

Twin Parish News

DECEMBER 2025

A partnership between St. William and St. Joseph, Côtes-de-Fer, Haiti



CHRISTMAS: The Infant Jesus Comes to Reveal Love to Us



Dear friends,

As we joyfully welcome Emmanuel into our world, wounded by so much suffering, the parish of St. Joseph of Côtes-de-Fer joins you in fraternity and prayer to fully experience this moment of joy.

The parishioners of St. Joseph are praying for you. Throughout the year, you have shown kindness, generosity, and love for us. Your goodness has not only rekindled the flame of hope, but has also resounded in our hills like the voice of John the Baptist crying out, "Prepare the way for the Lord." Through these small acts of love and compassion, you bring light and revive hope where anxiety and despair reign. We continue to pray for you and your families in gratitude.

May the Christmas star illuminate our hearts and dispel our fears.

May the Child of Bethlehem fill your hearts with peace and joy.

May His light guide your steps, and may his grace descend upon you and your loved ones.

Merry Christmas 2025

Happy New Year 2026

Father Isleire Faustin

Across the Globe, Children Bring Christmas to Life

At St. Joseph Parish, the joy of Christmas shines through the voices of children. With simple costumes and radiant smiles, they bring the Gospel to life in a way that touches every heart.



Mary sings the Magnificat



Young hearts gathered to share the story of Christ's birth



Families fill the church for the Christmas Eve event.



Guided by their teacher, the children make beautiful music on recorders kindly donated by St. William parishioners.





Mary and Joseph



An angel full of light and confidence.



The youngest bring sweetness to the story.



A procession of angels!



Older students lead with poise and good example.

Christmas Food Kits at St. Joseph Parish - Generosity by Both Communities!

Each year, Christmas food kits are made possible by remarkable generosity on two ends of one friendship.

Your generosity covers the food, the packing supplies, and the transportation that brings everything to the parish of St. Joseph.

St. Joseph parishioners organize the materials, pack the kits, manage the lines, and make sure every family is treated with dignity and respect. Their volunteer hours turn donations into real meals for real households.

Your gifts — and their work — meet in this simple act of charity: people helping people, across miles and circumstances, so that Christmas can arrive with a little more peace in every home.



Preparing...



Awaiting...



Distributing...



A Joyful Step Toward the Priesthood



Milky Gelin kneels before Bishop Glandas Marie Erick Toussaint during his ordination to the diaconate, November 15.

Our twin parish family celebrates a moment of grace as **Milky Gelin** takes the next step in his vocation. Many first met him in December 2024 as a young seminarian, steady in faith and full of promise.

In November, Milky was ordained a transitional deacon—the final, luminous step before priesthood. One photo shows him kneeling before the bishop, offering his life in service to God and His people. In others, **Father Faustin** places the deacon's vestment upon him—a tender gesture of blessing and preparation for the work ahead.

For St. Joseph Parish, this is more than a personal milestone. It is a sign of God's enduring faithfulness in a community that has weathered hardship with courage and hope. Milky's call strengthens the parish, brightens its future, and reminds us that the Spirit continues to raise shepherds quietly from small places for the good of the Church.

We hold Milky in prayer as he continues toward priesthood, grateful to witness his journey.

St. Joseph Parish now has two priests, a deacon and a seminarian.



Father Faustin places the dalmatic on Milky, clothing him in the joyful ministry of a deacon.





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Evy Marshall

We are thrilled to shine a spotlight on **Kevin and Susie Rassas** this month!

Originally from Chicago, they made their way to Pennsylvania 37 years ago. They were blessed with three wonderful children—two daughters and a son—now in their late 40s and early 50s, along with four grandchildren. After many years, some time living abroad while Kevin worked in international pharmaceutical management, they first discovered the island as visitors. Four years ago, they chose to make Saint Simons Island their permanent home and St. William their spiritual sanctuary.

“We love living here. It is a very welcoming and charming place. We especially enjoy being part of the St. William family. We intend to stay here until we end up in the slot reserved for us in the columbarium adjacent to the church.”

The Rassas have always carried a deep love for service to their community and the church. Susie spent years as a hospice volunteer in Pennsylvania and continues to serve here as an **Extraordinary Minister for Holy Communion**, a **sponsor for the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)**, and a valued volunteer with the **Bloomers** and **Helping Hugs Inc.**. Kevin treasures the time he volunteered as a board member at Cristo Rey Philadelphia High School. He now enjoys mentoring students at the **College of Coastal Georgia** and volunteering with **St. William**.

Their hearts were touched by stories of the challenges and lack of basic needs in Côte-de-Fer, Haiti. “With the abundance of great fortune we enjoy in the United States, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that there are people around the world who are struggling to survive.”

They were moved by the initiatives Helping Hugs has undertaken to strengthen education, expand opportunities for children, and support basic healthcare and infrastructure. “When considering donations, we try to support causes where our contributions will have the most impact, with particular emphasis on education.”

We are so grateful to have the Rassas as part of our St. William family and as strong supporters of Helping Hugs Inc. Hope reaches a little farther in St. Joseph Parish because of them.



Susie and Kevin Rassas



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

For 2025

Loving God,
for every seed planted,
every child encouraged,
every family strengthened this year—
we give thanks.

Bless all who have walked with St. Joseph Parish
in ways seen and unseen.

May the grace we've shared
grow into an even greater compassion
in the year ahead.

Keep our hearts open,
our hands willing,
and our hope alive.

Amen

A Christmas Greeting



*The Twin Parish Council
wishes you a blessed Christmas
and a peaceful New Year.
Thank you for the love and hope
you share
with our brothers and sisters
at St. Joseph Parish.*

A Prayer Request

A recent hurricane brushed the south coast of Haiti. Thanks be to God, the church and chapels were spared major damage. Some of the farms in the Tree Currency Program, however, suffered losses of crops and animals. Assessments are still under way, and we are discerning how best to respond alongside our partners. We will share more as soon as we know more. For now, we simply ask you to keep the people of St. Joseph in your prayers.

If you feel moved to offer an end-of-year gift, please know it will be received with deep gratitude and used with care. Together, we will continue bringing Hope to the people of St. Joseph Parish in the new year. See mail and website addresses below.



Helping Hugs, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) public charity.
All donations are tax deductible as provided by law.

Contact: info@helpinghugsinc.org

**Donations may be made to
Helping Hugs Inc.,
P.O. Box 24477, Saint Simons Island, GA 31522**

Scan to Donate

or on our website: www.helpinghugsinc.org

