



ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST PARISH
115 MIDDLESEX STREET
NORTH CHELMSFORD

ST. MARGARET
OF SCOTLAND PARISH
374 STEVENS STREET
LOWELL

ST. MARY PARISH
25 NORTH ROAD
CHELMSFORD



December 26, 2021 The Holy Family

And the Word became flesh,
and made His dwelling among us. -John 1:14a



Parish Office Location and Hours



115 Middlesex Street • North Chelmsford, 01863
(978) 251-8571/ 454-5143/ 256-2374
www.theholyrood.org

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Wednesday • 9:30 am - 5:00 pm
Friday • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Weekend Mass Schedule

St. John • Saturday, 4 pm/ Sunday, 9:30 am and 6 pm
• African Liturgy, 12 pm: 2nd, 3rd, 4th Sundays
St. Margaret • Saturday, 4 pm/ Sunday, 7:30 and 10 am
St. Mary • Saturday, 4 pm/ Sunday, 7 and 11 am

Daily Mass Schedule

Monday - Friday
7 am at St. Mary • 8 am at St. Margaret • 9 am at St. John

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. John
Tuesday • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Margaret
Wednesday • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Mary
Saturday • 11 am - 12 noon at St. Mary
• 1 pm - 2 pm at St. Margaret
• 3 pm - 3:45 pm at St. John

Eucharistic Adoration

Thursdays • 12:00 - 9:00 PM • St. Mary Adoration Chapel
First Fridays • 3:00 - 9:00 PM • St. John OPC Chapel

LIVEVIEW Devotions

Monday - Friday
3 pm • Chaplet of Divine Mercy at St. John
7 pm • Rosary at St. Mary

Prayer Line

To have prayers said for yourself or a loved one,
call the parish office and ask for ext. 223. After hours,
press 5.

*Please read entire bulletin for potential schedule changes

weekly calendar

Monday, December 27

PARISH OFFICES CLOSED

LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John

Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. John

LIVEVIEW Rosary • 7 pm • St. Mary

Tuesday, December 28

LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John

Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Margaret of Scotland

Bible Study • 7:00 - 8:45 pm • SM PC Conf Room 1

St. Margaret Choir Rehearsal • 7 - 9 pm • SMS Church Choir Loft

LIVEVIEW Rosary • 7 pm • St. Mary

Wednesday, December 29

Adoration • 9 am - 3 pm • St. Margaret Chapel

LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John

Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Mary

LIVEVIEW Rosary • 7 pm • St. Mary

Thursday, December 30

Charismatic Prayer Group • 10 am • SJE OPC

Rosary Making Group • 10:30 am - 12 pm • SM PC Conf Room 2

Adoration • 12 - 9 pm • SM PC Adoration Chapel

LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John

BINGO • doors open 3:30 pm/ first game 6:45 pm • SJE Hall

LIVEVIEW Rosary • 7 pm • St. Mary

Friday, December 31

PARISH OFFICES CLOSED

African Community End-Of-Year Mass • 9:30 am • St. John

LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • CANCELLED

LIVEVIEW Rosary • CANCELLED

Solemnity of Mary Mass • 6 pm • St. Mary

Saturday, January 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Solemnity of Mary Mass • 8 am • St. Margaret of Scotland

Solemnity of Mary Mass • 9 am • St. John the Evangelist

Confessions

- 11 am - 12 noon at St. Mary

- 1 - 2 pm at St. Margaret of Scotland

- 3 - 3:45 pm at St. John the Evangelist

SMS Prayer Shawl Meeting • CANCELLED

Handbell Choir Rehearsal • CANCELLED



Fr. Brian, Fr. Fernando, Fr. Colletti, Fr. Ray, and the entire Collaborative Staff wish you and those you love a Blessed and Merry Christmas!

A Song was Heard at Christmas

-by Timothy Dudley-Smith

A song was heard at Christmas,
To wake the midnight sky;
A savior's birth, and peace on earth,
And praise to God on high.

The angels sang at Christmas
With all the hosts above.
And still we sing the newborn King
His glory and His love.



Parish Office Closures

Due to the Christmas and New Year's Holiday, the parish offices will be closed on:

- Monday, December 27th
- Friday, December 31st
- Monday, January 3rd

The Solemnity of Mary

Holy Day of Obligation

Friday, December 31st

St. Mary at 6 pm

Saturday, January 1st

St. Margaret at 8 am
St. John at 9 am



Clergy

Reverend Brian Mahoney, PASTOR
fr.brian@theholyrood.org | (978) 254-0560

Reverend Fernando Ayala, PAROCHIAL VICAR
frfernando@theholyrood.org | ext 237

Reverend Arnold Colletti, SR. PRIEST IN RESIDENCE
frcolletti@theholyrood.org | ext 116

Reverend Raymond Benoit, SR. PRIEST IN RESIDENCE
frray@theholyrood.org | ext 115

Deacon John C. Hunt, Jr., PERMANENT DEACON
deaconjohn@theholyrood.org | (978) 254-2696

Deacon Frank Perez de Alderete, PERMANENT DEACON
deaconfrank@theholyrood.org | (978) 633-5408

Deacon Barry V. Lloyd., SR. PERMANENT DEACON
deac5@comcast.net

Outreach & Parish Ministry

Sr. Lori Fleming, SNDdeN, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE
srlori@theholyrood.org | ext 225

Business Office

Paul Firicano, COLLABORATIVE BUSINESS MANAGER
pfiricano@theholyrood.org | ext 220

Tina Sousa, FINANCE & FACILITY SUPPORT
tsousa@theholyrood.org | ext 219

Family Faith Formation

Heather Hannaway, MA, DIR OF FAITH FORMATION
hhannaway@theholyrood.org | ext 226

Courtney Callanan, MA, ASST DIR OF FAITH FORMATION
courtney@theholyrood.org | ext 227

Shaun Bradley, FAITH FORMATION ASSOCIATE
sbradley@theholyrood.org | ext 232

Lynn Anne LaDuke, FAITH FORMATION COORDINATOR
lynnanne@theholyrood.org | ext 240

Elaine Kindler, FAITH FORMATION COORDINATOR
ekindler@theholyrood.org | ext 216

Administration

Sue Beechin, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
sue@theholyrood.org | ext 236

Jamie Brown, PART-TIME SCHEDULING COORDINATOR
jbrown@theholyrood.org | ext 239

Rae Russo, PART-TIME FUNERAL COORDINATOR
rae@theholyrood.org | (978) 306-5882

Donna Gambon, PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
dgambon@theholyrood.org | ext 248

Facilities

Dan Heider, FACILITIES MANAGER
dheider@theholyrood.org | ext 213

Bulletin, Website, Social Media

Christine Trznadel, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
christine@theholyrood.org | (978) 254-4406

Turn page for *more*

Mask Mandate Reinstated

In the light of spiking numbers of new COVID cases and the likely increase in those numbers in the upcoming holiday season, Cardinal Seán is mandating that throughout the Archdiocese of Boston all people



attending public Masses, including weddings and funerals, wear masks.

Additionally, the City of Lowell also put into effect their own local Mask Mandate which is in effect until February 2nd. This local mandate would effect anyone attending Masses and ALL events at St. Margaret of Scotland.

- Mass celebrants, deacons, readers, servers, choir members, and instrumentalists, should all wear masks except when they are speaking.
- Children under the age of five are not required to wear masks.
- Children under the age of two should not wear masks.
- We will continue to provide a designated area in which social distancing is respected for those who want to use it (refer to below).
- We will have masks available for people inasmuch as possible, as some people attending especially on Christmas may not be expecting to need masks.

SOCIAL DISTANCING AREAS AVAILABLE

St. Mary and St. John the Evangelist

As you enter and approach, the front of the church, the 'mask-required' section is the front-right quadrant.

St. Margaret of Scotland

As you enter and approach the front of the church, the 'mask-required' section is the front-far-right section, against the wall.

of what's happening in The Holy Rood



Each winter, Boy Scout Troop 70 provides a Christmas tree collection service in the town of Chelmsford. For a donation of \$10, they will pick up and recycle your tree. To make a reservation for the Boy Scouts to pick up your tree, please register via the link that can be found at www.theholyrood.org/christmas-tree-pick-up-2022 or click on the QR code to your left.

You will receive an e-mail confirming that your request has been received and scheduled. It is important to leave your \$10 donation in an envelope taped to your front door after 8 am on the day of your scheduled pickup. Thank you for supporting Chelmsford Boy Scout Troop 70.



Saint Vincent de Paul St. Mary's Conference

Each year, during the Christmas season, we ask parishioners to consider making a charitable donation to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. Your past generosity has helped our dedicated members provide financial assistance to our needy neighbors in the parish community. Our financial report published annually in the bulletin shows the extent of our work in the parish and how your donations are spent.

This past year has been especially challenging for many families. The combined impact of the continued pandemic as well as higher inflation (especially at grocery stores and filling stations) has significantly weakened the safety net for many families. As a result, we have seen the number of assistance requests increase significantly, especially over the past few months. To meet this need, we have provided an increased number of both local supermarket and gasoline gift cards. We expect this service request increase to continue well into 2022.

We have been providing food vouchers and gift cards to struggling individuals and families to enable them to buy both food and presents during the recent Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

When our society cannot handle individual requests, we provide information about food pantries, food programs, the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, fuel and rent assistance, and social services. We also offer and suggest prayer to ask God for the strength to cope with their crises.

Your contributions help us make a difference in people's lives, so we ask for your continued support.

1. You may mail or drop off a check—payable to **St. Mary's SVdP**—to the parish offices at:

115 Middlesex Street
North Chelmsford, MA 01863

2. You can place an envelope—marked **St. Mary's SVdP**—into the weekly collection basket.

3. You may donate electronically through the **Online Giving** link found at: www.theholyrood.org/on-line-giving

We thank you for your generosity.

Collaborative Community!

Send your mother, sister, daughter, or friend away on a 3-day ACTS retreat, and she'll be forever grateful!



- When: February 24-27, 2022
- Cost: Priceless
- Contact: Beth Jacavanco, Retreat Director, at womensactsretreat2022@gmail.com
- Registration: Forms can be found in each church and on our website: www.theholyrood.org/acts

The ACTS Retreat is a three-day Catholic retreat that runs from Thursday evening and ends with Sunday morning Mass. It is based on the Gospels and teachings of the Church, and provides retreatants with the opportunity to deepen their faith, strengthen their relationship with God, and develop a better understanding of how God is calling them to live their life. The Retreat Teams, which organize and facilitate the retreat weekend, are made up of lay people from our collaborative.

Whether you purchase this gift for a family member, friend or even yourself, know that this gift will change your life and leave you or a loved one talking about this for years to come.



facilities update

St. Mary Parish

The lift installation began this past week, and based on what we have been told, should take about 30-45 days to complete.

We have received the final design of the new handicap ramp. The new design includes heated concrete and 'base' lighting to illuminate the ramp at night. The engineer and contractor are working on getting the permit, while we also work with the Historical Society to stay within the requirements of the historic commission.



This year marks the
129th Anniversary of St.
John the Evangelist Parish!

Established January 1, 1893

Funerals Recently Celebrated



May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Earl Batson, Jr • Friday, December 3 • St. Mary
Pauline Kennedy • Saturday, December 11 • St. Margaret
Robert Ogden • Monday, December 13 • St. John
Anne Walsh • Monday, December 13 • St. Margaret
Paul Grzyb • Tuesday, December 14 • St. Margaret
Allison Jensen-Johnston • Thursday, December 16 • St. John
Ann Robey • Friday, December 17 • St. Mary
James Cusick • Friday, December 17 • St. Mary
Thomas O'Connor • Friday, December 17 • St. Margaret
Eileen Meal • Saturday, December 18 • St. Mary
Elizabeth Wells • Tuesday, December 21 • St. John

the family connection

strengthening families dealing with addiction

The Family Connection is a parish-based ministry that has been in existence since 2017. It provides support for families dealing with alcohol and/or drug abuse of a child, spouse, grandchild or friend. Our aim is to provide families/friends with a better understanding of the disease of addiction through educational reading materials, videos, and discussions. We also have speakers who share their stories of recovery and how they are now living healthy, happy lives.

This confidential meeting provides a compassionate and supportive environment that encourages those in attendance to share their questions, feelings and concerns in order to learn from each other and gain hope during a very difficult time.

Please contact nancyk@theholyrood.org for further information or if you would like to join us.

The Financial Page

Fiscal Year 2021 runs from July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Paul Firicano, Collaborative Business Manager
ext 220 or pfiricano@theholyrood.org

To view this and ALL past financial reports,
click on the stewardship tab on our homepage,
www.theholyrood.org.

IMPORTANT DONATION REMINDER

When sending in checks, please make it payable to the specific parish—St. John the Evangelist, St. Margaret of Scotland or St. Mary—to whom you are making your donation. As each parish maintains their own financial entity, checks made out to The Holy Rood Collaborative cannot be cashed as The Holy Rood Collaborative is NOT a financial entity. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Firicano.

ST. MARY WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of Dec 4/5	Weekend of Dec 11/12	Fiscal TYD Dec 12th	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$360,000	\$15,000
Actual Received	\$15,097	\$18,879	\$340,718	\$14,197
Shortfall/ Overage	\$97	\$3,879	-\$19,282	-\$803

ST. JOHN WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of Dec 4/5	Weekend of Dec 11/12	Fiscal TYD Dec 12th	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$228,000	\$9,500
Actual Received	\$9,477	\$12,707	\$234,914	\$9,788
Shortfall/ Overage	-\$23	\$3,207	\$6,914	\$288

ST. MARGARET WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of Dec 4/5	Weekend of Dec 11/12	Fiscal TYD Dec 12th	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$133,200	\$5,500
Actual Received	\$4,631	\$5,026	\$104,911	\$4,371
Shortfall/ Overage	-\$919	-\$524	-\$28,289	-\$1,179

Support our Parishes

with an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) before December 31, 2021

People who are 72 or older and have traditional IRAs may use them to make charitable gifts in 2021. Both convenient and tax-advantaged, a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from an IRA allows a donor to direct pre-tax assets to charitable organizations, like St. Mary's, St. John's or St. Margaret's, without incurring any tax. The QCD is not recognized as income, so donors receive a tax benefit and could possibly decrease the amount of your taxable social security benefits. Gifts of any amount, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per IRA plan owner per calendar year, may be made this way.

As we need to keep the finances separate, when making a gift, please be sure to indicate to which parish—St. Mary, St. Margaret of Scotland or St. John the Evangelist—you would like your gift processed.

Your generosity will help our parishes to continue building the programs and ministries for the present and future growth of our faith communities. Please feel free to contact your financial advisor for additional information about using your IRA to make a gift to your parish.

Heather Hannaway, MA
 Director of Faith Formation
 hhannaway@theholyrood.org

Courtney Callanan, MA
 Asst. Director of Faith Formation
 courtney@theholyrood.org

Shaun Bradley
 Faith Formation Associate
 sbradley@theholyrood.org

Family Faith Formation Program

Elaine Kindler
 Faith Formation Coordinator
 ekindler@theholyrood.org

Lynn Anne LaDuke
 Faith Formation Coordinator
 lynnanne@theholyrood.org

Uniting the Heart of the Church with the



Heart of the Home

CLASS SCHEDULE

JANUARY DEEP DIVES

GRADES 1-6 SUNDAY, JANUARY 9

St. Mary Session A
 9:15 - 10:45 AM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

St. John Session A
 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM
 St. John Parish Hall

St. Mary Session B
 12:15 - 1:45 PM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

FIRST EUCHARIST PREP SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

9:15 - 10:45 AM
 St. Mary Parish Hall
 Mock Reconciliation

GRADES 7-8 SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

11:15 AM - 12:45 PM
 St. Margaret
 Sacred Heart Hall

Teaching Baptism
 Saturday, January 29
 1 - 2 pm ~ St. John the Evangelist Church

Family Movie Night
 Saturday, January 29
 5 - 7 pm ~ St. John Parish Hall

FEBRUARY DEEP DIVES

Family Lent Event with Reconciliation
 Wednesday, February 23
 6:30 - 8:00 pm ~ St. Margaret Church and Hall

GRADES 1-6 SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

St. Margaret Session A
 8:15 - 9:45 AM
 Sacred Heart Hall

St. Mary Session C
 9:15 - 10:45 AM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

St. John Session B
 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM
 St. John Parish Hall

St. Mary Session D
 12:15 - 1:45 PM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

CONFIRMATION I SUNDAY, JANUARY 9 & 30

4:15 - 5:45 PM
 St. John Parish Hall

CONFIRMATION II SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

4:15 - 5:45 PM
 St. John Parish Hall

Catechist Morning of Recollection

Saturday, January 8
 9:00 - 11:30 am
 St. Mary Parish Hall



P.L.A.N.S. FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY

All Families should Pray together daily/ Attend Mass weekly/Attend Class/Disciple Group Monthly/ Complete one Deep Dive per Month

Grades 1-6 children will be gathering to learn about The Last Supper and Parent Discipleship Groups will reflect on full, conscious active participation at Mass

Grades 7 & 8 students will be completing Altaration Session 4: What is our Response?

Confirmation I students will be completing Chosen Lesson 5: Who is Jesus? and Lesson 6: Why be Catholic?

Confirmation II students will be completing Chosen Session 17: Who's Calling?

*From the
Pastor*



This weekend we celebrate both Christmas and the feast of the Holy Family, and as I was reflecting on the meaning of these feast days I thought about my own childhood. In so many ways, I believe my family

was typical of most large families. My parents were loving and caring towards each other and towards my brothers, my sisters and myself. We always had a roof over our heads, food on the table, and clothes on our backs, and we were a close-knit family. Every night we gathered at the table for dinner by 6 PM, and afterwards would spend time together discussing how our day went or arguing about world events. We played a lot of cards and other games on the weekends and just generally hung out together as a family.

My brothers and sisters and I did a lot together—particularly fighting. Our fights could be both physical *and* verbal and—as you can imagine—mostly took place when Mom and Dad were not home. I would say that we were the typical dysfunctional American family—definitely not the Brady bunch. Of course I am not sure I have ever met a family that was *not* dysfunctional in some way. It probably stems from the fact that we can choose our friends but not our family. But, I still consider the members of my family to be the most important people in my life, and I feel truly blessed by the people God put in my life.

As I reflect on my own family life and that of the Holy Family, I wonder what similarities there might be. Is it possible that the Holy Family is the *only* truly functional family? I believe we are all called to be a holy family, but how is that possible in the midst of our brokenness? I think Jesus, Mary and Joseph became a Holy Family because of the way they dealt with issues that arose in their lives. They did not have all things perfect. First of all, King Herod was trying to kill their child, and so they had to flee their country as refugees. They had to live in a different country with people of a different culture until King Herod died. They were poor and marginalized, and yet, through it all they never lost faith in God. Being a holy family is not about having all things perfect; rather, it is about how we choose to address the issues that arise in our family. Mary and Joseph taught Christ to remain centered in God and that is where we see their holiness. Christ was always ready to accept the will of God

because Mary and Joseph led the way. Their example became the example that Christ lived by.

For Mary and Joseph, life was never about what was best for themselves. It was about ministering to the needs of the other. It was about being Christ to the other. Love was not about how they felt; rather, it was about how they treated each other. They were instruments of God's love, seen through the love that was acted out in their relationship. They were living examples of true love, which is total self-giving. It was their willingness to put aside their personal needs for the good of the other.

Through witnessing the love Mary and Joseph had for each other, Jesus learned about the unconditional love that He was destined to live out. He came to discover through their marriage what it means to be the Christ. Their dying to self that they expressed each day of their lives was an example and foreshadowing of the cross. Jesus discovered his vocation through the lived vocations of Mary and Joseph. Jesus more easily recognized the way of salvation by observing how his parents modeled it.

We learn from our parents who we are called to be, and the ways we are called to discover that truth. Mary and Joseph played that role in a powerful way in the life of Christ. As we contemplate the meaning of this day in our own family's life, we are reminded that being holy is not about being perfect, but rather, it is about being open to God's grace. It is allowing God to be the center of our family's life and allowing our faith to be the source of how we will live as a family. Because of our brokenness, at times we may be better at it than at other times. But the wonderful thing about being a family is that it is not about getting it right all the time, but being able to mess up and grow together as a family, always searching for God's help and guidance.

May we look to Mary and Joseph then, *not* to see how we have failed as a family, but rather, what is possible when God is truly at the center of our family.

If you have any questions about anything, please do not hesitate to ask me directly, or send your questions to me at fr.brian@theholyrood.org.

Please keep me in your prayers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Brian". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

From our Faith Formation Associate

Shaun Bradley

Christmas traditions are beautiful things. For some people, they pour all their effort into getting thoughtful gifts for their loved ones. For others, it's all about the tree and getting the ornaments hung, to bring joy and beauty to the house. For others still, it might be the long baking sessions as a family, and then enjoying the fruits of your labor. For me, the one tradition that means the most is my family's Nativity set.

For years now, setting up the Nativity has been my biggest priority, and the first thing I want to do in Advent. I don't remember when it became my priority—probably the first year I had to set it up on my own without my brother's help. Now though, it's the one thing during Advent I long for the most. I want to hang the angel. I want to place the manger in the middle, with Mary and Joseph kneeling on either side. I can't wait to group the shepherds together on one side and the kings on the other, and I even love arranging the animals all about in the fake hay. Most importantly, I look forward to hiding the Baby Jesus until Christmas morning. And this joy, this expectation, extends to Christmas morning when I rush downstairs to place the Baby Jesus in His proper place, laying in a feeding trough.

You do know that's what the word manger means—right? The manger is not the structure/stable/cave: it's the feeding trough, for animals. That's where Jesus was laid after His birth, in a long narrow channel where animals would go to eat. If you're surprised by this, then you are a lot like me, who for a long time thought the word manger meant the structure. However, like many things in our faith, this isn't about semantics. When God set the plan in motion for His Incarnation, He knew exactly what He was doing and all the little details that would go into it. Think about it. While it may sound strange to say Jesus was laid in a feeding trough, it certainly isn't weird for us to associate Jesus with food. This is exactly what we do each Sunday when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist. In a sense, the Mass is our much more, sanitary feeding trough. Just moments after His birth, the Lord was already preparing us for the Eucharist.

This Christmas, remember the manger. Whenever you place a figure in your Nativity or any time you see a Nativity, think of the “source and summit” of our faith. Even during the celebration of His birth, we already see the sacrifice that He will make for us, the sacrifice we remember in the Eucharist. When I place the Baby Jesus this Christmas morning, I will think of the Eucharist, the food of eternal life, and I pray that you will too.

From our Senior Priest in Residence

Fr. Ray Benoit

At Christmas, we celebrate God coming into our world as a needy, helpless infant. The rejoicing of this season is the arrival of Jesus... God's gift of a new beginning for humankind that will make everything different and everything possible. The story of Jesus' birth places this new beginning in the midst of a world of oppression and injustice, cruelty and poverty, homelessness and insecurity.

More than 2,000 years ago, the angel told the shepherds to look for God in the ordinary, everyday experience of seeing an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, the common clothing of poor babies. The message of the Incarnation is that God is willing to meet us wherever we are, whatever our circumstances may be. We must take the time and make the effort to recognize God in the Christmas miracle and appreciate that Jesus comes to bring God's gifts of peace, hope, and love.

For many people, Christmas is just a holiday, and a stressful one at that. It's a time for buying gifts that didn't need to be bought, out of a budget that couldn't afford them. It's a time for squeezing parties and extra events into a schedule that was already too full. It's a time in which many feel overcommitted when what they need to do is slow down and be humbly grateful for God's precious gifts.

Christmas should be a time of peace, not fear and unrest. We fear we may overlook someone on our gift list, or maybe they won't like what we bought them, or maybe they will think our gift is too cheap. For some, Christmas brings the added tension of bringing together fractured families. And so, instead of peace, they dread the inevitable conflicts.

Christmas should be a time of hope, not doubt and cynicism. Christmas is poised at the crossroads of the past and the future. A previous year with its blessings and its trials is slipping away gone. A new year looms ahead, full of uncertainty. Yet, here is Christmas, the celebration of a sacred birth more than 2,000 years ago, a perennial shining light in our hearts because God has blessed us with hope.

Christmas should be a time of love, not resentment and animosity. Christmas is centered around the greatest love story ever, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, God's greatest gift given to meet our greatest need - to be loved!

A tiny baby came into a dark world, shining light across the barren landscape, a light that some 2,000 years later still invites us to come into the warmth and comfort of God's grace to share precious gifts of peace, hope, and love. May these be the gifts that we open your hearts to receive, not only this Christmas Season, but each and every day.



Mass Intentions

If you would like to request that a Mass be celebrated for a specific intention or person, please call the parish office. A donation of \$10 per intention is requested to be made at the time you schedule your intention.

St. John the Evangelist

SUN, DEC 26	9:30 am: People of the Parish
	6:00 pm: Raymond St. Pierre: 25th Anniversary
MON, DEC 27	9:00 am: Dan O'Neill: Memorial
WED, DEC 29	9:00 am: Thomas J. Burke: 1st Anniversary
THU, DEC 30	9:00 am: LIVING INTENTION: In thanksgiving for Faith Formation Facilitators, Mentors and Volunteers
SUN, JAN 2	9:30 am: The Aspell Family: Memorial The Belken Family: Memorial Edward Clancy: Memorial The Curran Family: Memorial The Finlay Family: Memorial The Johnson Family: Memorial William and Marie O'Connell: Memorial
	6:00 pm: People of the Parish

St. Margaret of Scotland

SUN, DEC 26	7:30 am: George P "Chubby" Legrand, Jr: 26th Anniversary
	10:00 am: David Souza: 2nd Anniversary
MON, DEC 27	8:00 am: David Osborn: Memorial
TUE, DEC 28	8:00 am: Clement and Eva Gendron: Memorial
WED, DEC 29	8:00 am: Theresa Bourassa: 13th Anniversary
THU, DEC 30	8:00 am: LIVING INTENTION: In thanksgiving for Faith Formation Facilitators, Mentors and Volunteers
FRI, DEC 31	8:00 am: Frank LaPan: Memorial
SAT, JAN 1	4:00 pm: Stephen and Mary Botto: Memorial
SUN, JAN 2	7:30 am: William F Greenleaf: 16th Anniversary
	10:00 am: People of the Parish

St. Mary Parish

SUN, DEC 26	7:00 am: People of the Parish
	11:00 am: Jack Christianson: Memorial
TUE, DEC 28	7:00 am: Helen Morris: 3rd Anniversary
THU, DEC 30	9:00 am: LIVING INTENTION: In thanksgiving for Faith Formation Facilitators, Mentors and Volunteers
SUN, JAN 2	7:00 am: People of the Parish
	11:00 am: Georges Abadie: Month's Mind John MacGilvray: Memorial

For details on all available ways to remember a loved one, please visit

www.theholyrood.org/remember-a-loved-one

Rose for Life



Is there someone special you'd like to honor? You can do that by having a rose signifying your intention placed at either St. John or St. Mary, as well as having your intention published in the bulletin. To book a Rose for Life, contact the parish office. The suggested offering is \$5.

This week's St. Mary Rose for Life:
In Memory of Ann L. Knowler

This week's St. John Rose for Life:
In Memory of Brian J. Musato
Merry Christmas "Big guy"



St. Mary Altar Flowers

Parishioners are invited to donate a floral arrangement, to be displayed on the altar in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one. The requested donation for an arrangement is \$40. If you would like to donate altar flowers, call the parish office. Please note that we require a 2-week notice for your order.



St. Margaret Lamps

St. Margaret offers the opportunity to have one of three lamps in the church burn In Memory of a loved one. The stipend is \$25, and the dedication will be published in the weekly bulletin.

Blessed Mother Lamp
In Memory of Deb Chase Camacho

St. Margaret Bells



The steeple bells at St. Margaret toll daily at 12 noon and 6 pm, followed by the ringing of the Angelus bell and 2 hymns. At 3 pm, they play 2 hymns, and 15 minutes prior to each "weekend Mass, the bells toll a 'call to worship.' If you would like to dedicate the Ringing of the Bells In Memory/In Honor of someone, please contact the parish offices. The stipend is \$25, and your dedication will be published in the weekly bulletin.

In Memory of Clare and Edward Chartier



DOLAN FUNERAL HOME

106 Middlesex Street
North Chelmsford

James F. Dolan James F. Dolan II

978-251-4041 • www.dolanfuneralhome.com

Pre-Planned
Funeral Counseling

Fuel Oil • Wood Pellets
Heating Equipment Installation

COX FUEL COMPANY

316 Plain St.  978-454-7887

Family Owned & Operated Since 1927
www.coxfuel.com

FREE AD DESIGN

WITH PURCHASE
OF THIS SPACE

 CALL
800.477.4574

AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME!

ADVERTISE HERE NOW!

Contact **Bill Ames** to place an ad today!
bames@4LPi.com or (800) 477-4574 x6424

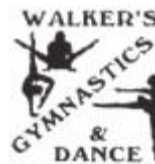


MAHONEY OIL COMPANY, INC.

120 Plain St., Lowell, MA 01851
978.453.1581

www.mahoneyoilco.com

Home Heating Oil • Automatic Delivery • Cash Discounts
24 Hour Service • Free Estimates • Installations
Tank Removals • Annual Cleanings • Flexible Budget Payments



~ Since 1978 ~

(978) 459-4954
312 Plain Street
Lowell, MA

www.WalkersGymnasticsDance.com

Driveways • Sidewalks • Parking Lots
BOB MULDOON PAVING SERVICE

121-23 Concord Street, Lowell, MA
(978) 458-4933 • (978) 423-8261 cell

OVER 35 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Free Estimates - References Available
New - Stamped Pavement

Excavating • Drainage • Retaining Walls
www.bobmuldoonpavingservice.com



"Multi-Million
Dollar Club"



ED OLIVERI, REALTOR / PARISHIONER

978-551-2944 | EdOliveri@aol.com

Servicing the Merrimack Valley
& surrounding area. MA & NH licensed



TESSIER ELECTRIC

FOR ALL YOUR ELECTRICAL NEEDS

Residential and Commercial

No Job Too Big or Too Small

978-815-8999



THIS SPACE IS AVAILABLE

David Murphy

Plumbing • Heating
Gas Fitting • Inc.

EST. 1983

978-458-0481

MA LIC 9723 • NH LIC 2154



Enterprise
Bank

978-459-9000
Member FDIC

Enterprisebanking.com



McDonough Funeral Home

14 Highland Street - Lowell, MA

www.McDonoughFuneralHome.com

Family Owned & Operated - 5 Generations

978-458-6816



ROARK LAW OFFICE P.C.

ANNMARIE ROARK

Concentrating in Estate & Trust Planning,
Elder Law and Medicaid Planning

36 Years Experience

229 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, MA

(978) 256-4167

www.aroarklaw.com

ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY

96 Riverneck Rd. • E. Chelmsford, MA

(978) 458-4851



O'Donnell FUNERAL HOME

"Discover the Difference"

276 Pawtucket Street • Lowell, MA 01854

James F. O'Donnell, Jr. Funeral Director

A Tradition of Caring

Celebrating Over 135 Years of Your Trust

Free Pre-planning

978-458-8768 • www.ODonnellFuneralHome.com



WE'RE HIRING

AD SALES EXECUTIVES

BE YOURSELF. BRING YOUR PASSION.

WORK WITH PURPOSE.

- Paid Training
- Some Travel
- Work-Life Balance
- Full-Time with Benefits
- Serve Your Community



Contact us at careers@4lpi.com

www.4lpi.com/careers

MORSE-BAYLISS Funeral Home

Helping Families Honor & Celebrate the Life of Their Loved Ones



Preplanning & Trusts

Funeral Director
Frederick W. Healy

978-458-6841

122 Princeton Blvd., Lowell

morsebayliss@comcast.net

www.morsebaylissfuneralhome.com

We've Missed You!

Welcome Back to Mass



Stay connected to our faith community no matter where you are
by signing up to get our bulletin delivered straight to your email!

www.ParishesOnline.com



Ad info. 1-800-477-4574 • Publication Support 1-800-888-4574 • www.4lpi.com

Holy Rood Collaborative

03-1137