



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



January 16, 2022

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

-John 2:3



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

Wednesdays • 8 am - 3 pm • St. Margaret Chapel
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, January 17

** PARISH OFFICES CLOSED**

Bible Study • 10 - 12 am • via ZOOM
LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John
Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. John
ACTS Core Meeting • 6:30 - 8:30 pm • SJE Linehan
LIVEVIEW Rosary • 7 pm • St. Mary

Tuesday, January 18

LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John
Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Margaret of Scotland
Wine, Women and Word • 6:30 pm • SJE Mariotti
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, January 19

Adoration • 9 am - 3 pm • St. Margaret Lady of Lourdes 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, January 20

Charismatic Prayer Group • 10 am • via ZOOM
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, January 21

Blood Pressure Clinic • 8:30 am • SMS Sacred Heart Hall
Knitting and Crocheting • 2 - 5 pm • SM Parish Hall
LIVEVIEW Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • St. John
LIVEVIEW Rosary • 7 pm • St. Mary

Saturday, January 22

Catholic Men's Group • 7:45 - 8:45 am • SM PC Conf Room 1
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



The Parish Offices
will be closed on
Monday, January 17

COVID + Reporting Protocols



We would like to say thank you to those who have informed us of their positive testing. It has helped us keep all our

families informed and take any needed precautions.

Please refer to the following Reporting Protocols:

If you test positive for COVID within 7 days of being in any of our buildings, please contact us at any of the following phone numbers. They will all connect you with our parish office:

(978) 251-8571
(978) 454-5143
(978) 256-2374

Please let us know the following:

- Date, Time and Location of Mass you attended/ day, date and time you were in what building
- Date you became symptomatic
- Date you tested positive
- In the case of Mass: Where were you seated?
- If you knew the people around you, have they been informed?
- Were you wearing a mask?

Additionally, the sooner we know of a positive result, the better opportunity we have to disinfect and mitigate the risk of spread.

These protocols can also be found on our website. www.theholyrood.org/covid19-updates

Thank you again for working with us as we all traverse this COVID-19 world together! God Bless!

Clergy

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

Reverend Fernando Ayala, PAROCHIAL VICAR
frfernando@theholyrood.org | (978) 401-9844

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 | (978) 454-6505

Outreach & Parish Ministry

Sr. Lori Fleming, SNDdeN, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE
srlo@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

In order to promote communication and transparency throughout The Holy Rood Collaborative, you are encouraged to forward any comments and concerns you may have directly to the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils.

Collaborative Parish Council

Parish Council matters can be sent to:
collaborativeppe@theholyrood.org

Scott Davidson (SJE) - Chair

Rob Donnelly (SM)	Lorraine Freitas (SMS)
Hilde Gilman (SMS)	Chad Groenwoltd (SMS)
Beth Jacavano (SJE)	Drew Jubinville (SJE)
Cathy Latina (SM)	Lori MacDonald (SM)
Ellen St. George (SJE)	Paul Sneeringer (SMS)
Steve McMillan (SM)	

St. John Finance Council

Finance matters concerning St. John can be sent to:
SJ.FC@theholyrood.org

Jeff Brown - Chair

John Bagni	Paul Brzezinski
Celeste Dunn	Grace Ann Steed

St. Margaret Finance Council

Finance matters concerning St. Margaret can be sent to:
SMS.FC@theholyrood.org

Robert Gilman - Chair

Thomas Kirwin	Marc Trudel
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St. Mary Finance Council

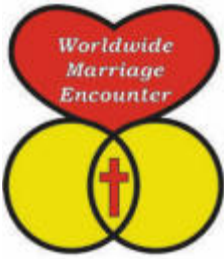
Finance matters concerning St. Mary can be sent to:
SM.FC@theholyrood.org

Lauren Desforge - Chair

Armand DiLando	Ted Powers
Paul Therrien	Paul Rigazio

If you would like to submit a notice for the bulletin, please do so no later than 12 NOON, TWO Fridays prior to the weekend in which you would like it published. Submittals should be emailed to christine@theholyrood.org or via US Mail to the Parish Offices at 115 Middlesex Street, North Chelmsford, MA, 01863, ATTN Christine. We will do our best to accommodate your request.

here's what's happening in The Holy



To support married couples during this time of social distancing, Worldwide Marriage Encounter is sponsoring virtual marriage experiences. Some are on weekends and other options include 7 weekday sessions from 7-9:30 pm. Couples will explore their individual personality styles, improve listening and communication skills, understand God's plan for their marriage, and learn how to keep their relationship a priority. Registration is limited and a \$100 application fee is required. For more information or to apply, call Joe and Ginny Vatalle at (800) 710-963 or visit www.wmwma.org.



All women from The Holy Rood Collaborative and beyond are invited to join us for our next gathering!

THIS Tuesday • January 18 • 6:30 - 8 pm
St. John NPC Mariotti Room

The main purpose of this ministry is to play a role in leading women to a more authentic and loving relationship with Christ. A wonderful benefit of this ministry is women forming new and authentic friendships with each other.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Sunday, January 16th

Before birth the LORD called me,
from my mother's womb He gave me my name.

This January marks the 49th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision, legalizing abortion on demand. In the United States alone, over 62.5 million infants have lost their lives to abortion. Recently, Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Center brought abortion back to the Supreme Court, opening the door to a new hope that all life will be protected.

As Christians, our purpose is to save and transform lives and share the love of Christ. When a pregnancy is unexpected, it can be difficult to see this new little life as a gift. We help women and men see the beauty, joy and value of this new life. We are excited to announce that we will soon offer ultrasound services at all three of our center locations, giving a new mother the chance to see her baby and hopefully choose life.

We trust that this year will be a turning point in protecting God's children, but we need your help now more than ever. Please consider donating to the work of the Pregnancy Care Center, honoring God and His beautiful creation. You can donate at www.PCCFriends.org. Thank you!

PREGNANCY CARE CENTER

Free and Confidential Unplanned Pregnancy Support
Pregnancy Testing - Ultrasound - Mentoring
Education - Material Services
(978) 373-5718 PCCFriends.org

Monthly Blood Pressure Clinic

St. Margaret Sacred Heart Hall
Friday, January 21
Following 8 am Mass



ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY presents
A FREE webinar January 18 at 7 pm
Presented by Fr. John Gavin, SJ



Examining the Our Father



The Fathers of the early centuries of Christianity include saints, scholars, bishops, priests, laity, and ascetics, who are all united in their hunger to know the Lord. Thus, we could ask for no better guides in a prayerful examination of the Our Father. This presentation will introduce some of these major interpreters—Cyprian of Carthage, Augustine of Hippo, Maximus the Confessor and others—and share their wisdom regarding the transformative power of Christ's command to "pray like this." To register, visit <https://bit.ly/33aoNvM>

9 Days for Life January 19 - 27

9 Days for Life is a novena for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. Visit... www.respectlife.org/9-days-for-life

Rood Collaborative community

When battered by life's storms, or immersed in a dense fog of suffering and uncertainty, we may feel alone and unequipped to handle the circumstances. Yet with words that echo through thousands of years into the corners of our hearts, the Lord says to us, "Do not fear: I am with you" (Isaiah 41:10).

He speaks these words not as one who merely observes our pain, but as one who experienced immense suffering. And the very wounds that bear witness to his suffering indicate the essence of our identity and worth: we are loved by God.

Reflecting on the healed wounds of the Risen Christ, we see that even our most difficult trials can be the place where God manifests his victory. He makes all things beautiful. He makes all things new.

He is always with us. Jesus promised this when he gave the disciples the same mission he gives to each of us: Go.

Go be my hands and feet to a world enslaved by fear. Go to the woman who is unexpectedly pregnant and fears the future. Go to your friend who fears reprisal at work because he takes a stand for the protection of human life. Go to your aging parent in failing health who fears being a burden. And go to others, too, for their support.

We don't need to have everything figured out. We can simply follow the guidance of Our Blessed Mother, the first disciple: "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5).

Walk with each other. Do not be afraid to embrace God's gift of life. Whatever storms or trials we face, we are not alone. He is with us.

"Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

2022 National Prayer Vigil for Life January 20 at 5:30 pm

"You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.

I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works!" (Psalm 139:13-14)

You are invited to virtually attend the 2022 National Prayer Vigil for Life on January 20 and 21.



The Opening Mass will begin at 5:30 pm on January 20 in the Great Upper Church of the National Shrine in Washington, DC. The Most Reverend William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore, and Chairman, Committee on Pro-Life Activities will be the main celebrant and homilist.

The Closing Mass will begin at 8am on January 21. The celebrant and homilist will be His Eminence Sean Cardinal O'Malley, OFM CAP., Archbishop of Boston.

Both the Opening and Closing Mass will be livestreamed on www.nationalshrine.org/mass.

Opening Mass • Thursday, January 20

5:15 pm: Chaplet of Divine Mercy... livestreamed on www.nationalshrine.org/mass

5:30 pm: Opening Prayer Vigil for Life Mass ... livestreamed on www.nationalshrine.org/mass

7:00 pm: Holy Hour for Life ... livestreamed on www.nationalshrine.org/mass

Closing Mass • Friday, January 21

8 am: Closing Prayer Vigil for Life Mass ... livestreamed on www.nationalshrine.org/mass

Unite your prayers with those of Our Lady by lighting a candle at the National Shrine. Vigil candles will burn for 5 days, lifting up your fervent prayers for the protection of all human life to God through the Blessed Virgin Mary's loving intercession. To request a vigil candle or donate, visit <https://bit.ly/33icFss>

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 which 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.

CHURCH IN LATIN AMERICA

Next week's second collection supports the Church in Latin America (CLA). The CLA provides support for pastoral projects in financially poorer dioceses in Latin America and the Caribbean. CLA funds catechetical and lay leadership programs, youth ministry, evangelization programs, and formation programs for religious, priests, and deacons. CLA is making it possible for the Catholic faithful in the Western hemisphere to help each other. Visit www.usccb.org/catholic-giving/opportunities-for-giving/latin-america/index.cfm for more information.

2021 TAX LETTERS

Tax Letters for parishioners who contributed \$250 or more in 2021 will be mailed out by the end of this month. If you are NOT in this category, but would like to receive a tax letter, please contact Paul Firicano. You can leave a voice mail or send him an email which includes the following information: your name, address, envelope number (if you have one) and to which church you make your offertory donations.

ST. MARY WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of Jan 1/2	Weekend of Jan 8/9	Fiscal TYD Dec 9th	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$420,000	\$15,000
Actual Received	\$17,102	\$14,371	\$396,215	\$14,151
Shortfall/ Overage	\$2,102	-\$629	-\$23,785	-\$849

ST. JOHN WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of Jan 1/2	Weekend of Jan 8/9	Fiscal TYD Dec 9th	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$266,000	\$9,500
Actual Received	\$8,243	\$7,414	\$268,947	\$9,605
Shortfall/ Overage	-\$1,257	-\$2,086	\$2,947	\$105

ST. MARGARET WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of Jan 1/2	Weekend of Jan 8/9	Fiscal TYD Dec 9th	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$155,400	\$5,500
Actual Received	\$4,110	\$4,000	\$121,323	\$4,333
Shortfall/ Overage	-\$1,440	-\$1,550	-\$34,077	-\$1,217

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR FAITHFUL FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS!

It is only because of your generosity and selflessness that we are able to operate as we do, doing our best to serve each and every person that enters our doors.

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

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 II SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

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



SACRAMENTAL PAPERWORK

Due Sunday,
 February 27

FIRST EUCHARIST PREP SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

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

Families should
 complete Blessed First
 Reconciliation and begin
 working on Blessed First
 Eucharist, which was
 given out at the December
 FE Prep session

GRADES 7-8 SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

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

CONFIRMATION I SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

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

JANUARY DEEP DIVES

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



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

All Families should Pray together daily/ Attend Mass weekly/Attend Class or 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 Lesson 17: Who's Calling?

Keeping all our Faith Formation families in prayer!

*From the
Pastor*



On the feast of Saint John Neumann, January 5th, I preached on two lines:

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in

love.” (1 Jn 4:18)

“But at once [Jesus] spoke with them, ‘Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid!’” (Mk 6:50)

Fear! Fear! Fear! We live at a time that is enraptured with fear because there are so many things we are told that we must fear. It could be climate change, disease, inflation, outsiders, those who disagree with us politically, and so on. Some of these issues obviously should cause us concern, but fear seems to be the overarching truth that we are being called to project in our lives.

And yet, as Christians, we hear this simple but powerful statement by Jesus, “Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid.” It is so easy to dismiss or ignore these words of Jesus simply as a cliché having no real value in this day and age. However, we must realize that Jesus was not only speaking those words to his disciples 2000 years ago: He is speaking those words to us today. Moreover, they are words that we desperately need to hear and take to heart.

As we see from John, fear does not come from God, for God is love. And as John so poignantly tells us, “there is no fear in love.” Fear honestly is a way of controlling us and stopping us from being our best. Fear really comes from the Evil One. It is the devil (and yes, as Catholics we believe the devil is real) who wants us to be afraid. The devil desires no more than to make us suffer. The easiest way to make that happen is to keep us divided and in fear. Fear paralyzes us and keeps us focused on the problem. It drains us of our hope and leads us into despair. Fear creates an atmosphere that draws us inward and suspicious of any voice that is counter to our perception of reality. It can lead us to viewing the world in a way that all views and expressions contrary to our perceptions must be wrong and evil. The people who express those views are our enemies and, of course, cannot be trusted.

The issue of fear is not confined to one political mind set, religious viewpoint, or the like. Fear is an issue that is pervasive and is truly infecting the social, cultural, political, and religious strata of every kind. It is creating great harm to our society, but this is nothing new. We can simply look to the McCarthy Era of the 1950s, the red scare of the 1920s, the anti-immigration movement (particularly anti-Catholic) of the 1800s, the Salem witch trials,

and so on. Honestly, throughout all of human history we can see how fear has arisen as an issue that created devastating results to the community. Our nation has faced it many times as well as other cultures and societies throughout the centuries.

When fear takes over it becomes self-perpetuating. We can soon simply fall into the trap that fear becomes an end to itself. We manufacture reasons to be afraid. It happens simply because we lose our sense, our ability to reject fear and to find real hope in every situation. We become comfortable in fear and so rebuff ideas that contradict our way of seeing the world. Now, this does not mean we cannot have serious disagreements with another person’s perception of things. Rather, we need to ask ourselves why we disagree and how we view the other person. Fear leads us to see the one we disagree with as the other—the enemy. Hope leads us to discern where we can find common ground. It allows us to treat the other with dignity, always seeing the sacredness of their life even though our views are not the same.

As Christians, if we are to truly live out our faith, we must take to heart the words of Jesus, “Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid.” We must reject fear and truly embrace love, not simply as a feeling but how we live out our lives. We must contemplate the words that Paul wrote to the Corinthians and realize how hard true love is.

Love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, it is not snobbish. Love is never rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not prone to anger; neither does it brood over injuries. Love does not rejoice in what is wrong but rejoices with the truth. There is no limit to love’s forbearance, to its trust, its hope, its power to endure.

To live life without fear, we must recognize that these words of Paul are not an ideal or something to strive for: they are the very definition of love. It is the love that Christ showed us in his dying on the cross. On that day He triumphed over fear; He defeated the devil and won the victory for us. Are we willing to accept the triumph of Christ on the cross? That is the battle! We win the battle when we choose to live a life of love. And we do that by rejecting fear and allowing the love of Christ to be the foundation of our lives. We live a life of love by having the courage to know that He is truly with us and that we have nothing to fear.

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.

From our Asst. Director of Faith Formation Courtney Callanan

Sometimes, when my turn in the rotation for writing these articles comes up, writing them is a breeze. I have an idea ready, the words follow easily, the process is enjoyable. Sometimes it is a struggle. I cannot think of anything to write, the ideas I have do not turn into coherent words on the page, the process is tedious and frustrating. This time around I have to admit it has been the latter. So far, while working on it I have: started three different articles on separate topics; added to two other previously started and abandoned articles; read articles on Traditional Seasonal Greetings in the Eastern Church and Hebrew blessings for various occasions, but have yet to actually finish an article (here's hoping this is the one!).

It occurs to me that my experience of article writing is not all that dissimilar to my prayer life. Sometimes it is easy and enjoyable: it feels both effortless and meaningful; I enter prayer easily and experience God obviously; an hour feels like mere minutes. Sometimes it is a struggle: it feels like a lot of work for little reward; entering prayer becomes a chore and I have trouble recognizing God; mere minutes feel like an hour.

I will grudgingly admit there probably is value to both easy and difficult periods in my spiritual life. Fr. Mike Schmitz talks about how sometimes the experience of prayer is like slipping into a hot tub, and sometimes (and truthfully probably more often) it is like a battle. The "hot tub" occasions, where we feel truly and deeply connected to God, give us a taste and remind us of what we are working toward—being in Heaven with Him forever. The battle of prayer, where it requires much work, reminds us that we are not yet in Heaven and that we will have to take steps to get there. The Catechism lays this out, saying:

"Prayer is both a gift of grace and a determined response on our part. It always presupposes effort. The great figures of prayer of the Old Covenant before Christ, as well as the Mother of God, the saints, and he himself, all teach us this: prayer is a battle. Against whom? Against ourselves and against the wiles of the tempter who does all he can to turn man away from prayer, away from union with God. We pray as we live, because we live as we pray. If we do not want to act habitually according to the Spirit of Christ, neither can we pray habitually in his name. The "spiritual battle" of the Christian's new life is inseparable from the battle of prayer." (CCC, 2725)

Prayer is hard because being a Christian is hard. Jesus warned us, time and time again, that this would be the case. However, He also promised us that He would not abandon us and that we can be reassured that He has already won the battle. He wishes to welcome us into Heaven one day but it may not always be an easy road getting there, in prayer or in life but we should keep up the good fight! Fear not, the victory is won! "In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world." (John 16:33)

From our Senior Priest in Residence Fr. Arnold Colletti

All of us have noticed the decline in Mass attendance over the last thirty years. We have gone from 44% of Catholics attending Mass every weekend in 1982 to 14% today. In light of this decline, the Archdiocese has closed churches and now has presented a Pastoral Plan to reconfigure the parishes into clusters. This can only be a temporary solution to the decline in the number of parishioners regularly attending worship services and the decline in the number of priests called to serve in our parishes. This is happening not just in our diocese; it is going on throughout the Church.

According to Jean-Marie Tillard, "There is no Christ without Church, just as there is no Church without Christ" (*Church of Churches: The Ecclesiology of Communion*). Walter Kasper explains that Christianity needs a Church and some kind of institutionalization if it is to survive and to keep alive the memory of its source—Jesus Christ. "Christianity without a Church is a utopian fantasy" (*An Introduction of Christian Faith*). The universal Church faces a number of challenges ahead.

The first challenge is how to deal with the widespread diversity present in today's Church. Down through the years the Church grew into new and, at times, unknown cultures. Today we meet many more cultures which will reshape the Church, presenting multiple and often contrasting understandings of the Christian message.

The second challenge confronts the resistance to ecclesial authority which comes from the universal Church and the local Church. "Many Catholics do not accept the teachings of the Church, especially on medical and sexual matters, such as: birth control, abortion, premarital sex, divorce and homosexuality. They contend that the Church is often "out of touch" with modern society and therefore they can make independent decisions" (Patrick Granfield, OSB in *The Concept of the Church as Communion*).

A third challenge has to do with the balanced and mutually productive relationship between the Church and the world, in view of the secularism and relativism in our culture. If there are no universal truths, how will the Church proclaim gospel values? The Church has a responsibility to care for life in all stages from conception to natural death. How does the Church "teach" the world that there are essential values all must protect? How will the Church tell the various cultures that we have a responsibility to care for the earth?

The ultimate challenge comes as we take care of our own needs through hard work and invention; we ask, "Who needs God?" Deists think that God created us and left us on our own. He has gone elsewhere. We do not have to think about God anymore or pray to him—he is not here. Is that what we are becoming?



Mass Intentions

If you would like to request that a Mass be celebrated for a specific intention or person, 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

- SAT, JAN 15** 4:00 pm: Paul O Amirault: 24th Anniversary
SUN, JAN 16 9:30 am: People of the Parish
 12:00 pm: Mary Brady: 2nd Anniversary
 Cletus Oham: 20th Anniversary
MON, JAN 17 9:00 am: Dorothy Pressley: Memorial
TUE, JAN 18 9:00 am: Kadereian Family: LIVING INTENTION
WED, JAN 19 9:00 am: Roy, Betty and David Hudson: Memorial
THU, JAN 20 9:00 am: Jerry Cohen: 3rd Anniversary
FRI, JAN 21 9:00 am: Katharine Ward:
 LIVING INTENTION: Birthday
SAT, JAN 22 4:00 pm: Sandra "Sonnie" J Martin: Memorial
SUN, JAN 23 9:30 am: Raymond J St Hilaire, Sr: Birthday Memorial
 12:00 pm: Ita Tah: LIVING INTENTION: Birthday
 6:00 pm: People of the Parish

St. Margaret of Scotland

- SAT, JAN 15** 4:00 pm: Raymond J St Hilaire, Sr: Birthday Memorial
SUN, JAN 16 7:30 am: People of the Parish
 10:00 am: Joseph Primeau: Birthday Memorial
MON, JAN 17 8:00 am: Deceased Members of the Kia Family
TUE, JAN 18 8:00 am: David M Quinn: Birthday Memorial
THU, JAN 20 8:00 am: Jack Bomil: Memorial
SAT, JAN 22 4:00 pm: Anthony Nobrega: 3rd Anniversary
SUN, JAN 23 7:30 am: Richard J Foley: 19th Anniversary
 10:00 am: People of the Parish

St. Mary Parish

- SAT, JAN 15** 4:00 pm: People of the Parish
SUN, JAN 16 11:00 am: Mr and Mrs William F Marcotte: Memorial
MON, JAN 17 7:00 am: John J and Mary T O'Rourke: Memorial
WED, JAN 19 7:00 am: Members of Eucharistic Adoration
SAT, JAN 22 4:00 pm: William Weir: 20th Anniversary
SUN, JAN 23 7:00 am: People of the Parish
 11:00 am: Stephen Hood: 1st Anniversary

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. John Rose for Life:
In Memory of Brian Muscato

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.

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.

Funerals Recently Celebrated

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



Patricia Precobb • Saturday, January 8 • St. Mary
Theresa Dixon • Wednesday, January 12 • St. John
Theresa Narus • Friday, January 14 • St. John



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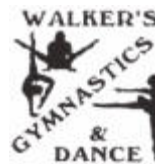


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