ST. JOHN BOSCO Parish

ANNUAL REPORT 2026





ST. MARY CHURCH
731 MAIN STREET
BRANFORD, CT 06405

ST. THERESE CHURCH
105 LEETES ISLAND ROAD
BRANFORD, CT 06405



FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Saint John Bosco Parish,

I am happy to present to you the 2026 Annual Report for Saint John Bosco, and to reflect with you on another year in the life of our parish.

Last year, I wrote about change, healing, hope, and new beginnings. Fifteen months into my ministry among you, I can now say with even greater confidence what I sensed when I first arrived: **Saint John Bosco Parish is a strong, vibrant, generous, and growing Catholic community.**

This report is, of course, a record of our financial stewardship and the many ways in which your generosity sustains the mission of our parish. But it is also a snapshot of a living community of faith —a parish, a local manifestation of the Body of Christ - where the Gospel is proclaimed, the Sacraments are celebrated, people encounter the love and mercy of God, families are strengthened, neighbors are served, and friendships are formed.

Our parish mission calls us to awaken faith, build community, and deepen discipleship. I am grateful to see that mission becoming increasingly visible in the life of our parish.

Listening, Welcoming, and Building Community

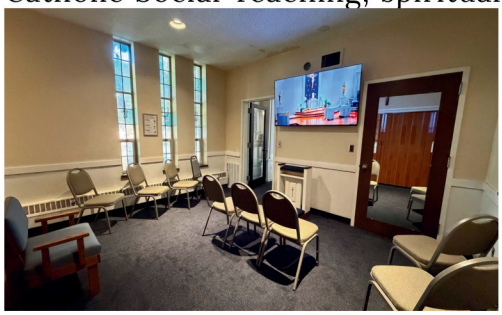




Last year, I promised that we would create opportunities to listen to one another through parish town hall gatherings. We did—and I am grateful for the many parishioners who came, shared their thoughts, offered encouragement, and spoke honestly about their hopes for our future. Those conversations did not end when the town halls concluded. You continue to reach out to me through appointments, emails, spontaneous conversations that happen in the vestibule, at parish gatherings, after Mass, and wherever parish life brings us together. I have heard a great deal about what you love about Saint John Bosco Parish, and what you hope we can become.

One thing is clear: **you want to grow in your faith and in your relationships with one another.**

That is why I see adult faith formation as an important priority for the coming year: more opportunities for Bible study and small-group faith sharing; "Theology on Tap"-style gatherings where we can engage with important questions and topics about Catholic theology, Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching, spirituality, the mysteries of our faith, and the Church's engagement with



We also want to continue welcoming and engaging young families and young adults, creating more opportunities for fellowship and authentic community. Our improvements to the "cry room" are one small but important example. Families with young children should know that they are not an interruption to parish life—they are parish life. We will continue improving these spaces as part of our larger commitment to Christian hospitality.

That same spirit is behind our renewed effort to strengthen the ministry of ushers. An usher does far more than take up the collection. Ushers are among the first people a visitor encounters. They welcome, assist, help people find a seat, notice when someone needs assistance, and help create an atmosphere in which every person knows: **you are welcome here. Again, I want to extend an emphatic invitation to anyone who is interested in participating in this ministry.**

A Parish Open to the Community

This year also reminded us that Saint John Bosco Parish is not an island. We are part of the wider Branford community and of the universal Church.



Our second annual Father Daniel Keefe Gathering—this year a parish gala honoring Fire Commissioner Robert "Bobby" Massey, Jr.—was a tremendous success. It brought together parishioners, civic leaders, friends, neighbors, and members of the wider Branford community for an evening of gratitude, fellowship, and celebration. We look forward to continuing this wonderful tradition.

Seizing the opportunity to collaborate and share resources with neighboring parishes, we hired a part-time Youth Minister who will work with the Faith Formation leaders and Pastors of St. John Bosco, St. George in Guilford, and St. Margaret in Madison to grow a vibrant Shoreline Youth Ministry.

During Holy Week, we also renewed our ecumenical relationships with our fellow Christians in Branford through our Walking Stations of the Cross and Tenebrae celebrations. We hope this will become an ongoing expression of our commitment to Christian unity and our desire to be good neighbors and faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ.

Our commitment to those in need has likewise grown. By becoming a host site for Connecticut Foodshare at Saint Therese, we have opened our doors to families and individuals in need of the most basic necessities. I look forward to involving more of our parishioners directly in this ministry of service. Our parish has long been a host site for American Red Cross blood drives, a simple way for parishioners and neighbors to give the gift of life.

We have also strengthened our commitment to safety, with AEDs now available at both of our churches and training offered to staff and parishioners. Caring for one another means being prepared to respond when someone is in need.

A Parish Connected to the Local & Universal Church

Perhaps one of the most beautiful signs of our parish's vitality was Archbishop Coyne's decision to entrust us with a seminarian for the summer.

From his first days with us, when he joined our young people on their Appalachia mission trip, through his preaching, liturgical ministry, presence at parish events and activities, visits to the sick and homebound, and meaningful conversations, Nick became a true part of our parish family. It was a privilege for me to represent SJB parish at his ordination to the Transitional Diaconate in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. It was just as moving to see so many of you gather in St. Mary Hall and in your homes to share in that historic moment. The event reminded us that Saint John Bosco Parish is part of something much larger: the worldwide Catholic Church, the Body of Christ that transcends every parish boundary.



photo by PNAC

We look forward to welcoming Deacon Chapman home at Christmas and, God willing, back to Saint John Bosco Parish as a priest following his ordination in June 2027.

Gratitude—and Work Still to Be Done

I am deeply grateful for the exceptional work and dedication of our parish staff. What a privilege it is to serve with such a great team. The creation of two new positions, Parish Office Manager and Administrative Assistant & Communications Coordinator, have strengthened our daily operations. Together they have helped us introduce online Mass Intentions, making it easier for parishioners to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for their loved ones The fact that the entire 2027 Mass calendar filled within two weeks is itself a beautiful testimony to the faith and devotion of this parish.

I am also grateful to the many volunteers who generously share their time and talents in service to our parish. Whether serving in our liturgical ministries, reaching out to those in need, nurturing faith and teaching our young people, extending hospitality, preparing for parish gatherings, beautifying our grounds and worship spaces, assisting couples as they prepare for marriage, or accompanying grieving families through the Rite of Christian Burial, they bring the love of Christ to life in countless ways. Much of what makes our parish a vibrant community of faith happens because of their faithful service. And for that, on behalf of our whole parish, I offer my heartfelt thanks.

And ***your*** generosity continues to amaze me. In addition to your consistent financial support of our parish, your commitment to charitable outreach through the Archbishop's Annual Appeal, the Mission Co-op, the formation of our seminarians, the education of our children in Faith Formation and East Shoreline Catholic Academy, and the many worthy initiatives we are called to support throughout the year—your generosity is humbling, and an expression of your faith in action.

At the same time, there is much work ahead. We will be taking on significant capital projects and repairs, including the restoration of the Saint Mary's steeple, improvements to the Saint Therese parking lot, HVAC work at Saint Mary's, and continued improvements to our Faith Formation Center at Saint Therese - just to name a few. These efforts will require sacrifice, careful stewardship, and your continued support. To meet these needs, we will reestablish a Buildings Improvement Committee, which will work with our Parish Finance Council to guide and oversee this necessary work.

One family in Christ. One Mission. One Parish.

We have been abundantly blessed. And, as Jesus Himself has said: "much will be required of [those] entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of [those] entrusted with more" (Luke 12:48).

As we strive to grow this vibrant parish while being good stewards of all the grace, blessings, and patrimony we have received, which has been passed down through the generations of faithful who preceded us, it is my sincere hope that each of us will pray, discern, and decide how we will contribute our time, talent, and treasure to continue the good work that has been entrusted to us.

With this in mind, I strongly and sincerely encourage each of us to step up to the plate, join or volunteer in a ministry, share your ideas, and please, **participate in this year's Annual Collection, which is vital for the health of our parish. Please feel free to use the enclosed, self-addressed envelope**. No gift is too small, and we must always remember that our loving God will never be outdone in generosity.

Thank you for your patience, your generosity, your ideas, your creativity, your prayers, and most of all, your faith. I remain humbled and deeply grateful to be your pastor.

May Saint John Bosco continue to intercede for us, and may the Holy Spirit kindle in us an ever-deeper love for Jesus Christ, His Church, and one another.

Peace, and God bless you!



Fr. Ryan Lerner, Pastor

A YEAR IN REVIEW

- 3,535 Registered Households
- 9,413 Registered Members
- 65 Infant, Child and Adult Baptisms (*through 10/12/26*)
- 3 Adult Professions of Faith
- 69 First Holy Communions
- 48 Confirmations
- 13 Weddings
- 250+ Anointings of the Sick
- 104 Funeral Masses, Parlor Services and/or Burials (*through 10/12/26*)
- 230 Children enrolled in our parish Faith Formation program
- 2,069 Followers on our parish Facebook page
- 1,200 Subscribers on our parish YouTube channel
- 2,811 Communion Calls to Homebound Parishioners (*through 10/7/26*)
- 2,009 Receiving Parish Emails/Updates
- 370 Recurring Online Givers
- Innumerable Blessings of items, homes, cars, animals, persons, and more













PARISH MINISTRIES

Join Us! Connect with your parish community and put your faith into action by sharing your time, gifts, and heart with our ministry groups. Please reach out with any suggestions for additional ministries to serve the needs of our parish community.
Visit www.saintjohnboscobranford.org or call the parish office at 203-488-1607 to learn more!

SERVICE AND ADVOCACY



Social Action – spreads awareness, advocates for change, and acts to improve the lives of people in need
- **Columbus House** – monthly food donations, prepare/serve hot meals at Columbus House shelter
- **Midnight Run** – assembles and delivers bagged lunches and meals for the homeless in New Haven
- **Monthly Food Collection** – monthly collection of nonperishables for Branford Food Pantry
- **Family Faith in Action** - faith formation families join monthly parish efforts to help the hungry, homeless, elderly, and ailing

Mission Trip Team – week-long trips planned locally/nationally to bring hope and help to those in need
Respect Life Ministry – promoting dignity of life through advocacy, awareness, education, accompaniment

SUPPORT AND OUTREACH



Bereavement Support Group – helps those who mourn the loss of a loved one to find comfort and explore initial strategies in coping with grief and loss with a 10-week “New Day” seminar
Bereavement Chapter II – formed for those who completed the "New Day” seminar, have dealt with the initial stages of bereavement, and are ready to continue the grieving process with others on this journey
Prayer Quilting Groups – knit, crochet, and sew prayer quilts, blankets, and shawls for babies, sick, lonely
Pastoral Associate to the Sick and Elderly – outreach to parishioners who are ill or homebound to receive a visit and Holy Communion at home or at a nursing facility

SOCIAL AND FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES



Family Faith & Fellowship – Every month an event or activity is offered for all ages to come build faith and friendships.
Hospitality & Special Events Committee – organizes parish events, picnics, Bosco Bistro, etc. throughout the year
Knights of Columbus Council #10 – promotes social and intellectual fellowship and service among Catholic laymen and their families through educational, charitable, spiritual, patriotic, and social welfare works
Lunch Bunch – Fellowship and a hot meal once a month for parishioners aged 55+
Mothers Group – provides accompaniment, spiritual enrichment, prayers, and social connection for moms of all ages and stages: hopeful, biological, adoptive, foster, grandmothers, godmothers, etc.
Women’s Group – Enriches women through fellowship, faith-building retreats, and community involvement. The group also awards an annual scholarship and hosts fundraisers throughout the year to support parish and community needs

PARISH MINISTRIES

SPIRITUAL GROWTH



East Shoreline Catholic Youth Ministry – provides ongoing opportunities for youth from the east shoreline parishes of St. John Bosco, St. George, and St. Margaret to connect, reflect, grow in faith and deepen their relationship with God and one another
Legion of Mary – meets weekly to pray the Rosary and other Marian devotions
Cornerstone Men's Ministry – a brotherhood of parish men growing in faith together, including an annual retreat
Rosary Ministry – opportunity to pray in community every Thursday at 1:00pm in St. Mary Church
Walking with Purpose – a women's bible study following the Walking with Purpose book and program

EDUCATION AND FAITH FORMATION



East Shoreline Catholic Academy – A STREAM model school for PreK-Gr 8 co-sponsored by the east shoreline parishes
Faith Formation – religious instruction for families and children in grades K–10 and sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation
OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) – the formal spiritual and educational process through which un-baptized adults, baptized Christians from other traditions, and baptized but un-catechized Catholics prepare to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church
Kids 4 Jesus (K4J)– a week-long summer camp for children Grades K–4
Nurturing Seedlings - a ministry designed to provide parents & families with the support, encouragement, and skills needed to nurture the spiritual life and emotional well-being of their young children (birth to age five)
Vocations Committee – a collaboration of shoreline parishes (and schools) committed to fostering vocations

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES



Altar Decorating – decorate and adorn the sanctuaries at both churches for weekly Masses and holy days
Altar Servers – an opportunity for boys and girls (Grades 4-12) to assist at the altar during Mass
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion – assist in distributing Holy Communion during Mass and bringing the Eucharist to homebound parishioners under the direction of the Pastoral Associate
Lectors – proclaim the Word of God during Mass
Live-Stream Assistants – help record and bring the live-streamed parish Mass to those at home
Music Ministry – Adult Choir, Youth Ensemble, & Children's Choir inspiring a deep participation in the Mass
Ushers - welcome parishioners and visitors, assist with seating, take up the collection, and help ensure a welcoming and orderly worship experience during Mass

FAITH FORMATION

Faith Formation at St John Bosco bridges the gaps to nurture true life-long faith

BAPTISM

Families are invited to participate in a Baptism Preparation Session before their child's Baptism. This special gathering offers an opportunity to discover the beauty and power of the Sacrament, connect with parishioners who are eager to support them, and share experiences, encouragement, and practical tips for raising happy, faith-filled Catholic children. Following Baptism, families are personally invited to become part of Nurturing Seedlings, a welcoming post-Baptism community dedicated to nurturing the faith of young children and supporting families as they grow together in Christ.

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION (K - GRADE 6)

Faith is rooted in the family, and we support parents as they nurture their own faith and that of their children. Our sessions provide opportunities for families to pray, learn, participate in activities, and engage in meaningful discussions together. While children learn alongside their peers by grade with their catechists, parents meet separately to explore resources, practical strategies, and ways to make faith a living part of everyday family life.

Families also attend our Family Masses the first weekend of every month, with Children's Liturgy of the Word to engage the little ones and a Teen Mass Chat to help the homily and readings come alive with pre-teens/teens.

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION: FORMING DISCIPLES

Faith has to grow in the heart as well as the mind. Our program empowers teens to seek the sacrament of Confirmation when they show an interest and are ready. We've developed "Junior Varsity" and "Varsity" Discipleship programs to meet all students' needs, whether they've experienced some gaps in their formation or attended regularly and are ready to challenge themselves. Through interactive class meetings, Mass Chats following Family Masses, required monthly service and ministry participation, and retreats, our students learn to walk the walk.

Our new Year 3: Confirmation and Discipleship, ushers students through Confirmation to Youth Ministry. Following their ceremony, during the second half of this year, students discern where their gifts and talents meet the parish's, community's, and world's needs. They will plan and participate in service projects, mentor peers and younger students, explore vocations, and make a faith action plan to carry them through high school and into their careers or college.





EAST SHORELINE CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

Serving the shoreline communities of St. John Bosco in Branford, St. George in Guilford, and St. Margaret in Madison. We bring together the youth of our three parishes, creating opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth.

- **Bible studies** for 7th-12th graders on Mondays at the St. Therese Parish Center and on Thursdays at the Lattanzi Room in the St. George Parish Hall.
- **"Open Hours"** on Wednesdays where we open the Parish Center at St. Therese for teens to come use as a safe space to connect with the Lord and each other.
- Monthly **Dinners and Discussions** at St. Margaret where we prepare and share a meal together with a monthly theme to learn and grow.
- **Peer Ministry** where teens step forward after Confirmation to live out their faith as true disciples of Christ. They lead many of our youth ministry and faith formation events, share witness talks and lead the Confirmation Retreat, represent the youth of our parish in community and Archdiocesan events. They are models for other teens, whether through leadership, discipleship, service, or accompaniment of what it means to fully live our faith.






STATEMENT OF REVENUES & EXPENSES

REVENUES	FY 2026	FY 2025	BUDGET FY 2027
Offertory (Weekly & Holy Day)	**$1,014,846**	$955,103	$1,087,000
Annual Collection	**109,643**	140,765	110,000
Investment Income	**88,235**	95,447	80,000
Rental Income	**550**	1,100	1,100
Stole Fees (Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals)	**36,405**	45,180	35,000
Gifts, Donations & Bequests	**99,305**	189,450	90,000
Program & Event Income	**178,477**	57,741	157,500
Faith Formation Income	**27,248**	26,928	27,000
Other Income	**27,958**	25,557	26,000
Total Revenues	**$1,582,667**	$1,537,269	$1,613,600

EXPENSES	FY 2026	FY 2025	BUDGET FY 2027
Salaries & Payroll Taxes	**$615,041**	$595,113	$579,519
Employee Benefits	**145,528**	136,621	178,474
Contracted Services	**20,235**	17,575	20,000
Utilities	**90,633**	90,633	92,000
Insurance	**60,919**	54,831	65,000
Maintenance & Repair	**166,424**	132,565	175,000
Rectory Operating Expenses	**3,810**	10,332	6,500
Office Expenses	**84,861**	76,085	80,000
Miscellaneous	**7,105**	6,188	7,500
Sacramental & Liturgy Expenses	**31,541**	29,007	30,000
Faith Formation, Youth Ministry, etc.	**52,903**	46,184	50,000
Charity	**44,780**	17,545	40,000
Programs & Special Events	**37,076**	37,480	38,000
Professional Fees	**2,681**	1,975	3,000
Printing & Publications	**5,138**	5,050	5,000
School Support	**10,000**	10,000	50,000
Cathedraticum	**163,350**	175,175	173,600
Total Expense	**1,542,957**	1,442,359	1,593,593
Net Operating Surplus	**$39,710**	$94,912	$20,007

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	6/30/26	6/30/25
Parish Operating Account	$158,264	$206,233
Parish Organizations	11,080	5,083
Capital Improvements Fund	129,567	179,420
Other Savings	462,804	511,542
Donor-restricted Fund	21,575	21,571
"Forward with Faith" Fund	550,411	483,950
Mass Stipends	13,502	12,264
Accounts Receivable	-	-
Investments	3,062,115	2,635,047
Other Current Assets	2,410	6,450
Fixed Assets (buildings, furniture, fixtures, etc.)	1,967,288	2,027,795
Total Assets	**$6,379,016**	$6,089,355

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	6/30/26	6/30/25
Accounts Payable	$10,452	$14,077
Stipends Payable	13,502	12,264
Cathedraticum Payable	163,350	175,176
Other Current Liabilities	6,731	10,845
Total Liabilities	**194,035**	212,362
Net Assets	**6,184,981**	5,876,973
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	**$6,379,016**	$6,089,335

As the financial statements above show, the parish experienced modest net operating surpluses in Fiscal Years 2026 and 2025. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, had it not been for an unexpected $30,000 in bequests received during FY 2026, our surplus would have been a miniscule $9,700. Similarly, bequests totaling $99,400 received during FY 2025 masked what otherwise would have been a deficit of nearly $4,500. The major contributor to this trend is the decline in offertory receipts resulting from COVID-related reductions in Mass attendance. (The graphs published monthly in the parish bulletin illustrate the significant decline since 2019.)

Happily, the parish has substantial savings and investments, as reflected in the Statement of Financial Position, so we are not in a crisis situation. Nevertheless, prudence requires that parish finances be carefully managed. The Parish Finance Council has carefully crafted the FY 2027 budget, holding expenses basically "flat" from 2026, despite anticipated substantial increases in costs such as utilities and operating supplies (as most parishioners probably will recognize as being parallel to their own household expenses). Even so, this bare-bones budget results in a barely break-even bottom line, and will require ongoing work during the year to improve revenue sources – through both increased offertory and special fundraising programs. Parishioners can expect to hear more about these initiatives in the coming months.

In the meantime, the continued generosity of our parishioners is key to the parish's ability to fulfill its mission to "*Awaken Faith; Build Community; and Deepen Discipleship!*"

SUPPORT TO THE WIDER CHURCH – ARCHDIOCESAN AND NATIONAL COLLECTIONS



photo by Tina Poet, AAA

Reaching beyond the boundaries of our parish, parishioners give of their time, talent, and treasure to scores of area civic and charitable organizations. One way they do this is through the Archbishop's Annual Appeal of our Archdiocese. The Appeal funds a wide array of programs and services in New Haven, Litchfield, and Hartford counties, addressing the spiritual, educational, and temporal needs of our brothers and sisters – regardless of faith. **So far this calendar year, 555 St. John Bosco Parish households have donated $230,402 to the Appeal, surpassing our goal of $205,000.**

Additionally, special collections taken up during Mass at various times during the year help support specific Archdiocesan, national, and world-wide programs, such as Catholic elementary and high schools, Catholic communications (including the daily televised Mass), Catholic Relief Services (including CRS Rice Bowl), the Holy Father's worldwide charities, the Holy Land collection, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the Archdiocese for Military Services, the Retirement Fund for Religious, natural disaster relief, and foreign missions. **During fiscal year 2026 these special collections raised a total of $48,118 in our parish.** In addition, this year's Mission Co-Op collection, benefitting the Claretian Missionaries of Cameroon, raised $28,126 in response to Fr. Jude Thaddeus' appeal, and nearly $101,000 was donated in support of Seminarian Formation. Your generosity to all these collections is greatly appreciated.

LEAVING A LEGACY

In recent years, generous bequests have been received from the Estates of parishioners (and our late Pastor) who had remembered Saint John Bosco Parish in their Wills (or other Estate plans). Without these gifts, the results for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2025 would have been very different, as noted in the "Comments on the Financial Statements." **Therefore, we owe special thanks to Alfred Angelo, Mary Lowery, and Fr. Daniel Keefe, and ask that you join us in remembering them in a special way in our prayers.** If you would like to know more about how you can make provisions in your Will for continued support of the church and/or school, or how you can establish a Charitable Gift Annuity (which combines a charitable gift with guaranteed lifetime income), call the parish office (203-488-1607) for a brochure containing additional information, or visit the parish website, select "Resources" at the top of the page and click on "Charitable Gift Annuity."

SCAN HERE TO VIEW CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

Additionally, in recent years several parishioners have named the parish as a recipient of memorial gifts at the time of their loved-one's death, or made significant gifts of their own. It is a wonderful way to carry on their loved-one's legacy, and is very helpful to our parish. If you are making your own advance plans, please consider asking your family to suggest memorial gifts when they compose your obituary.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

If you have any questions or comments about our Annual Stewardship Report, please feel free to discuss them with any of the following:

Pastor: *Fr. Ryan Lerner*
Business Manager: *Ronald F. Shea*
Parish Trustees: *Peter Bassermann, Jeff Klarman*
Parish Finance Council: *Stephen Burke, Andrea Duffy, Joseph Montesano, Donna J. Perrone*





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East Shoreline Catholic Academy is a dynamic Pre-K-8 STREAM school, preparing individual students to be our future leaders rooted in faith, service, and academic excellence.



Contact Us

Phone Number
203-488-8386

Website
www.eastshorelinecatholicacademy.org

Cheryl Panzo, Principal

Nicole Truhart, Dean of Studies

Maria Caserta, Director of Admissions