

# St. Sylvester R. C. Church

68 Ohio Avenue, Medford, NY 11763

[www.stsylvesterli.org](http://www.stsylvesterli.org)

(631) 475-4506

*A community praying, growing, serving & welcoming in Jesus Christ.*

## ***Eucharist:***

Saturday 5pm; Sunday 9am & 11am.  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday @  
8:30am in the Church. Rosary recitation begins  
at 8:15am before morning Mass. Holy Days as  
announced.

## ***Baptisms:***

Celebrated on pre-determined dates. *Prior to making plans*, please call the Parish Center for Baptism dates, for preparation class dates, and important information regarding Godparents.

## ***Reconciliation/Confession :***

For those seeking spiritual healing.  
Saturday: 4:00 to 4:30 pm in the Sacristy or by  
appointment 631-475-4506, Ext. 101 or email  
[dsuglia@drvc.org](mailto:dsuglia@drvc.org) .

## ***Confirmation:***

In the Fall for the youth of the parish. Adults  
and young adults can also be confirmed at  
Pentecost. Please call the Faith Formation  
Office 631-475-4506, Ext. 118.

## ***Marriage:***

Friday @ 3, 4:30, 6pm; Saturday @ 11:00am,  
12:30pm, & 2:00pm. Arrangements must be  
made one year prior to the requested date.  
Please be aware that all the Sacraments of  
Initiation should have been celebrated prior to  
the requested wedding date and Pre-Cana  
preparation is required. No plans should be  
made prior to meeting with a priest or deacon.

## ***Anointing of the Sick & Dying:***

For those needing surgery or serious medical  
treatment and for those in danger of death.  
According to the Catechism of the Catholic  
Church #1515, the Sacrament should be  
received once, unless during an illness the sick  
person's health worsens, or for subsequent  
surgeries, or after recovery they begin a new  
illness. They may then receive it again. Every  
second Friday of the month @ 8:30am Mass, or  
call the Rectory at 631-475-0418 any time.



## December 20, 2020

### Pastoral Leadership Team

Rev. Dennis A. Suglia, Pastor

Rev. Dan Picciano, Weekend Assistant

Deacon Joseph Mystkowski, Retired

Deacon George Riegger, Retired

Michael Lofaro, Administrator,  
Faith Formation

Frances McMahan, Director,  
Faith Formation & Music Ministers

Justin McMahan, Director,  
Parish Social Ministry

Lori Zito, Director, Parish Ministries & Events

## Office Information

**Parish Office:** (631) 475-4506, ext 101; Fax (631) 475-1057; email: parishoffice@stsylvesterli.org  
Mon., Wed. & Fri. ~ 9am-12pm

**Faith Formation Office:** (631) 475-4506, ext. 118; email: faithformation@stsylvesterli.org  
Please call (631) 475-4506, ext. 118 to make an appointment and we will be happy to serve you!

**Parish Social Ministry at Clare House:** (631) 475-4506, ext. 122; Fax (631) 475-6058  
Please call the number above or press the number "5" on the parish phone message for assistance.

**Thrift Shop:** (631) 475-4506, ext. 124 ; Tues. & Thurs. ~ 10am-3pm .



**Pastoral Council:** The members of our Pastoral Council listed below meet with Fr. Suglia monthly to discern the needs and hopes for the future of our parish. Please keep them in your prayers as they carry out this important responsibility:

**Patricia Coppola**  
Nancy Di Santo

**Amanda Gentile**  
Tom Mowat

**Ashley Perrone**  
Bill Sisco

## We Pray

### **Saturday, December 19, 2020**

5:00pm Grzymala & McGarvey Families  
Jacqueline London  
Cesarino Family  
Amelia Cunningham  
Alarcon Family ~ *Living Intention*

### **Sunday, December 20, 2020**

9:00am Joseph Abrescia  
11:00am Rocco & Ernestine Mangino

### **Monday, December 21, 2020**

8:30am The People of St. Sylvester

### **Tuesday, December 22, 2020**

8:30am Luigi & Maria Russo

### **Thursday, December 24, 2020 (Christmas Eve)**

All Masses The People of St. Sylvester

### **Friday, December 25, 2020 (Christmas Day)**

9:00am For Those on Our Memorial Pavers  
11:00am The People of St. Sylvester

### **Saturday, December 26, 2020**

5:00pm Luigi & Maria Russo  
Elizabeth Pagano  
Donald Plante  
Lydia Trotta  
Edward Leitgeb  
William Gartung

### **Sunday, December 27, 2020**

9:00am Frank Cayea  
11:00am Luigi & Maria Russo & Deceased  
Family Members



**We remember and pray for those who have died, especially: *James J. Hines, Geraldine Bledsoe, Emma Monteforte, Antoinette Borneman and Francis P. Grippi.***



*The Bread and Wine  
used at the Christmas Liturgies*

*in loving memory of  
Edward Zatwarnicki*

*&*

*The Candles  
used at the Christmas Liturgies*

*in loving memory of  
Edward & Gloria Vannucci*

*are the gifts of  
Cecile & Matthew Zatwarnicki*

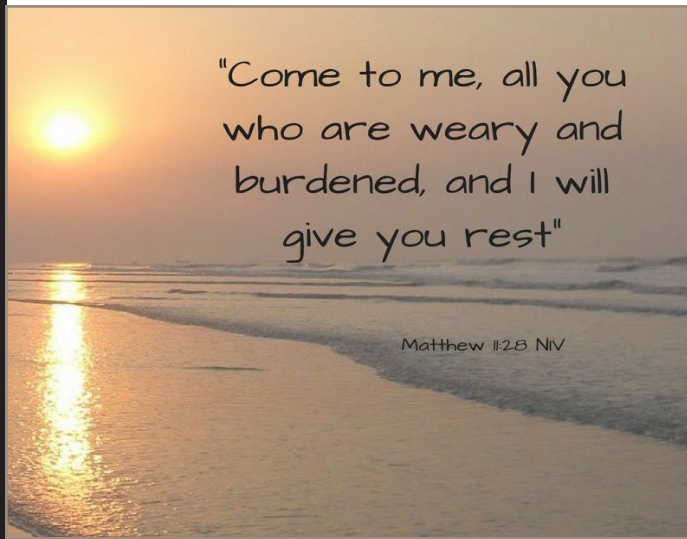


# We Pray



Please pray for all who are sick, especially . . .

**John McGarvey, Grace Stephens, Evangeline Hurst, Joan Polan, Ralph Cerqueira, Barbara Stanton, Theresa Mazza, and William Schaefer.**



"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"

Matthew 11:28 NIV



We also pray for Anne Marie Callahan, a member of our parish staff who unexpectedly passed away last week. Anne Marie was a member of our staff for over 20 years, most recently as our Sunday Parish Office Secretary. Some of you may also remember Anne Marie from her time as the evening Faith Formation Secretary or the evening Parish Office Secretary. May she rest in peace.



All parish offices will close on Wednesday, December 23rd at 12 Noon for Christmas and will re-open Monday, December 28th at 9am.



Please pray for world peace and all public servants including the following who are serving on active duty:

Captain Meghan Munisteri, D.O., Army  
Captain Maurice "Joe" Grosso, Air Force  
1st Lieutenant Hannah Grosso, Army  
1st Lieutenant Michael Dustin, Army  
1st Lieutenant Michael Hawkins, Army  
Petty Officer 2nd Class Elena Greck, Navy  
Lieutenant Nicoli Carlson, Navy  
Captain Holly Grosso Carlson, Army  
Captain Peter Duff, Army  
Ensign Brett Reilly, Navy  
Airman Brandon Basile, Air National Guard

*If you have a family member who is currently serving on active duty in the military and would like his or her name added to this prayer list, please call 631-475-4506 Ext. 101 or email [ecareccia@stsyvesterli.org](mailto:ecareccia@stsyvesterli.org) Please notify the same of any change in status. Thank you.*

***Romans 12:12  
Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction,  
persevere in prayer.***



## **Pastor's Column SS Medford**

**December 20, 2020**

**Dear Friends,**

**Merry Christmas...yes that is right, MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

**It may be a little more difficult to say it and especially hear it this year, but it is Christmas nonetheless and it is worth celebrating.**

**The Son of God has been born and we have been given the opportunity for salvation to eternity in Heaven. We must not lose sight of this despite the hardships that we have endured now in our 9<sup>th</sup> month of the pandemic.**

**Perhaps there is something to be thankful for. Maybe it is simply that things have become very grounded, haven't they? The basics of family life have been thrust upon us: presence to each other, prioritizing our time and the simple reality of what is most important: love.**

**I am especially thankful for all of you, the parishioners of Saint Sylvester here in Medford. Whether you have been able to come to Mass or watch it livestreamed at home, your loyalty and devotion to our community is beyond commendable. I thank you for ensuring our weekly collection is maintained in person or by mail. It helps keep the lights on.**

**I also want to thank our ushers and "heavenly helpers" with us at weekly Mass. The ushers have worked tirelessly to ensure our liturgies are safe and effective. The heavenly helpers have disinfected the Church on Sunday mornings between liturgies to ensure our worship space is clean and safe.**

**A strange year? Yes, without a doubt. Nonetheless, there is much to be thankful for as we continue to navigate our way through this health crisis.**

**Let us be especially thankful that God became man and shows us the pathway to happiness, health and everlasting life. May God continue to bless you and your families this Christmas season into the New Year.**

**Yours in Christ,**



**Fr. Suglia  
Pastor**

# CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE



## Sacrament of Penance/Confession

Saturdays at 4:00pm in the Church

### Individual Penance in the Parish Center

Monday, December 21st ~ 12 Noon to 2:00pm

### Communal Penance Service with Individual Confession

Monday, December 21st ~ 7:00pm in the Church

*\*Registration is required at [www.stsylvesterli.org](http://www.stsylvesterli.org) for the Communal Penance Service and will begin on Friday, December 18th at 9am and end Sunday, December 20th at 6pm.*

## Christmas Masses

### Christmas Eve ~ Thursday, December 24th

*There will not be an 8:30am Mass*

Masses will be celebrated at 2:00pm, 4:00pm, 6:00pm and 10:00pm.

### Christmas Day ~ Friday, December 25th

Masses will be celebrated at 9:00am & 11am.

*\*Registration is required for all Christmas Masses at [www.stsylvesterli.org](http://www.stsylvesterli.org) beginning Sunday, December 20th at 12 noon and ending Wednesday, December 23rd at 12 noon.*

## New Year's Masses

### New Year's Eve ~ Thursday, December 31st

*There will not be an 8:30am Mass*

Mass will be celebrated at 5:00pm.

### New Year's Day ~ Friday, January 1st

Mass will be celebrated at 10:00am.

*\* Registration for all New Year's Masses will begin Sunday, December 27th at 12 noon and end Wednesday, December 30th at 12 noon.*



# PARISH INFORMATION

As we continue to navigate through this challenging time, we are pleased to be able to say that things are beginning to open up here at the parish, although in a limited way. We are happy to communicate the following:

**WEEKEND MASSES ARE CELEBRATED AT 5PM ON SATURDAYS AND 9AM AND 11AM ON SUNDAYS.** You must register to attend these Masses weekly through our parish website beginning each Wednesday morning at 9am. The program will stop accepting reservations on Friday at 3pm (or sooner if it reaches a maximum of 80 people for that particular Mass). Ushers will check your registrations at the door before entering the church and will seat you. The pews in the church are marked off to maintain social distancing.

**WEEKEND MASSES WILL NOW BE LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE AT 5PM AND 11AM —LINK AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE.** If you click on the Mass and it has already begun, you will have the ability on *You Tube* to rewind the Mass to the beginning while it is in progress. Don't worry if you are unable to rewind — the Mass in its entirety will also be available immediately after its conclusion. Live streaming will allow you to attend Mass at home simultaneously with your fellow parishioners in the church, and with much clearer video and sound than we have been able to offer in the past.

**THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IS OFFERED ON SATURDAYS AT 4PM IN THE CHURCH.** Unfortunately due to limited seating, you cannot remain for the 5pm Mass after Reconciliation if you have not reserved a seat ahead of time.

**WEEKDAY MORNING MASSES ARE CELEBRATED ON MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS AT 8:30AM IN THE CHURCH.** You do not need to register for these Masses.

**THE PARISH OFFICE IS NOW OPEN ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 9AM TO 12PM TO ASSIST YOU WITH MASS CARDS, ANNOUNCED MASSES, MEMORIALS, SACRAMENT CERTIFICATES, ETC.**

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR A MASK AND PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE CHURCH AS WELL AS IN ALL PARISH BUILDINGS AND AREAS.**

## HELP PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

TO REPORT SEXUAL ABUSE involving diocesan personnel, priests, deacons, teachers, employees or volunteers at schools or churches in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, please call our confidential hotline number at 1-516-594-9063 and speak with Mary McMahon, LCSW, Director.

IF YOU SUSPECT a child or vulnerable adult is being—or has been abused, call the New York State Hotline phone number: 1-800-342-3720

If you suspect someone is in immediate danger, call 911.

**Dear Parishioners,**

**As we continue to navigate the public celebration of Mass within State Guidelines, St. Sylvester Parish will offer Mass on Saturdays at 5PM and Sundays at 9AM & 11AM. Please note the following important information:**

- **At this time, the bishop still dispenses all the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation.**
- **Our Sunday worship will be livestreamed on Saturdays at 5pm and Sundays at 11am and will continue to be posted on the website for those who are vulnerable, for those who have a health impairment that would make them more susceptible to serious illness, for those who might not be feeling well, or have a fever, and for those who are caretakers for other people who are vulnerable. If you are in any of these situations, you are encouraged to continue to remain at home and worship online.**
- **Restrooms will be open for emergency use only! Please use bathroom at home!**
- **There is a mandatory online reservation system for all who wish to attend Mass. Please register beginning Wednesdays at 9am by going to [www.stsylvesterli.org](http://www.stsylvesterli.org)**
- **Please print out your registration information or have available on your phone as you will be asked to show your registration before entering the church.**
- **Masks or other face coverings must be worn by all participants.**
- **Please arrive 15 minutes before Mass so your reservation may be confirmed and you may be shown to your seat. Capacity at this time is limited to 25%.**
- **Seating will be done according to social distancing guidelines. You will most likely not be sitting in your “usual” seat. Families may sit together at Mass. There is no “saving seats” or asking to be seated in a particular seat.**
- **The Offertory procession and passing of the donation basket will be omitted.**
- **If you wish to make a contribution, there will be baskets at the entrance and exit. Contributions may also dropped at the parish center or made online.**
- **The Sign of Peace or other greetings will not be exchanged.**
- **Directions will be given for Communion, which will be distributed after Mass as you are leaving the church. Please follow the directions of the ushers.**
- **Please go directly to your car, as no congregating is permitted.**
- **We will continue to keep you updated on changes as we move forward.**

**This is a work in progress, so as we move forward there may be changes. We appreciate your patience and want you to know that our first priority is that those attending Mass will be safe.**

**Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Suglia**



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2020

To the People of God of the Diocese of Rockville Centre:

When he was elected as a Successor of St. Peter on March 13, 2013, our Holy Father chose the name *Francis*. It was a weighty decision with a prophetic message. Especially now, seven years later and with the publication of his latest encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* from the tomb of St. Francis of Assisi on October 3, 2020, the significance of the choice is clear: Pope Francis connects his papacy to St. Francis.

Through the ministry of our Holy Father, St. Francis of Assisi is close to the Church in these times. Therefore, as we draw near to Bethlehem at the end of this difficult year, I wish to recall two points Pope Francis highlights from the life of St. Francis. One will help us celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord; the other indicates a grace for which to pray during the holy season.

First, in his 2019 Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum: On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene*, Pope Francis emphasizes St. Francis of Assisi's foundational role in our celebration of Christmas. The Holy Father recalls the origins of the crèche and the first nativity scene inspired by the holy friar in 1223, by which the saint sought "to bring to life the memory of that babe born in Bethlehem." Importantly, the remembrance of Christ's birth that St. Francis desired to convey was brought alive in Greccio, a small village in Italy, not by statues but by people from the surrounding towns and countryside. Together with St. Francis, his friars, an ox and a donkey, they gathered at a cave to behold a manger full of hay over which the Eucharist was celebrated. That Christmas night, almost 800 years ago, Pope Francis reminds us, "the nativity scene was enacted and experienced by all who were present." That night, there was "no distance between the original event and those sharing in its mystery." (2) Encountering Christ, there was simply joy and hope.

This Christmas, in our world laden with the Crosses of COVID-19, political and economic turmoil, racism, financial hardship, and so many other societal ills and challenges – challenges that impact us on Long Island – let us remember this lesson from Greccio: Christmas is an event to be lived. It demands our participation. Like the women and men who embodied that first crèche, we must be present to Christ who is born for us. We must behold and receive Him.



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

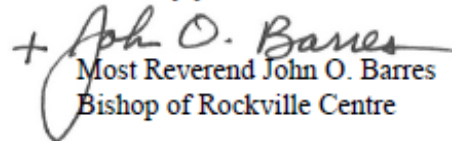
Second, in *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis shows St. Francis as an icon of Christocentric-listening. With great humility and charity, the saint reverently listened to others. He was present to the various voices in his life – the voice of God, the voice of his neighbor, the voice of the poor, the voice of the sick, the voice of nature – and by truly hearing them, he was an instrument of peace, healing, and understanding. How different it can be for us! The Holy Father says well what we know: “Today’s world is largely a deaf world...At times, the frantic pace of the modern world prevents us from listening attentively to what another person is saying.” Aware of this fact, the Pope encourages us, in the midst of our hectic and polarized world, to be like St. Francis and “not lose our ability to listen.” (48)

This Christmas, when we approach the crib, let us ask for the grace to be attentive listeners. Let us ask for the grace to be like St. Francis, so that we may hear the voice of God and the voice of our neighbor and respond with the radical charity he exhibited.<sup>1</sup>

Like Pope Francis, may we be moved by the example of St. Francis, and may St. Francis of Assisi’s love for the Mystery of the Nativity, his ecstatic mysticism, his love for the poor, and his spirit of universal fraternity animate our celebration of Christmas this year.

May God bless you and your families this Christmas.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ John O. Barres  
Most Reverend John O. Barres  
Bishop of Rockville Centre

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bishop John O. Barres October 8, 2020 Statement, “The Compelling Figure of St. Francis of Assisi in the Pontificate of Pope Francis and his New Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*.”

## ***Faith Formation Program 2020-2021 Has Begun!***

***We are doing the best we can and trusting that God will do the rest!  
Thank you to all the Parents & Catechists for helping to make this happen!***

### **Calendars can be found at [www.stsylvesterli.org](http://www.stsylvesterli.org) Faith Formation/ Calendars & Information and then click on your child's Level.**

We have revised and simplified the St. Sylvester Faith Formation Program so that it will be **more manageable and yet still meaningful** for all involved, Catechists, students, and their families.

As school districts are moving forward with plans for the school year, it has become clear to us that parents and students may be challenged by the newness of what lies ahead. This combined with parents changing work situations has caused us to take another look at the Faith Formation Program we are offering and how we can be more accommodating to all.

If you have already registered your child, we hope this will make life a little easier. If you have not yet registered your child, the hope here is that with this more accommodating schedule, you will now reconsider registering them.

#### ***Here is the revised and simplified Faith Formation Program for 2020-2021 Year for Levels 1 through 7!***

- ◆ Arrangements will be made for you to pick up the materials (books, etc.) needed for each of your children so they can work from home.
- ◆ There will be 4 virtual meetings on the Zoom platform, for the year, that we ask students to try their best to attend (with the help of a parent). So, for example, if you registered your child for a Level 5 class on Mondays at 4:30 p.m., your child's class will be held four (4) times virtually on 4 specific Mondays at 4:30 p.m. according to the Level 5 Calendar. If you registered your child for Level 3, 4 or 5 Home Taught the virtual; meetings will be held on Saturdays according to the Home Taught Level 3, 4 or 5 calendars. Level 1 will be Home Taught and have four (4) virtual meetings on specific Saturdays according to the Level 1 calendar.
- ◆ The calendar began Monday, November 30, 2020 to give everyone time to adjust to the school schedules, etc. and will end in May. **It is not too late to register!**
- ◆ Parents with children who have special needs!  
Parents, for students who are in the Individualized Faith Formation Program or whose needs would make it difficult to stay focused virtually, we will work directly and individually with you to accommodate your child's needs. Please go ahead and register your child for the next Level in the Individualized Faith Formation Program. If you have questions, please email [faithformation@stsylvesterli.org](mailto:faithformation@stsylvesterli.org)



Did you know? *Our homes are called the School of Christian Life and the Domestic Church!*

**“Childhood religious awakening which takes place in the family is irreplaceable. Indeed, family catechesis precedes...accompanies and enriches all forms of catechesis.”** *General Directory for Catechesis, John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, Catechesi Tradendae (October 1979): AAS 71 (1979), pp. 1277-1340*

Adults: We know that formation in faith is ongoing and life-long and therefore St. Sylvester's ministers of RCIA and Adult Confirmation are prepared to walk with you as you deepen your relationship with God, yourself and others. For information please email to: [fmcmahon@stsylvesterli.org](mailto:fmcmahon@stsylvesterli.org)

***For more information or if you have questions, please email [faithformation@stsylvesterli.org](mailto:faithformation@stsylvesterli.org)***

# Stewardship

## One Family in Mission



Called to Evangelize

Formation

Hospitality

Prayer

Service

### *Gifts of Treasure*

*December 13, 2020*

Regular ~ \$7,698

Renovation ~ \$65 Solar ~ \$30

*Last Year's Collection ~ December 15, 2019*

Regular ~ \$10,663

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**  
*to all those who, in the spirit of stewardship, continue to financially support the mission and ministry of the parish!!!*

### Altar Linens Ministry Seeking Members

Are you someone who wants to offer their time to the parish, but doesn't have much time to give... or prefers to serve from home? Do you enjoy washing and ironing?

If so, you may want to consider joining our Altar Linens Ministry. On a rotating basis (normally one week a month), you would pick up the linens used during Mass, clean, iron and fold them and then return them to the church in a timely manner. It is a very much behind-the-scenes ministry, but an important one.



If you are interested in keeping our altar linens looking clean and pristine, please contact Lori Zito in the Parish Center by calling 631-475-4506, ext. 115 or emailing to [lzito@stsylvesterli.org](mailto:lzito@stsylvesterli.org).

### Reaching for the Light

This Christmas, no doubt, will be very different than all those in recent memory. As the pandemic still rages on, some of us will forgo coming to the church and spending time with family and friends. For many, it will be a time of unwelcome solitude, of darkness.

However, as hopeful stewards, we must dispel the dark and find ways to reach for the light. The Prophet Isaiah proclaims, "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; and upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.*" The light of course, burns brightly from a star in Bethlehem announcing to a worn-out world the birth of our Savior, the Christ Child — and this year especially, it arrives just in time.

Jesus' birth, the ultimate gift given out of love, brings the light of hope to each and every one of us. No matter how young or old, rich or poor, healthy or ill — He comes for *all* of us and walks with us, uplifting us and taking on our burdens. And some of us, this year especially, carry heavy ones...

More intense than the brightest LED lights you can find to decorate your house or Christmas tree, Jesus comes to us in the soft silence of early Christmas morning, whispering to our hearts to believe, to rejoice and have hope. Let us be open to the promise and possibility that the newborn Babe, the Prince of Peace, brings to us this Christmas and always.

**Merry Christmas!**



Lori Zito



## ***Background Screening Update***

### ***The Office for the Protection of Children and Young People:***

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (The Charter) promulgated by the Bishops of the United States in 2002 outlines specific practices and guidelines providing standards of safety in parishes and dioceses throughout the United States. As directed in The Charter, the Diocese of Rockville Centre requires all employees, clergy, and volunteers to complete three requirements within thirty days of employment or volunteering:

1. Attend *Protecting God's Children Program (Virtus)*
2. Sign the Codes of Conduct;
3. Complete a background screen application. ***The Diocese requires all those who remain in active ministry be rescreened at 5 yr. intervals. Volunteers/employees.***

#### **A Word on Background Screening of Volunteers:**

The Office for the Protection of Children and Young People (OFPCYP) has streamlined the volunteer application process enabling volunteers to complete the three safe environment requirements in one step. Individuals wishing to volunteer in a parish or school:

1. Register to attend a Protecting God's Children class and create a Virtus account on the Virtus website: [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org)
2. Electronically acknowledge the Diocesan Code of Conduct- provided during the Virtus registration process.
3. Follow the instructions to complete the Sterling Volunteers background screening application background offered during the Virtus registration process.

#### **Active Volunteers:**

***If you are active in a parish ministry, have already attended Virtus and have been background screened you may be at – or beyond- the 5yr. rescreening requirement. If this is the case, you will receive an email from Sterling Volunteers asking you to complete the background screening application on-line.*** You may access the background screening application by following the prompt in the email or logging into your Virtus account. ***Please be aware-this is not a scam nor has your e-mail been hacked.*** The OFPCYP has been working with your parish to update the Safe Environment records and noted it is time for you to be rescreened. You may also be prompted to electronically re-sign the Code of Conduct when you log into your Virtus account.

#### **Edit Your Virtus Account:**

To access your Virtus account: [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org) You will need your Username and Password. If you need assistance, please contact Virtus: 1-888-847-8870 or [helpdesk@virtus.org](mailto:helpdesk@virtus.org). Once in your account, review your account information — particularly your e-mail address. If your account requires updating, please hit the TOOLBOX tab at the top of the screen. On the left side of your screen in the green column click "Update My Account" You will be able to make the necessary changes-please remember to hit the SAVE button at the bottom of the screen.

Questions or concerns: [mmcmahon@drvc.org](mailto:mmcmahon@drvc.org); [amendoza-cantos@drvc.org](mailto:amendoza-cantos@drvc.org); [jwinter@drvc.org](mailto:jwinter@drvc.org); [pditomasso@drvc.org](mailto:pditomasso@drvc.org)

Thank you to all who continue to serve in a ministry during these extremely challenging days!

# Parish Social Ministry



## Clare House - We are here to help!

We no longer have drop in hours open to the public. If you have an emergency situation that requires assistance please call our intake line. Please leave only one complete message stating your name, number, and primary need: 631-475-4506 x122

Emergency Food Distribution is held weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment only. A full new client intake is required, including documentation of all income and expenses, to access resources at Clare House. A member of our staff will contact you to complete this intake interview over the phone. Documentation should be provided electronically whenever possible.

We regularly post resources to our Twitter feed @clarehouse99

<https://twitter.com/clarehouse99>

We are NOT soliciting physical donations at this time. If you wish to support our mission please consider making a donation through Faith Direct. Click "Make a One-Time Gift Now" and then write "Clare House - PSM" in the Note. Thank you for your support!

<https://membership.faithdirect.net/NY285>



## Thrift Shop is Open!

St. Sylvester operates a community thrift shop filled with a variety of goods at extremely affordable prices - often much lower than traditional thrift shops! Hardworking staff and volunteers stock the shelves with a high level of detail. Often the items available are very high quality. Excess clothing which cannot be sold or used is donated to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and furthers their mission to serve the poor. Clare House clients can receive a voucher, based on financial need, to obtain items at no cost.

**WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING DONATIONS!**

All items must be placed inside the bin. To donate items which do not fit in the bin, please call during hours and speak to a member of our team.

Please DO NOT leave items outside the thrift shop, they are destroyed by exposure to the elements.

Thank you for your support!

### CONTACT

631-475-4506 x124

### HOURS

Tuesday and Thursday  
10:00AM - 3:00PM

# Parish Social Ministry



*The Parish Social Ministry Team invites you to join us for a seasonal event to support families in our community with whom we have developed a special relationship...*

## LIGHT UP THE HOLIDAYS!

### We've Gone Virtual!

During the Month of December make a donation of any amount to light up the holiday season for one of our Clare House families.

We are NOT soliciting physical donations at this time.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

\*\*\*\*\*

If you wish to support our mission please consider making a donation through Faith Direct. Click "Make a One-Time Gift Now" and then write "Clare House - PSM" in the Note.

<https://membership.faithdirect.net/NY285>

\*\*\*\*\*

### Where Does My Money Go?

All donations will be converted into gift cards by the PSM team before distribution to clients. It is fundamental that we strive in all our service activities to empower those on the margins. Gift cards allow clients to make their own decisions about what food, gifts, decorations, etc. they would like for their family. This enhances their agency in the process and respects their human dignity as individuals. With this in mind, please consider making a donation to support our families in need.

## Meet the Families of Clare House

- Melissa is a single mom of three children. An unexpected medical emergency with one of her children forced Melissa to take an unpaid leave of absence from her job as a medical assistant. While she was able to use her savings to cover essential bills, it has been difficult to cover all of the household expenses.
- Trica and her husband Logan have two children, one of whom has severe disabilities that have resulted in very large medical bills. Trica and Logan both work, however, due to their daughter's medical needs, they have both been forced to take unpaid time off from work.
- Maria and her mother emigrated from Mexico two years ago. Maria works in a nearby hotel while attending ESL classes at the local library. She is saving money to move her and her mother out of the studio apartment they currently share. She hopes to return to school to pursue a career in Early Childhood Education.
- After being released from an impatient drug rehabilitation program, Kevin found himself with no place to live and no employment prospects. He has been working with our case manager to explore education, training and employment programs. Kevin reports that he would like to help others suffering from addictions.
- Gloria is currently raising her four grandchildren. She had been retired for several years when her grandchildren were placed in her custody. She has returned to work but has found it difficult to find full-time employment that provides enough for her to support her new, larger family.
- Brian and Olivia are a newly married couple that recently moved from Ohio to Long Island to help care for Olivia's elderly grandmother. Olivia's grandmother has Alzheimer's disease and requires round the clock care. Brian was able to find a job at a local hardware store, while Olivia has been providing care for her grandmother. Olivia is also pursuing her GED and reports that she would like to become a nurse someday.



# CHRISTMAS 2020



This year we are grateful for the generosity of so many donors who have made a financial contribution to support our mission. These financial resources allow us to meet the needs of our neighbors on an individual basis. The flexibility allows us to address a variety of needs in a timely fashion as well as helping us to fill gaps in other programs that exist. We are acutely aware that 2020 has been unpredictable at best and more likely one of the most challenging years you can remember. Your support means that much more during these times.

Many thanks also to the staff and volunteers who continue to assemble emergency food bags and distribute them to those in need. Our shift from one of the most progressive client choice pantries to a pre-packed bag model has been a stark departure from our traditional operation. Nevertheless, it has allowed us to serve our neighbors in need in a contactless

fashion, increasing the health and safety of everyone while still getting food to those who need it.

A gentle reminder that we are not soliciting physical donations at this time. We are able to receive large quantities of food from area food banks to support our mission. By making a financial contribution you allow us to purchase the items that are needed. This reduces unnecessary travel and interaction between persons helping to keep everyone healthy.

**Thank you for your support!**

**-The Parish Social Ministry Team**



# Parish Social Ministry

# CIVILIZE IT



## DIGNITY BEYOND THE DEBATE

A divided country. Fights at the dinner table. Political vitriol. What does it mean to love our neighbors in the midst of such a climate?

As Catholics, we have a long tradition of engagement in the political process as a means of putting our faith into action. We are called to bring the best of ourselves and our faith to the public square—and yet today, many shy away from such involvement because our national and local conversations are filled with vitriol and harsh language, often directed at people themselves.

When personal attacks replace honest debate, no one wins. This kind of attack, no matter the reason, only serves to further divide our communities. As Catholics, we must model a better way. We invite you to join the Civilize It campaign by taking the pledge below as a way to promote civility, love our neighbors, and build community.

Civilize It is about making room in your heart for those with whom you disagree. We are called to recognize that each one of us is a beloved child of God and to respond in love to that reality. Civilize It is a non-partisan call to focus on the dignity of all people, even when we disagree, and to put faith in action by bearing witness to a better way forward.

Take the pledge below as an individual, family, or community. Anyone and everyone can commit together to honoring human dignity through civil conversation.

## **I PLEDGE:**

### **1. Civility**

To recognize the human dignity of those with whom I disagree, treat others with respect, and rise above attacks when directed at me.

### **2. Clarity**

To root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well formed conscience, which involves prayer, conversation, study and listening. I will stand up for my convictions and speak out when I witness language that disparages others' dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others' experiences.

### **3. Compassion**

To encounter others with a tone and posture which affirms that I honor the dignity of others and invites others to do the same. I will presume others' best intentions and listen to their stories with empathy. I will strive to understand before seeking to be understood.

[www.wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it](http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it)

## *Will & Estate Planning*

Consider leaving a legacy of faith by remembering our parish in your will or bequest. Saint Sylvester RC Church is a fully compliant charitable organization registered as a 501(3)C non-profit.

Please contact Father Suglia directly if you have already made provisions for St. Sylvester or if you would like to remember us when you conduct your estate planning.



*Thank You and God Bless!*

### **Is Your Contact Information Up-To-Date?**

**Help us stay spiritually connected with you though physically apart!**

This crisis has made us acutely aware that there are some parishioners we are unable to communicate with on an immediate or regular basis because we do not have their email addresses and cell phone numbers.

So, if you have not been receiving any communications from the parish, including emails with Father Suglia's messages, please go to the website's home page, click the word "[here](#)" below the *Contact Information* graphic and update your email and cell phone information.

**Thank You !**

## **RELIGION AND ROCK**



Tune into "*Religion and Rock*," a nationally syndicated, 60 minute, classic rock radio program with Msgr. Jim Vlaun, which airs on Sundays from 7:00am - 8:00am on **WBAB 102.3 FM or 95.3 FM** on Long Island's East End.

Listen on Saturdays at 11:00 PM on *Sirius Radio, Channel 159, The Catholic Channel* and at 11:00 PM on *XM Satellite, Channel 117*.

**This Sunday's theme is Christmas ~ don't miss it!**

To listen online, or receive more information regarding "*Religion and Rock*," go to [www.ReligionandRock.com](http://www.ReligionandRock.com) or to "*Religion & Rock*" on **ITUNES**.

### **RICK HINSHAW BEGINS BLOG POST**



Rick Hinshaw, previously the editor of The Long Island Catholic, has reprised his column "Reading the Signs" as a blog post.

The column, according to Hinshaw, focused on articulating the moral and social teachings of our Church and their applicability to the critical issues of our time.

To read Rick's articles, go to [rickhinshaw.com](http://rickhinshaw.com).





*Unto Us  
a Child is Born*



*For a child is born to us, a son is given us;  
upon his shoulder dominion rests.  
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,  
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.”*

*~ Isaiah 9:6*

*MAY YOU AND YOUR  
FAMILIES RECEIVE THE  
PRECIOUS GIFTS OF HOPE,  
PEACE AND LOVE  
THIS CHRISTMAS  
AND ALWAYS.*



*HAVE A BLESSED AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
~ FR. SUGLIA AND THE STAFF OF ST. SYLVESTER*

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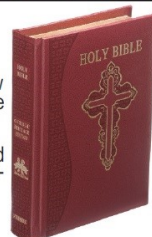
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