



**ST. MARY'S PARISH
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Palm Sunday

APRIL 2, 2023

**Full Holy Week
& Easter Schedule**

**Enclosed. Photo Below:
Visit to our Sister Parish
in Palestine!**



St. Mary's Parish Newsletter

April, 2023 ~ Volume 49, Number 3



St. Mary's Parish
8 Church Street
Holliston, MA 01746

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Website: www.stmarysholliston.com

Mission: "To Know Christ and to Make Him Known!"

Visit to Our Sister Parish in Palestine!

Wednesday, March 15, 2023. After three years of pandemic related delays, the people of St. Mary's finally made it to Our Lady of Fatima in Beit Sahour, the "Shepherd's Field's" outside Bethlehem. Fr. Issa Hijazeen, the Pastor, and his newly ordained associate Fr. Michael, were both waiting outside to welcome the Holliston Pilgrims. They offered a warm and gracious greeting, escorting everyone into the church for a tour, then providing refreshments in the hall.

There Fr. Issa spoke about parish life, and his personal prayer commitment to St. Mary's. He said that every First Friday during Adoration he holds up the sick, the elderly, the children and the families of St. Mary's, Holliston.

Our own Pastor, Fr. Mark, reaffirmed St. Mary's desire to deepen the relationship between the two parishes, and spoke of the inclusion of Beit Sahour in the Mass Prayers every weekend and the First Friday Mass Intention always offered for the clergy and people there. He also mentioned the new Sister Parish Digital Pen Pal initiative, through which families in Holliston and Beit Sahour will be matched to pray for each other and exchange messages.

Next, the pilgrims were addressed by Mr. Anton Jaraysah, Principal of the Patriarchate School at Our Lady's. He shared that the student body is 70% Christian and 30% Muslim. He discussed the academic structure, and challenges faced by the students. A major goal of the school is to help the children feel connected to and cherish their homeland. Because of a lack of economic opportunity and the treatment of religious minorities as second class citizens, a majority of young people end up emigrating.

Both Fr. Issa and Mr. Jaraysah took questions, then Fr. Mark presented them each with a copy of the new 150th Anniversary History of St. Mary's, Holliston Book. He showed them the page with photos of Our Lady's in Beit Sahour, and observed that *"We are now part of each other's history."*



Donations for the Schoolchildren



Visit to Our Sister Parish in Palestine!



Our 35 St. Mary's Pilgrims had each carried a portion of the school supplies donated by our parishioners in their luggage, and these were graciously received by Principal Jaraysah.

As the Chaplain of St. Mary's Boy Scout Troop 14, Fr. Mark also presented Fr. Michael, Chaplain of the Our Lady's Boy Scout Troop, with several gifts. These included a red Troop 14 Shirt, and the distinctive Black Watch Tartan worn by the Holliston Troop.



Next came the visit to the Parish School. The students were delighted to finally meet some people from their Sister Parish in Holliston. It was a special joy to meet the two recipients of the Holliston – Holy Land Friendship Scholarship, Andrea Elias Salim Jaraisseh, (he goes by Andy); and Malak Majdi Hanna Odeh. Both are pictured with Fr. Mark below.





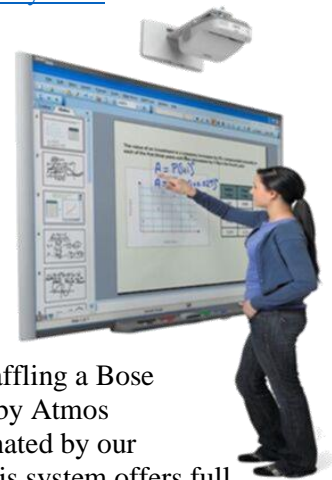
Visit to Our Sister Parish in Palestine!



After the school visit, our pilgrim group enjoyed Mass in Our Lady's Church. Fr. Issa presided, with Fr. Mark and Fr. Michael concelebrating and Deacon John Barry ministering. The Mass was prayed in Arabic, with the readings, responses, and homily in English.

This visit was a moment of great joy for all who took part. If your family would like to connect with a family in our Sister Parish, contact Paula O'Brien for more information at st.marysre1870@gmail.com, or apply to become digital pen pals with a family in Beit Sahour through <https://forms.gle/s12FgtesxdK35yVM9>.

To advance education in our Sister Parish's school, St. Mary's has committed to raising funds to purchase an Interactive Projector and Smartboard Epson 695 WI for classroom use.



To help fund this exciting and much needed item for our Sister Parish, we will be raffling a Bose Smart Soundbar 600 with Dolby Atmos (Retail price of \$449.00). Donated by our Equestrian Order Members, this system offers full immersion sound for movies, TV, and music! Use Wi-Fi® to access integrated music services in the Bose Music app, or stream songs with Bluetooth®, Apple AirPlay 2, Spotify® Connect, or Chromecast built-in. For more information click: https://www.bose.com/en_us/products/speakers/home-theater/bose-smart-soundbar-600.html#v=bose_smart_soundbar_600_black.



Tickets can be purchased for \$5 each or 3 for \$10 after all Masses the weekend of Palm Sunday, April 1 and 2, including during Donuts, Juice and Coffee after the 9:30 AM Mass that Sunday. Tickets are also available anytime in the Religious Ed Office during the week. The Raffle will continue until enough funds are collected to support this outreach mission.

Holy Week Schedule



PALM SUNDAY

Saturday, April 1:

5 PM & 7:30 PM Masses

Sunday, April 2:

7:30, 9:30 & 11:30 AM Masses

Palms will be blessed &
the Passion read at all Masses.

HOLY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 6:

9 AM

Morning Prayer

7 PM

Mass of the Lord's Supper

The Mass of the Lord's Supper recalls the events the night before Jesus died, especially the institution of the Holy Eucharist. The ceremony of the washing of the feet reminds us of Jesus' call to serve one another. The Mass concludes with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of repose in Father Haley Hall, where Adoration will continue until 10:30 PM. At Mass a collection will be taken up for the Holliston Food Pantry.

GOOD FRIDAY

Day of Fasting & Abstinence

Friday, April 7:

9 AM

Morning Prayer

12 PM

(Kindergarten – Grade 5) Younger Children's Stations of the Cross

7 PM

Celebration of the Lord's Passion

The 7:00 PM Lord's Passion Celebration is the official Good Friday Liturgy that continues the three day Triduum Celebration begun on Holy Thursday and concluding at Easter. It consists of the Liturgy of the Passion, Veneration of the Cross, and Holy Communion. The Noon Stations are designed for younger children K – Grade 5, (accompanied by parents), and utilize a living tableau and special station prayers to help young children discover Jesus' love for them in the here and now.

Good Friday is a day of fasting and abstinence from meat. In every single Catholic parish around the world this day, a collection is taken up to maintain the Shrines and struggling Christian communities in the Holy Land. This collection is taken up at both the Stations and Passion Services.

HOLY SATURDAY

Please Note: No Confessions on Holy Saturday

Saturday, April 8:

9 AM

Morning Prayer

8 PM

The Great Easter Vigil (brass quartet, adult choir)

The Great Easter Vigil is rightly called the "Mother" of all liturgies. It includes the blessing of the new Easter Candle, the sung Exultet Prayer, and readings that capture the fullness of God's saving work for humanity. The Church rejoices in a special way to receive new members this night through the Sacraments of Initiation. All Easter collections go to support the retired priests of our Archdiocese. Please generously support these men who have given their whole lives in your service.

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, April 9:

7:30 AM

Church Mass

9:30 AM

Fr. Haley Hall Mass

9:30 AM

Church Mass

11:30 AM

Church Mass



Dear Members of the St. Mary's Parish Family,

As Easter Sunday fast approaches, I share with you this photo of Deacon John and myself taken in the Tomb of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It was the culmination and final day of our recent Parish Holy Land Pilgrimage, and how humbling it was to celebrate Mass in the very place where Jesus was raised from the dead. To the right of Deacon John you can see the low entrance to the tomb, and through it the figures of some of our St. Mary's pilgrims crowded together on the other side in what is called the "Chapel of the Angels." The Tomb itself was too small for them to enter except two by two for Communion. But they could hear my Mass prayers and I could hear their responses throughout the celebration. Why? Because the door was open!

"Who will roll the stone away for us?" asked the women approaching the Tomb that first Easter Day. Only to discover that Jesus had already done so. And not just the physical stone. By His Resurrection, Jesus opened forever the way between heaven and earth, creating a passage through death to eternal life for those who trust and believe in Him. That is our hope. That is our faith. That is the true meaning of Easter.

Sometimes in my ministry, I encounter individuals very sad that they could not make a final declaration of love, or forgiveness, or contrition to someone who died suddenly. To them I always say, *"The door is open. The stone is forever rolled away. Anything you would have said to your departed loved one on this side, you can still speak to them and know that in Christ you will be heard. Indeed, they will know the truth of your heart even more than when they were alive."*

It was one of the great honors of my life to celebrate Mass in Jesus' Tomb. But the truth is that every Mass allows us to participate in the Mystery of His Life, Death, and Resurrection. No matter what church we may be in on Sunday, it becomes our own "Chapel of the Angels," a threshold from which our prayers and longings pass through the open door into heaven. A place where God's graces always flow. And where sometimes, we can even hear the faint echoes of the heavenly liturgy that awaits us when we make our final passage through to Him.

Happy Easter.



CONGRATULATIONS NEW ALTAR SERVERS!

On Sunday, March 5, thirteen young men and women were formally invested as Altar Servers at St. Mary's Parish. The ceremony consisted of promises to faithfully and reverently carry out the duties entrusted to them, and a prayer of blessing. Then family members "vested" the servers in a white alb – the symbol of Baptism and the vesture for their new ministry. A party with cake followed in Fr. Haley Hall. We thank these young people for their generous response to the needs of our parish and pray that they will give and receive many blessings in their new role. Well done!

**Aiden Breen, Katherine McSherry, Liam Breen, Anders Nelson, Ava Breen,
August Nelson, Erin Breen, Daniel Nunes, Ben Dufault, Jacob Enriquez,
Luisa Silveyra-Dodds, Henry Hayes, and Santiago-Silveyra Dodds.**





DO YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR CHURCH ...

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ... train holy priests for ministry? | ... clothe the naked? |
| ... feed the hungry? | ... minister to the sick? |
| ... shelter the homeless? | ... educate the young? |
| ... support women in crisis pregnancies? | ... console the bereaved? |

IF YES, THEN HAVE YOU GIVEN YET TO THE 2023 CATHOLIC APPEAL?

The Catholic Appeal supports all of the good works listed above and many, many more. The Appeal is to your Archdiocese what the weekly collection is to your parish – the critical support that makes its ministries possible. This includes essential services to the poor and needy, whose situation is more serious than ever due to the pandemic crisis.

It is the duty of every Catholic to support the good works of the Church. Please do your part and give to the Catholic Appeal by mailing in a Catholic Appeal Envelope, or by donating online at <https://bostoncatholicappeal.org/>. Please be sure to identify your parish as St. Mary's, Holliston, so that your gift will count toward your parish's 2023 Appeal Goal.

Gifts of every size – even modest ones – all matter. The important thing is to participate. Remember what Jesus said when He saw the widow put her one tiny coin into the temple treasury: *“Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.”* (Mark 12:44)

Easter Collection for Retired Priests



As at Christmas, the entire Easter Collection in each parish goes to support the healthcare and other needs of our retired priests.

These good and holy men gave their whole lives in dedicated service to us. Now let us be there for them in their need.

Please mail in or bring to Easter Mass your offering for our priests.

Or you may contribute online at <https://clergytrust.org/>. This site also provides detailed information about the uses of this collection.

WeShare and Automatic Giving gifts may also be designated for the Easter Collection.

Thank you!

Knights of Columbus



St. Mary's Council #14224 March, 2023

"In Service to One, In Service to All."

MULCH AND CHURCH GROUNDS CLEAN-UP SATURDAY APRIL 8: The Council will gather at 8:00 AM to apply new mulch and clean-up winter residue on the church grounds in preparation for Easter Sunday. All parish men are invited. After the clean-up, coffee and donuts will be enjoyed.

MONTHLY ROSARY: The next Rosary will be Wednesday, April 19 in the church at 7:00 PM. This praying of the Glorious Mysteries is open to all parishioners.

"Countless families the world over invite Mary into their homes through the family Rosary. She comes. They sense her presence. They solve their problems because where Mary is present, there is Christ, her Divine Son."
- Father Patrick Peyton

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY - APRIL 16: Once again, the Council will lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet after each Mass. All parishioners are invited to recite the Chaplet that promises Divine Mercy to even the worst sinner who asks Jesus for His Mercy.

GREEN TEAM & K of C COUNCIL #14224 RECYCLE DAY: On Saturday, April 29, the Council will sponsor a recycle day with the Green Team. Details to follow.

BASKETBALL FREE THROW CONTEST: The Council held this event on January 28 at the high school gym. Holliston boys and girls from the ages of 9-14 years participated. The winners were: 9-year old-William Finneran and Briana Cooper; 10-year old-Joseph Lawendi and Danika Rosario; 11-year old-Leonardo DeFazio and Mackenzie McDonald; 12-year old-Chris Baker and Olivia Kerchner; 13-year old-Colin Doherty and Mia Saletra; 14-year old-Jack McDonald and Katie Joslin. The winners participated in the Districts held in March. State finals will be held in April.



FIFTEENTH ANNUAL CHARITY RAFFLE: The Council Knights have raffle tickets to sell for your lucky chance to win the \$1000 first prize while benefitting needy local charities. One ticket costs \$5 and a book of five tickets costs \$20. The Council's annual raffle has now donated over \$280,000 to disabled veteran's charities, local food pantries, the Holliston Senior Center, Autism research, and other very worthy non-profit organizations. Thanks for your past support and we pray you will participate this year. Contact Grand Knight Albert Scaramella at 508-561-0584.

MEMBERSHIP: The Council welcomes new member Jerome Deise. For membership information contact Grand Knight Albert Scaramella at 508-561-0584 OR ajscaramella@comcast.net OR you can now join ON-LINE by going to the Supreme K of C website kofc.org/joinus. Our Council respects members limited time but needs new members to share our faith journey as Catholic men. Welcome!

Knights of Columbus

St. Mary's Council #14224 March, 2023



"In Service to One, In Service to All."



K OF C CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT: "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" is the motto of the Holliston Pantry Shelf. You can help support your neighbors in need and enjoy a day on the golf course by participating in the 2nd annual Knights of Columbus Swing for Charity Golf Tournament to be held on June 9, at Pinecrest Golf Club. You can register as a sponsor, player or foursome at KofCswingforcharity.com. Alternately, you can mail a check payable to K of C Council 14224 to Tony Polise at 172 Rolling Meadow Dr, Holliston, MA 01746, or payment can be made via VENMO @KofC14224. Thank you for your continuing support of the St Mary's Knights of Columbus and the Holliston Pantry Shelf.



St. Mary's Parish Middle School Youth Group

Next Meeting is Sunday, April 2 from 6:30 – 8 PM. You are invited!

After a two year pandemic forced hiatus, the annual MSYG Luau Dance was back! Friday, February 10 was total fun in the sun with nearly 300 teens enjoying great music, spectacular island decorations, and delicious frozen tropical drinks complete with umbrella straws. There were also Limbo and Best Beach Outfit Contests, with prizes for both. Aloha!





St. Mary's Parish Middle School Youth Group

Open to all 6th, 7th, & 8th Graders for Faith, Friendship, Service & Fun.



BODA BORG!

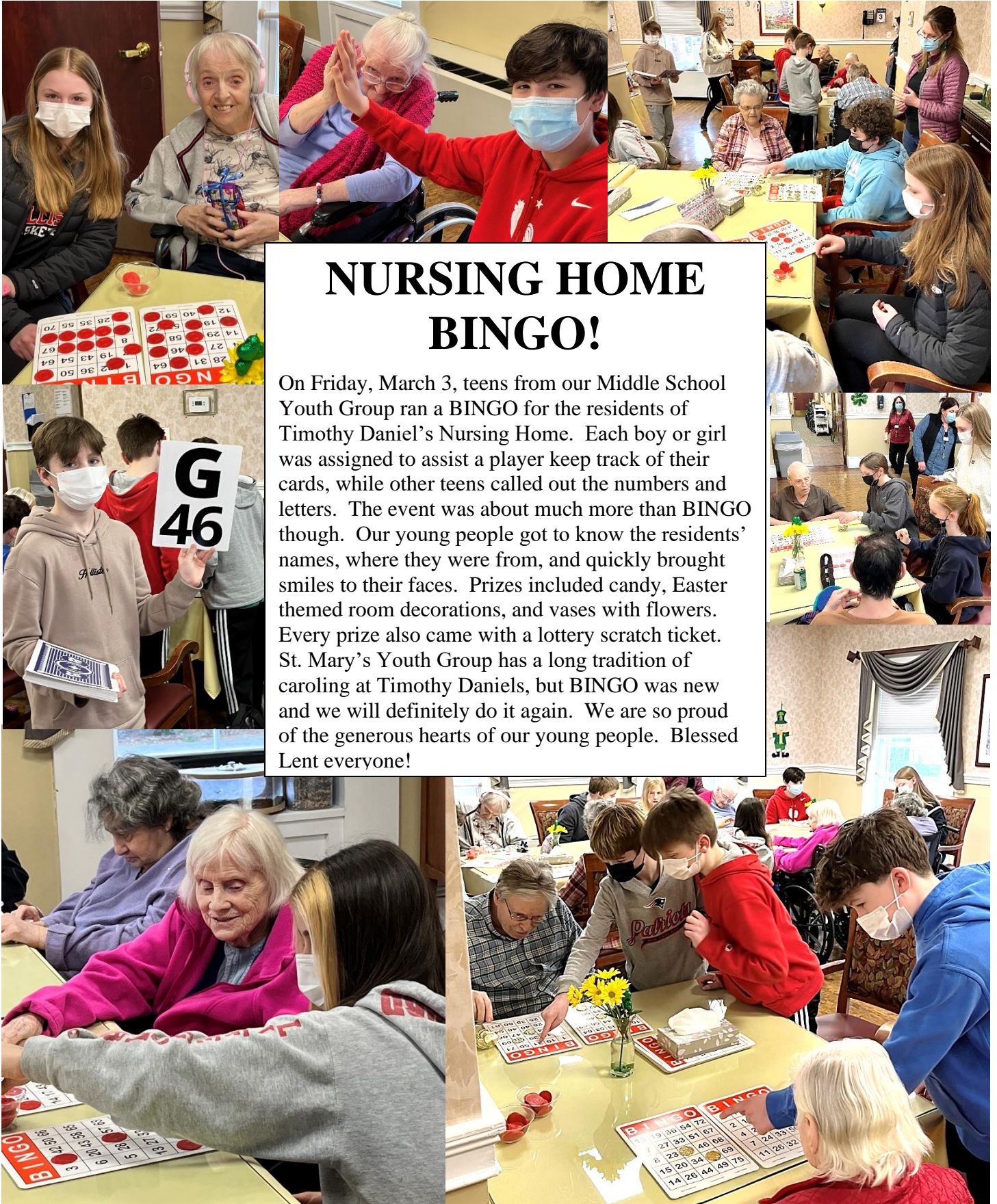
On Thursday, February 23, our Middle School Youth Group enjoyed a day at BODA BORG in Malden. Teams of four to six teens raced to solve escape room quests – some physically demanding, others requiring knowledge and mental skill. Teamwork and a good memory were required to keep the lights on in a town during a huge storm, while teens raced and climbed to reach safety during a battle in Platoon. Everyone enjoyed a delicious dinner at the Quincy Market Food Court, with the winning Boda Borg Team eating for free. Congratulations to Scott Baribeau, William Hayes, Quinn McErlean, and Alex Cataldo!





St. Mary's Parish Middle School Youth Group

Open to all 6th, 7th, & 8th Graders for Faith, Friendship, Service & Fun.





Troop 14 Holliston

Boy Scouts of America
St. Mary's Parish * April, 2023

Meetings: Monday Nights 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Contact: Chris Baribeau, Scoutmaster
508.579.4357

Email: Troop14Holliston@yahoo.com

If interested in joining Troop 14, contact the Scoutmaster. It is an ideal organization for boys in sixth grade or above.

2022-2023: The Troop meets weekly during the school-year, Mondays from 7 - 8:30 PM.

SCOUT SUNDAY: February was another busy month for Troop 14. It started with Scout Sunday. Scouts from Troop 14 attended the Scout Sunday mass and practiced their commitment to the "A Scout is Reverent" tenet of the Scout Law. Many Troop 14 Scouts, from other religious denominations, attended the Mass to learn and understand other faiths.



PANCAKE BREAKFAST: Immediately after Mass, Troop 14 hosted its annual Pancake Breakfast fundraiser in Father Haley Hall. The Scouts served over 200 guests a breakfast of pancakes, sausages, and coffee. Adult leaders and volunteers cooked the food, while the Scouts greeted and served our guests. The event was a great success, bringing former Troop 14 Scouts and leaders back together, providing an opportunity for the Troop families to

spend time together, and meeting other members of the St. Mary's community. The Scouts served over 800 pancakes throughout the morning. The guests shared many compliments on how "Courteous", "Kind" and "Cheerful" the Scouts were as they served their meals.



ROCK GYM:

Troop 14 also held its annual Rock Gym overnight trip in February.

Twenty-nine Scouts and three adults spent the evening climbing, jumping, and playing at the Rock Spot gym in South Boston.



As they do every year, Troop 14 invites Webelos from the two Cub Scout Packs in town to join, get to know the Troop 14 Scouts, and have fun climbing. This year, we welcomed nine Webelos to climb with us. Halfway through the evening, the Scouts took a break from climbing and ate Pizza, snacks, and candy. The Scouts continued climbing and eventually went to bed around 3:00 AM, (although some Scouts stayed up all night finishing the pizza and candy).

A Cross Walk

With Jen Schiller

Finding Easter in Our Good Fridays

I have been looking forward to this Cross Walk for a while now. Jen Schiller always greets me with a smile, a kind word and exudes a calm holiness. Spending time with her is like attending a supersonic WINGS session. I come away, renewed and hopeful, with a new faithful perspective on life's challenges. Every word of our chat was a gem. Whittling 14 pages of notes down to two was indeed a challenge. Here, in her words, is her story.

"Faith was at the center of our lives, for sure," Jen began, "Going to church every Sunday was very important. My siblings and I were mortified when my dad volunteered us kids to take up the gifts - you know, we were normal teenagers, but we always did it for love of dad. One of my favorite memories is of my mom praying the Saint Andrew novena at Christmas. In college, I loved learning about my faith from the Jesuits and wanted to keep on learning. Discovering WINGS in California, filled this empty space in my life."

"When we moved back to Massachusetts to be near family, I really loved Saint Mary's but felt like something was missing and decided it was the spiritual enrichment through WINGS. Fr. Haley gave me his endorsement and Fr. Brian Bachand became an energetic supporter. He encouraged me to spread the ministry to other Archdiocesan parishes when they came calling, and to CatholicTV when Fr. Reed (now Bishop) invited me to make it a series. WINGS provides an opportunity for women of all ages to grow in knowledge and love of their catholic faith. Over the years, I have seen women come to WINGS to be nourished in the Spirit, the Word and by others and then they are shored up to go off and do something beautiful for God."



L-R: Grace, me, Andrew, Emma & Peter

"Quietly in the background, Peter's a doer, a man of loving service and just a beautiful soul, who keeps us all

together. Peter has always supported me in everything God has asked me to do from WINGS to leading the Boston Catholic Women's Conferences. I couldn't do any of these things without him. We didn't know if we would ever have children because of my health issues, but thankfully, God blessed us with three: Grace, Emma and Andrew."



Jen and her mother, Joan

"My mother Joan's influence on me was profound.

Her catholic faith was at the center of her life. Kind and nonjudgmental, people were drawn to her. She was a loving soul, buoyed up by frequent receipt of the Eucharist. She also had a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother which she passed on to me. When you left my mother's company, you were better off in every way."

"Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile."

-Mother Teresa

Sadly, Joan's terminal illness was misdiagnosed for over a year or two. "My mother didn't harbor anger or malice towards the doctor that missed the real issue, Jen said, "rather, she accepted her diagnosis of non-small cell (non-smokers) lung cancer, which had metastasized to her brain. After her treatment one day, we went to adoration together. My mother sat in complete silence, then turned to me and said, 'the rays from the monstrance are my radiation.' She wasn't being some holy roller, she meant it."

"Our close relationship carried right through to the moment God called my mother home. Those last three years with her, were training on how to live joyfully and gratefully amid deep suffering. I was with her a lot, taking her to all Dana Farber appointments. At the same time this was going on, I was dealing with my own suffering. I was born with a fracture in my spine, which had gotten progressively worse through the years. About 10 years ago, it started to cause the discs in the lower part of my spine to bulge and rupture. A top back surgeon advised that surgery was essential, so I had a six-hour spinal fusion, and afterwards, was in unimaginable pain. Unfortunately, an MRI confirmed

that the surgery did not successfully fix the fracture. So, a few months later, I had to undergo another six-hour spinal fusion surgery where a lot of hardware was inserted into my spine. This time in my life was like a total immersion in suffering all at once - my mother's pain and my own were tied up together. Mom used to say to me, 'I'm not in any pain, but you are.' I would look at her in disbelief that she could say this to me because I knew the magnitude of her "terminal" pain was worse. But she understood that God was in charge, and she remained obedient to His will, which allowed her to live in joy. She carried her cross with such grace, love and faith."

"Several months after my second surgery, I was back at work having to take very strong pain medication, and it wasn't getting any better. Over the course of two more years, I tried countless things to help heal the pain – injections, acupuncture, trigger points, three different pain clinics and much more. Finally, I was told that I had to stop looking for answers, that there was no real fix for my back pain... it was just a question of acceptance. In the end, I had to "retire early" from my job. It had been a very challenging period of realizing my health limitations, losing my career and losing my mom."

(From Jen's blog www.choosejoylife.com) Written 9/16

"In September of 2016, when the moment finally came, the nurse announced that my beloved mother's heartbeat was no more, I thought I would never survive. But now... despite the excruciating pain, I see that the moment her heart stopped beating on earth, it continued in heaven, in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Every beautiful, loving, selfless, caring, thoughtful effort she made on earth catapulted her into the arms of her beloved God. Their hearts beat as one now."

"After losing mom and living with chronic pain, I really fell deep into the realm of suffering. I could have gone either way, you know, but I chose to go towards God

When you've endured the loss of somebody who is so significant in your life, and have entered into the kind of suffering that you don't think you can bear... somehow the Lord gives you the strength to bear it.

amid that darkness, even when I didn't feel Him." The first thing Jen did in that darkness was to go to Mass daily, and then back to the prison ministry. "I found hope in the midst of my own pain through helping others," Jen shared, "Incarcerated women are no different than you and me; they have lived tragic lives that none of us can imagine and just happened to

have been born to people unlike our own loving parents. They need to be shown that people care about them. It's amazing how my visits with them continue to save me from getting lost in my own pain and I'm grateful. It's funny how God led me to reach out to the people who are most broken in this world, amid my own brokenness. We are all broken in some way. I'm just there, I guess to say I'm broken too and together we can remind each other that God is there and loves us."

"My faith has kept me above water. I'm able to live a decent quality of life despite my pain because of my faith and my family. In my pain support group, it's very evident to me the despair in the hearts of people in the group with no faith, so I try to share my own faith as appropriate. With God, we can live without fear. I have hope that if I've got God, anything's possible even the impossible."

"Every morning I pray 'Let me be love,' no matter how I feel physically. I haven't always wanted to pray that prayer, but you know at my age, and at this stage of my life, that's the prayer I want to pray. "



"The cross at St. Mary's holds enormous meaning to me. It's the cross that met all three of my children in new ways in the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. It's also the cross which greeted my family each week at Sunday Mass and the one which comforted me in my toughest days after losing my mom. When I was most worried about my children or some other matter, I sat by the cross on many days contemplating the unimaginable pain of our Lord and the excruciating suffering of His mother. It is this same cross which I gaze upon silently, during more difficult days of my physical pain. Finally, it is the cross that has taught me through God's love I have received the grace necessary to bear all of life's challenges, even when I don't think that I am capable. The cross at St. Mary's is a symbol of boundless hope and unconditional love - it will always have a special place in my heart."

Walking in His Name - Cathy Stenquist

ADULT FAITH RESOURCES

APRIL, 2023

got faith?



“FAITH SPEAKING” VOLUMES: This month’s recommended books come to us from our parish librarian, Betty Febo. She writes: “two recent donations caught my eye: *My Sisters the Saints: A Spiritual Memoir* and *The Catholic Gentleman: Living Authentic*

Manhood Today. Both involve a journey to understand how faithful Catholics can situate their Catholic beliefs in light of the world’s secular culture. Colleen Campbell, the author of *My Sisters the Saints*, finds inspiration in spiritual friendship with six female saints as she struggles to understand the meaning of her life and identity in light of her Christian faith and contemporary feminism. Sam Guzman, author of *The Catholic Gentleman*, reflects on how to act as a gentleman when traditional gender roles are being questioned and devalued. Both turn to Catholic beliefs and traditions and offer valuable insights and ways forward. The books can be found on the New Book Shelf in the library by the window. Don’t forget to check them out!”

SUNDAY READINGS: This month, we experience Holy Week and the Triduum as well as the first few weeks of the Easter Season. Sunday, April 2, is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. On this day, we hear the familiar story of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem along with other readings, including the Passion, which orient us to our remembrance of Jesus’ suffering and death later in the week. But Jesus’ story doesn’t end there. At the Easter Vigil Mass (Saturday, April 8) and then on Easter Sunday itself (April 9) we attend to the stories of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead and celebrate joyfully with *Alleluias* the fact that He is Alive!! The next few weeks, beginning with Divine Mercy Sunday (April 16), we listen to readings from the Acts of the Apostles; many of these readings, along with the gospels for these Sundays, are familiar to us and can help us to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection and life with and within us today. You can prepare for the Sunday readings at <https://liturgy.slu.edu/>.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION: April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The US government website for this initiative, <https://bit.ly/USNCAPM>, provides resources for both professional child welfare organizations and community members in the work of strengthening families and preventing child abuse. It is our sincere belief as Catholics that all people deserve to be treated with dignity as well as to live and learn in an environment that is free from abuse of all types. Let’s use the month well and do our part to prevent child abuse in our community!

THE ENVIRONMENT: Saturday, April 22 is Earth Day, a day of education and activism regarding the environment which is observed around the globe. The Earth Day website, <https://www.earthday.org/>, tells us that Earth Day started in the United States in 1970 as an idea for a teach-in on college campuses. “The idea generated intense interest, and thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment and there were massive coast-to-coast rallies in cities, towns, and communities.” The theme for Earth Day this year is “Invest in Our Planet.” The city of Framingham hosts an annual Earth Day festival; this year it will be held on Saturday, April 22, with a rain date of Saturday, April 29. You can go to <https://framinghamearthday.org/> for more information.

PRAYER: We have completed our exploration of the ACTS acronym regarding the different types of prayer (Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving and Supplication) and now look at a few methods of prayer. The first is *lectio divina*, or sacred reading. *Lectio divina* has been practiced for many centuries; it helps one to both know and then incorporate the scriptures into one’s daily living. The steps, as explained by Becky Eldridge (<https://bit.ly/LPlectio>) are Read, Reflect, Respond, and Rest. Check out the article and then give *lectio* a try with one of your favorite Bible texts or one of the Sunday readings from this month.