

Parish Life Report



ST JOHN PAUL THE GREAT
ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

TORRINGTON, CONNECTICUT



Parish Life Report from your Pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In the name of Jesus Christ our risen Lord, I greet you all.

2020 was a year that has been enshrined in the annals of human history. None of us escaped the impact of Covid -19. Our lives were turned upside down, hundreds of thousands of people died, including some of our parishioners. We lived in isolation and fear of one another. Many businesses went out of business because of the lockdown, and many lost their jobs and means of livelihood. Our parish did not escape the wrath of the pandemic. We could not assemble and worship as we would typically do.

While the pandemic impacted our way of worship, Covid-19 did not take away Jesus from us. We did not allow it to rob us of the obligation we owe to God, which is worship. While 2020 was filled with so much darkness and hopelessness, it provided us an opportunity to live for God and neighbor. Convinced that nothing would be able to separate us from the love of God, as a parish, we dug

in and remained steadfast. We prayed more, served more, gave more.

This parish life report describes some of the ways we lived for God and neighbor.

Left, Father Emmanuel speaks to viewers during Facebook livestream of Mass



We lived for God through our liturgies:

Church Online:

Though on a lockdown, we were not closed. We quickly moved our liturgies online and beyond Torrington and the US and continued to celebrate our weekday and weekend Liturgies.

We also provided a few drive-by services such as weekly confessions, drive-by palm pick-up on Palm Sunday, drive-by communion on Easter Sunday and more.



Discipleship: How many children did our parish teach about/bring to Jesus?

Since we turned our school into an **ACADEMY** and began to infuse **STREAM** into the curriculum, our enrollment has continued to grow. The registration has gone from 105 to **144**. We have maintained uninterrupted in-person and hyflex learning since the beginning of the 2020/2021 school year.

Students, right, show off their new logo jackets, a gift from the Cooks.





Left, top to bottom: children celebrate first holy Communion; teens are confirmed in the faith; a couple marries; and parishioners observe luminaria display for All Soul's Day.

Our parish welcomed **22 babies** into the faith by way of baptism last year despite the pandemic.

23 children were introduced to Jesus by way of first holy Communion in 2020.



Through our remote learning, we evangelized **290 children** in our religious education program in 2020.

23 of our teenagers received their sacrament of confirmation last year despite the pandemic at the shrine of our Lourdes in Litchfield.

Discipleship: Do you know how many families joined our parish last year?



Last year our parish welcomed **92 new families** (199 new registered members if we count spouses and children).

One couple was married in our parish.

2 adults embraced our Catholic faith through baptism.

4 adults received their first holy Communion.

2 adults received the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We provided **587 weekend Masses** and **weekday Masses** (holy days of obligation not included).



Above, L-R, food drives were every Saturday morning in May & June; banner displayed in front of both St. Peter and St. Francis churches - thanks to Knights Council #55 - let people know the parish was still "open" through email, text, phone, Facebook, YouTube and our website; and candles lit for deceased during Masses of Remembrance in November.

We Lived for our Neighbors through our Parish Social Justice Outreach:

We fed the poor for Jesus. Last year, we served **803 meals** through Kevin's Place, some of which went to FISH NWCT due to COVID. In addition, **50 bags of food** were distributed to those in need during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

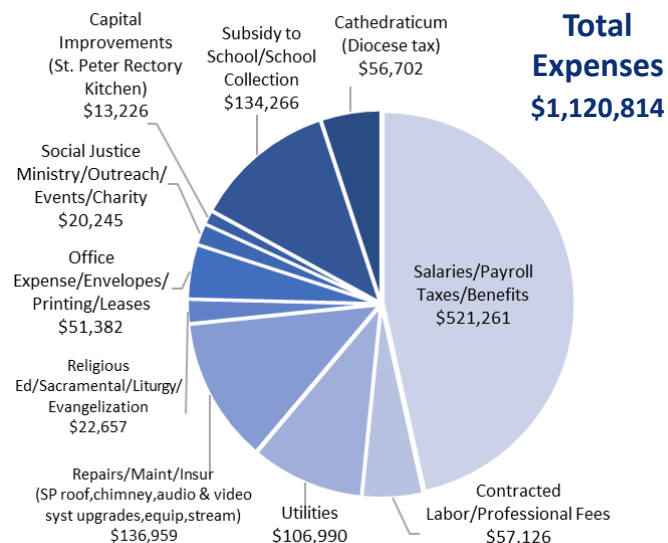
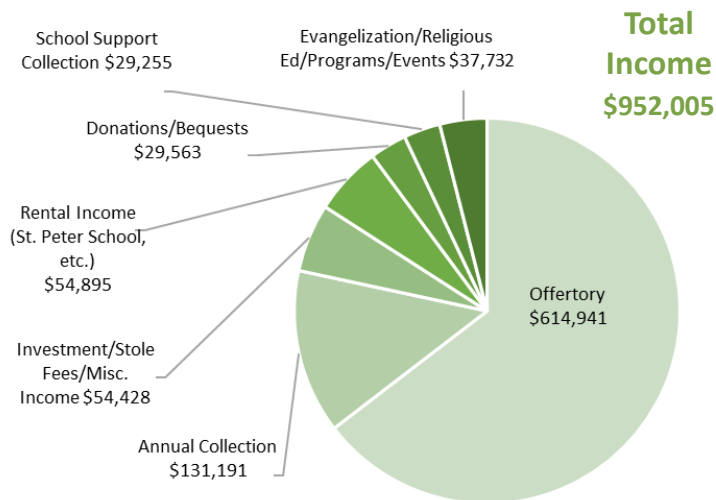
400 bags of non-perishable food plus \$1,587 in monetary donations were collected for FISH NWCT and Friendly Hands food banks.

25 homebound parishioners received **180 visits** last year from their clergy and eucharistic ministers before the pandemic lockdown. After lockdown began, starting the week of March 17th thru the end of December 2020, **500 phone calls** were made to homebound parishioners.

Our eucharistic ministers made **46 visits** to the residents of Valerie Manor, Litchfield Woods, Wolcott Hall and Regal Care nursing homes as well as Keystone and Atria assisted living and Torringford West facilities before the pandemic lockdown ended in-person visits.

Our **Bereavement Ministry** served **66 families** in 2020.

2020 Financial Report



Despite the pandemic shutdown, parish life continued thanks to your spirit of stewardship. Just a few examples: Chris and John Delgrande (Kevin's Place) were awarded the St. Joseph Medal of Appreciation and our catechists (with masks) gathered to be commissioned for the year. St. John Paul the Great community came out to support fundraising events for the Academy such as "Fore the Children" golf tournament in August, Downtown is A-Glow Halloween event in October, and Christmas is A-Glow in December.



STEWARDSHIP: We also took care of our church,
office & rectory buildings:

St. Francis Church Parish Center Building
St. Peter's Church St. Peter's Rectory
St. Peter's Kitchen

Without you and your support, we would have no parish and would not have achieved these accomplishments. Thank you for remaining steadfast and not allow Covid-19 to intrude in our obligation to God and neighbor.

On behalf of our entire staff and parish family, I thank you for your generous support.

Rev. Emmanuel Ihemedu

Your Servant in Christ,
Rev. Emmanuel Ihemedu, PHD, NCC, LPCA
Pastor



*Some scenes throughout the year –
top to bottom: 15 teens and 3 chaperones
from our parish attend the January March
for Life in Washington DC; our priests
distribute “drive-by” flowers for Mother’s
Day; luminaria displayed; families attend
confirmation in an outdoor, Covid-safe
venue; adorners kneel before
window Exposition of the Blessed
Sacrament; our priests light the
Paschal candle during 2020 Holy
Week services.*



Snapshot of 2020 St. John Paul the Great Parish

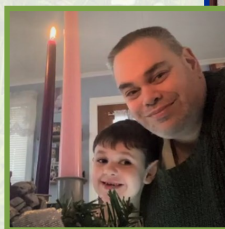


Above, because of Covid-19 the Holy Rosary Society was unable to have their fundraisers and meetings. However, they continued to honor their commitment for the upkeep of our beautiful grotto. At right, religious education families continued the tradition of lighting advent candles, but virtually; Academy students thanked essential workers in creative ways; Knights #55 added new members to assist their mission of supporting our parish; and we remember those we lost in 2020.

144 students enrolled at SJPG Academy
22 babies baptized
23 children first holy Communion
290 children in religious education program
23 teenagers confirmed
92 new families (**199** new registered members)

1 couple married
2 adults baptized
4 adults first holy Communion
2 adults confirmed
587 Masses celebrated
803 meals served through Kevin's Place
400 bags of non-perishable food collected for food banks

180 visits to **25** homebound parishioners before lockdown
500 phone calls to homebound after lockdown
46 visits to residents in facilities before lockdown
66 bereaved families served



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