



St. Mary's Parish



Mass Schedule:

Monday through Friday
9:00 AM

Saturday Vigils
5:00 PM
7:30 PM

Sunday
7:30 AM
9:30 AM Family Mass
(C.L.O.W. Sept. – May)
11:30 AM Choir Mass

Holy Days: Announced

Advent Adoration Schedule:

First Friday, 9:30 – 10:30 AM
Advent Mondays, 7 - 8 PM.

Our Mission:

“To know Christ and to make Him known.”

8 Church St., Holliston, MA 01746
Website: www.stmarysholliston.com
Email Address: St.marys1870@gmail.com
Rectory Phone: (508) 429 - 4427
Religious Education Phone: (508) 429 - 6076

Dear Visitors: Welcome! We are delighted that you chose to worship with us this day. Please introduce yourself to the priest, and if you are interested in becoming a member of the parish then please register through our website or by calling the rectory. Please also be aware that for generations it has been the custom at St. Mary's to kneel together for a silent Hail Mary at the end of Mass. Please join in!

Advent Confessions:

Mondays, 7 - 8 PM
Saturdays, 12 - 12:45 PM
No Confessions Dec. 23

Anointing of the Sick: Any time by appointment. Please call as soon as you are aware of a serious illness or upcoming surgery.

Baptism: The 2nd & 4th Sunday of each month. To register for Baptism Preparation call 429-4427.

Marriage: Please call at least 6 months in advance of your desired wedding date.

2023 ST. MARY'S PARISH GRAND ANNUAL UPDATE

"What return can I make to the Lord for all He has done for me?" Psalm 116

2023 Grand Annual goal to cover operating expenses:	\$150,000.00
Grand Annual parishioner support received to date:	\$133,776.00
Parishioner support still needed to reach 2023 Grand Annual goal:	\$ 16,224.00



% of 2023 Grand Annual achieved to date:	89 %
% of St. Mary's families who have now made their Grand Annual gift:	36 %

As the Grand Annual continues, contributions may be placed either in the gold G.A. envelope you received in the mail, or in a separate envelope clearly marked "Grand Annual." G.A. envelopes may be mailed to 8 Church Street or dropped through the Rectory Office Door Mail-slot. Any collection basket passed at Mass may also be used.

As explained in the special mailing to all parishioners, the \$150,000 goal will fund staff salaries, the Sister Ricci House bathroom renovations and the two Church Boiler Pumps, which currently are leaking. Your generous support will assure the financial health of our parish continues.

Thank you for your support of this most important annual collection!

PARISH STAFF:

Rev. Mark J. Coiro, Pastor
 The Xaverian Fathers, Weekend Assistance
 Deacon John D. Barry, Permanent Deacon
 Deacon Ronald A. Dowding, Permanent Deacon
 Deacon Martin Breinlinger, Senior Deacon
 Mrs. Fran Crespi, D.R.E., Grades K-7
 Mr. Sean Jacobs, D.R.E., Grades 8-10, Youth Minister
 Ms. Abigail Kelley-Lanser, Organist, Director of Music
 Mrs. Mary Beth Harris, Parish Secretary
 Mrs. Jennifer Burgett, Religious Education Secretary
 Ms. Mary Sanning, Business Manager
 Mrs. Najat Whalen, Sacristan
 Mr. Billy Hanson, Parish Facilities
 R & R Landscaping, Cemetery Care

LAST SUNDAY'S PARISH OFFERTORY:

Automatic Giving:	\$ 3,577.00
WeShare:	\$ 3,273.00
Offertory Envelopes Dropped/mailed to the office:	\$ 4,938.00
Total Offertory:	\$ 11,788.00

Shortfall \$ 3,212.00

Thank you for making up any missed weekly parish support. The fiscal health of your parish depends on it. Kindly consider switching to WeShare or Automatic Giving. See: <https://stmarysholliston.com/how-to-give/>.

MASS INTENTIONS:

Saturday	December 2
5:00	Donald Cotton
7:30	People of St. Mary's
Sunday	December 3
7:30	Stephen Fogarty, 34 th Anv.
9:30	William Reynolds, 22 nd Anv.
11:30	Thomas Brady
Monday	December 4
9:00	The Chaplin Family (Living)
Tuesday	December 5
9:00	Joseph Bonino
Wednesday	December 6
9:00	Holy Souls
Thursday	December 7
9:00	Timothy Garry

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

6:30	<i>Immaculate Conception</i>
Friday	December 8
9:00	<i>Immaculate Conception</i>
7:00	<i>Immaculate Conception</i>
Saturday	December 9
5:00	Gary Sencio
7:30	Charlie Coles
Sunday	December 10
7:30	People of St. Mary's
9:30	Jacqueline O'Neill, 6 th Anv.
11:30	Margaret Reddy, 16 th Anv.



DONUTS, JUICE AND COFFEE TODAY: The Welcoming Committee invites all parishioners and their families to stop into Fr. Haley Hall after the 9:30 AM Mass today Sunday, December 3, for donuts, juice and coffee!



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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

Happy New Year! Advent marks the beginning of a new year in the Church calendar, as we recall the First Coming of Jesus among us as the Babe of Bethlehem, and as we look forward to His Second Coming as the King of Glory.

The Advent Mass readings today through December 16 focus on Jesus' return at the Last Judgment, then on December 17 shift to His birth 2,000 years ago. In a real sense, the Advent readings capture the way a faithful Christian lives – reflecting on the Jesus Who once walked among us as man, and also preparing to meet Him face to face one day.

The shift in Church seasons is evident in our worship space in several ways today. For Advent the sanctuary draperies have been changed to purple, the Church's color of penance and preparation. Likewise the priest's and deacon's vestments are purple – the darker "royal" purple of Jesus the newborn King or returning triumphant King. This is different from the more "violet" purple of Lent, the redder tint of which suggests the blood spilt for us by Jesus on Calvary. For this same reason the Advent vestments are much richer in ornamentation than the simple vestments worn during Lent.

To the right of the sanctuary stands the St. Mary's Advent wreath, the candles of which will count down for us the weeks until Christmas, even as time itself counts down to the return and final judgment of Jesus. We hope that an Advent wreath will grace your own family table tonight, as it is a beautiful way to bring prayer into your home and teach children about the two comings of Jesus.

As we look at the way our church building has been transformed for Advent, we are each invited to consider the transformation that God is calling us to in these four short weeks of grace. How can we move from fear to courage, doubt to trust, covetousness to generosity, sorrow to joy, and loneliness to the sure knowledge that **GOD IS WITH US** in the person of Jesus Christ? How can we make sure that Christmas finds us spiritually closer to God than we are right now today?

Prayer is always the foundation of our relationship with God, and Advent prayer books have been made available at the church entrances for you to take home. We hope they will enrich both your four-week journey to

Christmas and your greater journey to God. Monday Adoration and extra Confession times are also available this season. A good Confession, especially if it's been awhile since we last experienced the healing grace of that sacrament, can help us open up and allow Jesus to come anew into our hearts like few things can.

In the end, Advent invites each of us to look honestly at our relationships with God and neighbor so as to make whatever changes and fresh starts are needed to be more faithful disciples. Above all, we must avoid the trap of spending all our time and energy on external Christmas preparations, and none on our interior / spiritual life.

May the Lord of Our Advent Journey bless you and yours.

Under His Mercy,

Rev. Mark J. Coiro

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS RESUMES THIS WEEKEND



Suspended by the pandemic, the Presentation of the gifts by the people at Mass resumes at St. Mary's this Advent.

If you are attending a Mass you requested (intentioned), please sit right behind the gift table if you wish to present the gifts at that Mass. It is also helpful to alert the

celebrating priest that you intend to do so. Otherwise, any family may bring up the gifts.

Why do we do this?

At the presentation of the gifts, the faithful present the gifts of bread and wine to the priest, symbolizing an offering of creation and themselves back to the Father. This also gives an exterior sign of our internal offerings – we offer our prayers and ourselves in the same way that we offer these mere gifts of bread and wine, hoping that just as they are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, so may we be transformed by His grace.

TODAY ~ MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP: Our next Meeting is today, Sunday, December 3 from 6:30 – 8 PM in the Parish Center. There will be faith, friendship, fun, and signups for the December 15 Caroling, Pizza Party, and Christmas Lights Trip. Friday, January 5, 7 PM, Celtics vs Utah Jazz payments are also due tonight. Any and all 6th, 7th and 8th Graders are invited. Bring a friend!

TODAY ~ ST. MARY'S MARRIAGE FELLOWSHIP: Join St. Mary's Marriage Fellowship today, Sunday, December 3 for a family-based service project making holiday crafts for the Holliston Senior Center. Drop by for an afternoon of fun in the Lower Church from 2 - 5 PM. Children are very welcome. Come for as long as you're able! RSVP to stmarysmarriagefellowship@gmail.com.

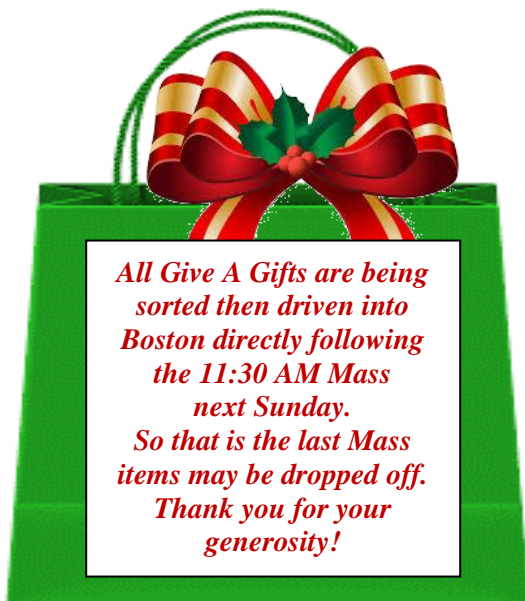
ALL MONDAYS IN ADVENT ~ ADORATION & CONFESSION: Mondays, December 4, 11, and 18 from 7 - 8 PM. Bring your day to a restful end by basking in the True Presence of our Eucharistic Lord. Clear and quiet your soul from all that has come between you and God by making a good Confession – especially if it has been awhile. Confession is a healing encounter with Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The Lord's mercy, healing, and grace are given to us through this encounter. In it Jesus also strengthens us to resist future or ongoing temptation. The Sacrament of Confession is a moment of accountability for us before the Lord. The Lord's forgiveness and mercy is infinite. Nothing we have done can ever separate us from experiencing God's forgiveness through this sacrament. Confession will also continue to be offered Saturdays in the church from Noon to 12:45 PM, except on December 23.

THIS FRIDAY ~ HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION:

Thursday, December 7 Vigil Mass at 6:30 PM.

Friday, December 8 Feast Day Masses at 9 AM & 7 PM.

The Immaculate Conception is that sacred moment when Mary was conceived in her mother Anna's womb and specially protected by God from any touch of original sin. In this way, Mary became the new Eve, a new beginning for people and a pure vessel to receive the Son of God and bear Him into the world. This is the Patronal Feast of the United States of America, a nation consecrated to Mary under her title as the Immaculate Conception.



NEXT WEEKEND ~ GIVE A GIFT:

December 9 and 10 at all Masses. Once again we ask the people of St. Mary's to help make Christmas truly a season of sharing. All items go to needy families in Boston, and are distributed through two inner city Catholic parishes. Please bring an article of new clothing and a new toy, unwrapped together in a plain bag or gift bag with a tag stating "Boy" or "Girl" and size or age up to age 18. No adult gifts please. Kindly place your gift in front of St. Mary's altar at any Mass the weekend of December 9 & 10. Gift bags only please.

NEXT SUNDAY NIGHT ~ TGIF (Teens Gather In

Faith): We next Gather in Faith on Sunday, December 10 from 7 - 8:30 PM in Fr. Haley Hall. Enjoy a Christmas Party and begin to experience the joy and meaning of the Savior's Birth. Parents are invited from 8 - 8:30 PM for the "big" Mississippi Mission Trip presentation with Q & A. All Mission Forms will be passed out tonight.



COOKIE WALK NEXT WEEKEND!

December 9 & 10, after all Weekend Masses.

Long rows of tables will be set up in the Lower Church – tables loaded down with over 2,000 delicious homemade cookies baked by St. Mary's Middle School Youth Group Members. For \$6, you may purchase an empty cookie bag, then “walk” down the rows of tables and select a dozen cookies which youths (wearing plastic gloves) will place in your bag. All proceeds will benefit the poor of Haiti, a deeply impoverished nation rocked by a presidential assassination, a major earthquake, and a hurricane.

THE LIVING STONES OF BETHLEHEM: Tuesday, December 12, from 7 - 8 PM in the church. Come learn more about Bethlehem, and the “Living Stones of the Church,” the Christians who live there today. The presentation will include slides and stories from our Parish Visit to Beit Sahour last March. We will also pray for peace in the Holy Land.

LESSONS & CAROLS: Sunday, December 17 from 5 - 6 PM in the church.

Sunday, December 17, 5 - 6 PM in the church, preceded by an organ performance from 4:30 - 5 PM. Join us for an evening of beautiful music and scripture, anticipating the wondrous birth of our Lord Jesus. This year's Lessons and Carols will feature St. Mary's Adult Choir under the direction of Abbey Kelley-Lanser. The program will include familiar carols as well as choral music by Victoria, Willcocks, Praetorius, and more. Our organist will be Brandon Santini who will offer a recital from 4:30 - 5 PM. Bring the whole family and fill your Christmas preparations with holy joy!

CHILDREN & YOUTH CHOIRS ARE BACK IN 2024!

On Wednesday, January 17, 2024, our Music Director Abbey Kelley-Lanser will be relaunching the Children's Choir and the Youth Choir! Rehearsals will be held weekly on Wednesdays in the St. Mary's Lower Church Hall. Our goals are to foster musical community among the groups, to prepare solo or joint choir songs for every other 9:30 AM Sunday Mass and special events, to learn about God through lifelong, memorable songs and to make a joyful noise unto the Lord! To Sign Up or if you have any questions, contact Abbey at musicatstmarysholliston@gmail.com, or call her at 508-429-6076.

Children's Choir: 3rd - 5th graders, Wednesdays 3:30 - 4:15 PM.

Youth Choir: 6th graders and above, Wednesdays 4:00 - 5:15 PM.

First Sung Mass: Sunday, January 28 at 8:45 AM warmup for the 9:30 AM Mass.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE ARE THE SAME DAY? ~

The Sunday Mass Obligation for the Weekend of Saturday, December 23 and Sunday, December 24 remains. The 4th Sunday of Advent is a distinct and essential part of our spiritual journey to Christmas, even though Christmas Eve is that same Sunday afternoon.

This year Catholics should therefore plan to attend Mass either Saturday Afternoon or Sunday Morning for the 4th Sunday of Advent, *in addition* to whatever Christmas Mass they attend. Those who choose to attend Mass twice on Sunday – in the morning for Advent and then later that day for Christmas, are permitted to receive Communion twice in the same day. God bless you!

4th Sunday of Advent Masses

Saturday, December 23

5 PM
7:30 PM

Sunday, December 24

7:30 AM
9:30 AM
11:30 AM

Christmas Eve Masses Also Sunday, December 24

4 PM Mass in the Church
4 PM Mass in Fr. Haley Hall
(Children's Pageant)
5:30 PM Mass in the Church
7:30 PM Mass in the Church
11 PM Midnight Mass
in the Church
(Caroling starts at 10:30 PM)

Monday, December 25 Christmas Day Masses

9:30 AM Mass in the Church
11:30 AM Mass in the Church



2023 CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

The Christmas Collection supports the retirement, healthcare and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. We encourage you to please give generously on behalf of the priests that have devoted their lives to faithfully serving God and the people of the Archdiocese of Boston. Thank you.



TIMELY ADVENT WISDOM FROM POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II:

Dearest Brothers and Sisters! With today's first Sunday of Advent, a new liturgical year begins. The Church takes up her journey again, and invites us to reflect more intensely on the mystery of Christ, a mystery that is always new and that time cannot exhaust. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. Thanks to him, the history of humanity proceeds as a pilgrimage toward the fulfilment of the Kingdom which he inaugurated with his Incarnation and victory over sin and death.

For this reason, Advent is synonymous with hope: not the vain waiting for a faceless God, but concrete and certain trust in the return of Him who has already visited us, of the "Spouse" who with His blood has sealed with humanity a pact that is an eternal covenant. It is a hope that stimulates vigilance, the characteristic virtue of this special liturgical season. Vigilance in prayer, fostered by a loving expectation; vigilance in the dynamics of concrete charity, aware that the Kingdom of God comes close whenever men learn to live as brothers.

The Christian community begins Advent with these resolutions, keeping the spirit vigilant, the better to receive the message of the Word of God. We recall the famous and wonderful oracle of the Prophet Isaiah, spoken at a time of crisis in the history of Israel. "In the days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it;... they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again" (cf. Isaiah 2,1-5).

These words contain a promise of peace that is more urgent than ever for humanity and, in particular, for the Holy Land, from where even today, unfortunately, sad and worrying news reaches us. May the words of the Prophet Isaiah inspire the minds and hearts of believers and of all men and women of good will ... to create a more serene and solidary climate in the world.

I entrust this invocation for peace to Mary, vigilant Virgin and Mother of hope. In a few days, with renewed faith we will celebrate the Solemnity of her Immaculate Conception. May she guide us on the way, helping every human person and nation to look to the "mountain of the Lord", an image of the final triumph of Christ and the advent of his Kingdom of peace.



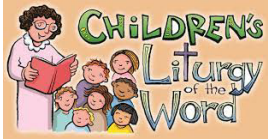
INTERFAITH PRAYER FOR PEACE IN ISRAEL, PALESTINE, AND HERE: The MetroWest Interfaith Community invites you to a gathering of prayer and a shared meal for peace in the Middle East and in our own communities on Sunday, December 3 from 5 - 7 PM at the Fatima Shrine. We gather with a shared passion for God and our shared passion for all of humanity, and we do so with our one interfaith voice, without politics or ideology. Join us for an interfaith candlelight prayer and shared meal together. Halal and kosher selections available. We ask that all political and ideological views, as important as these cultural identities are, be left out of our interfaith peace prayer event. They are more appropriate in another type of forum. Thank you for the RSVP so we know how much food to have available: <https://bit.ly/oneinterfaithvoice>.

THE ROSE FOR LIFE: Is sponsored this week by a St. Mary's Parishioner. Please join her in prayer for an unborn child. To sponsor the Rose for Life for 2024 please call 429-4427.

SMCWG: St. Mary's Catholic Women's Group will hold our last meeting of the year on Wednesday, December 13 at 12 noon in the Parish Library. Please bring a \$10 gift for our Yankee Gift Swap, lunch and a drink. All are welcome.

CEMETERY REQUESTS: In preparation for the winter season, please remove all plant, chime, birdfeeder and ornamental hangers from your Cemetery Lots. With the ground becoming frozen, they can be very dangerous if broken or leaning into the right of way of funeral vehicles.

HOLLISTON PANTRY SHELF HELP: Regular coffee, peanut butter, jelly, sugar, ketchup, mayonnaise, Chunky Soup, cookies, canned turkey/chicken, canned fruits, pasta sauce, canned tomatoes, toilet paper and cake and brownie mixes. Donations may be dropped off in the bin by the main parking lot entrance.



CLOW - CHILDREN K-6: CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD: Today, Sunday, December 3, the children will remain in the church to listen

and learn what Jesus teaches us in the Gospel reading with Fr. Mark.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES THIS WEEK

DAY	GRADE	GRADE
Sun., Dec. 3	Pre-K at 9:15 AM	GR-1 at 8:10 AM
	GR-4 at 10:45 AM	GR-5 at 10:45 AM
Mon., Dec. 4	GR-8 at 6:00 PM	
Tues., Dec. 5	GR-4 at 4:00 PM	GR-9 at 7:00 PM
Wed., Dec. 6	GR-8 at 6:00 PM	
Thur., Dec. 7	GR-9 at 7:00 PM	
Sun., Dec. 10	GR-3 at 7:55 AM	GR-3 at 10:45 AM
	GR-6 at 4:00 PM	GR-7 at 5:00 PM
Tues., Dec. 12	GR-5 at 4:00 PM	GR-5 at 5:00 PM
	GR-6 at 4:00 PM	GR-10 at 7:00 PM

PLEASE HELP FILL OUR MONITOR NEEDS

BELOW: Contact us at 508-429-6076 if you can monitor a session. We need your help!

GR-2 & 3: 1 Monitor - alt. Sun. 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM.

GR-4 & 5: 1 Monitor - alt. Sun. 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM.

GR-4 & 5: 1 Monitor - alt. Thurs. 4:00 - 5:30 PM.

GR-6: 1 Monitor - alt. Sun. 4:00 - 5:30 PM.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS NATIVITY

REHEARSALS: Christmas Nativity rehearsal dates are Saturday **12/2, 12/9 and 12/16 from 9 - 10 AM.**

Parents are to bring their children directly to Fr. Haley Hall and check in with Deb Frey and the adult volunteers.

GRADE 4 CHRISTMAS HAPPENING:

On **Monday, December 18** from 4 - 5:30 PM all Sunday, weekday and homeschooled Grade 4 children will attend this event and enjoy the wonder of making Christmas ornaments and gifts for needy children in the Holliston community. Thirty gift bags will be lovingly put together by the children while they make Christmas crafts and enjoy special homemade treats made by their parents. The children will bring in a toy for a needy boy or girl paid by their allowance earned from their home chores. The gift bags will be filled with warm gloves, socks, school supplies and treats. They will also listen to the Christmas narrative that we all know so well, the birth of our Savior in Bethlehem. The gift bags will be delivered and distributed to the families by the Holliston Food Pantry.

CONFIRMATION I AND II: Grade 9 classes meet on Tuesday, December 5 and Thursday, December 7 from 7:00 - 8:30 PM. Please check into Fr. Haley Hall.

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN TRAINING

WORKSHOP: All new volunteers in any capacity and ministry must take the Protecting God's Children (PGC) Training. Please check our bulletin each week for the newly scheduled **PGC Workshops.**

Participants must **pre-register** for a session. Here's how: "Go to www.Virtusonline.org. Click on "First-time Registrant" and select "Boston, MA (Archdiocese)" as your organization. You will have to create a VIRTUS log-in before proceeding to register. Follow the prompts after this."

CORI RENEWAL ALERT: All active and new volunteers (18+ years) must have a completed **2024 CORI** form on file in our office to serve in a ministry. Volunteer renewals may submit a copy of driver's license, along with signed/completed CORI form and email directly to st.marysre1870@gmail.com for processing. New volunteers must have information verified in person by any staff member. *Please note: If a FY2023 form has already been submitted, we do not need another.*

GRADES 5 AND 7 COORDINATORS ARE STILL NEEDED: Please contact Fran Crespi if you are interested and able to help. Training is provided. Please call 508-429-6076 or st.marysre1870@gmail.com.

Please note that R.E. Coordinators are responsible for guiding and assisting both teachers and students in growing in their relationship with Christ and His Church. Since this is done best by example, all parish coordinators are required to be regularly practicing members of the St. Mary's Worshipping Community



ADVENT WREATHS AND CANDLES: On Sunday, December 3, the Church enters the Liturgical season of Advent.

One of the symbols used in the Church today is the Advent wreath. Many families light their Advent Candles before their evening meal and pray together. Brass Advent Wreath and Candle sets are \$15.00 each, and a set of Advent Candles is \$6.00. These items will be available today following the 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM Masses.

ADVENT REFLECTION: "So to, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." – Matthew 24:44