v. 37). In short, these two elders are full of life! They are full of life because they are enlivened by the Holy Spirit, obedient to his action, sensitive to his calls....

And now there is the encounter between the Holy Family and the two representatives of the holy people of God. Jesus is at the center. It is he who moves everything, who draws all of them to the Temple, the house of his Father.

It is a meeting between the young, who are full of joy in observing the Law of the Lord, and the elderly who are full of joy in the action of the Holy Spirit. It is a unique encounter between observance and prophecy, where young people are the observers and the elderly are prophets! In fact, if we think carefully, observance of the Law is animated by the Spirit and the prophecy moves forward along the path traced by the Law. Who, more than Mary, is full of the Holy Spirit? Who more than she is docile to its action?

In the light of this Gospel scene, let us look at consecrated life as an encounter with Christ: it is he who comes to us, led by Mary and Joseph, and we go towards him guided by the Holy Spirit. He is at the center. He moves everything, he draws us to the Temple, to the Church, where we can meet him, recognize him, welcome him, embrace him.

Jesus comes to us in the Church through the foundational charism of an Institute: it is nice to think of our vocation in this way! Our encounter with Christ took shape in the Church through the charism of one of her witnesses. This always amazes us and makes us give thanks.

And in the consecrated life we live the encounter between the young and the old, between observation and prophecy. Let's not see these as two opposing realities! Let us rather allow the Holy Spirit to animate both of them, and a sign of this is joy: the joy of observing, of walking within a rule of life; the joy of being led by the Spirit, never unyielding, never closed, always open to the voice of God that speaks, that opens, that leads us and invites us to go towards the horizon.

It's good for the elderly to communicate their wisdom to the young; and it's good for the young people to gather this wealth of experience and wisdom, and to carry it forward, not so as to safeguard it in a museum, but to carry it forward addressing the challenges that life brings, to carry it forward for the sake of the respective religious orders and of the whole Church.

May the grace of this mystery, the mystery of the Encounter, enlighten us and comfort us on our journey. Amen.