



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.

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

2023 GRAND ANNUAL THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who have participated in the 2023 Grand Annual. The appeal goal of \$150,000 has been achieved. Combined with the weekly offertory, the Grand Annual covers our parish's operating costs. This year's Grand Annual included the funding of staff salaries, the interior bathroom renovations in Sr. Ricci House and the repair/refurbishment of the two Church Boiler Pumps. Your faithful stewardship is much appreciated.

LAST SUNDAY'S PARISH OFFERTORY:

Automatic Giving:	\$ 4,685.00
WeShare:	\$ 5,603.00
Offertory Envelopes Dropped/mailed to the office:	\$ 8,468.00
Total Offertory:	\$ 18,756.00

KINDLY CONSIDER SWITCHING TO WESHARE OR AUTOMATIC GIVING: These online services allow you to maintain your support without having to remember to mail or drop off envelopes. Thank you for making up any missed weekly parish support. The fiscal health of your parish depends on it. See: <https://stmarysholliston.com/how-to-give/>. Thank you for your faithful stewardship!

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.

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.

MASS INTENTIONS:

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.
Monday	December 11
9:00	Merritt Moraski
Tuesday	December 12
9:00	Edith Davis
Wednesday	December 13
9:00	Paul T. Shea
Thursday	December 14
9:00	Vincent Mullen
Friday	December 15
9:00	Claire Medwid, 5 th Anv.
Saturday	December 16
5:00	Vincent and Joan Mullen
7:30	Nicholas Rossini
Sunday	December 17
7:30	People of St. Mary's
9:30	Ronald Nicasio
11:30	Teotima Bolandrina

THE HOLLISTON PANTRY SHELF SUPPLIES FOOD FREE OF CHARGE TO HOLLISTON

RESIDENTS IN NEED: We offer a grocery store shopping experience where Holliston residents are able to select from close to 500 quality food items, including: milk, beef, chicken, fish, pork, seasonal produce, eggs, cheese, yogurt, canned soups, beans, pastas, cereals, coffee, snacks, and much more. We also offer personal care items like shampoo, laundry detergent, soap and toothpaste. The Holliston Pantry Shelf offers complete privacy and confidentiality for our neighbors who need temporary or longer term help meeting their grocery needs. Shoppers need to only obtain a Pantry ID card through the Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall. Personal financial information is not required. Proof of residency in Holliston is required. The Holliston Pantry Shelf is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation. It receives no municipal, state or federal funding, and is operated by more than 120 unpaid volunteers. All monetary donations to the Holliston Pantry Shelf go directly toward the purchase of food or maintaining our Pantry space. The Holliston Pantry Shelf is open 5 days a week including two evenings a week.

SMCWG: St. Mary's Catholic Women's Group will hold our last meeting of the year this 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.



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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

Today John the Baptist fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah, becoming a voice of one crying out in the desert, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." In ancient times when a king planned to visit a distant part of his kingdom, he would send a herald ahead to announce his coming. As the dirt roads were often in poor condition, the king's subjects in that area were expected to carry out repairs in anticipation of his arrival.

Just so in this Advent Season, we are all being invited to effect spiritual repairs to smooth the way for God's coming anew into our lives. This is the time to fill in the potholes of resentment, the cracks of jealousy, and whatever other fractures sin has caused to mar the surface of our souls.

Always the key to a joyful and graced Christmas - one where you really feel the "Christmas Spirit" if you will - is an Advent spent in real preparation. Look around for opportunities to make the necessary repairs. You know where the need for healing lies in your own family and circle of friends. You know where there is loneliness and heartache. You know where there is a need to return to prayer.

Last weekend all our Second Graders prepared the way for Jesus by making their very First Confessions. They have set a good example for all of us, reminding us of the sacrament that like no other can return us to innocence and a childlike wonder of the Lord. If you do nothing else this Advent to prepare spiritually for Christ's coming, experience the Sacrament of Confession, available here each Saturday from Noon to 12:45 PM, and also each Monday of Advent from 7 - 8 PM with Adoration in the Church.

In today's Psalm we asked God to "show us His kindness." And one of the most awesome ways He has done this is by giving us the means to have our sins forgiven in Confession. God has shown us the way, but as always we choose whether or not to accept His invitations to grace.

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

Under His Mercy,

Rev. Mark J. Coiro

COOKIE WALK THIS WEEKEND!



venmo



December 9 and 10, in the Lower Church Hall after all Weekend Masses.

Long rows of tables are 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, (cash, check, or Venmo), 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.



THIS 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 and 10. Gift bags only please; and final donations at the 11:30 AM Mass today.



THIS TUESDAY ~ THE LIVING STONES OF BETHLEHEM:

This 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.

A Festival of Lessons and Carols

at St. Mary's Church in Holliston



Next Sunday, December 17, 5:00 – 6:00 PM



Join us for an Advent and Christmas celebration
through scripture and music.

This year's Lessons and Carols will feature St.
Mary's Adult Choir under the direction of Abbey
Kelley-Lanser. The program will include choral
music by Victoria, Willcocks, Praetorius, and
more. There will also be familiar, traditional
Christmas carols to sing along!



Our organist will be Brandon Santini who will offer a recital from 4:30 – 5 PM.
Come fill your spirit with the joy of the Coming of the Lord!

This event is free and open to all.



TONIGHT ~ TGIF (Teens Gather In Faith): We next Gather in Faith tonight, Sunday, December 10 from 7 - 8:30 PM in Fr. Haley Hall. Enjoy a Christmas Party, decorate Christmas Cookies for our local police and firefighters, 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.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP: All those who are caroling this coming Friday, December 15, will receive updated drop off and pick up instructions this week. Please watch for it. Thank you for bringing Christmas cheer to our senior citizens!

TWO REMAINING MONDAYS IN ADVENT ~ ADORATION & CONFESSION: Mondays, December 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.

WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS: *"The liturgy of Advent...helps us to understand fully the value and meaning of the mystery of Christmas. It is not just about commemorating the historical event, which occurred some 2,000 years ago in a little village of Judea. Instead, it is necessary to understand that the whole of our life must be an 'advent,' a vigilant awaiting of the final coming of Christ. To predispose our mind to welcome the Lord who, as we say in the Creed, one day will come to judge the living and the dead, we must learn to recognize him as present in the events of daily life. Therefore, Advent is, so to speak, an intense training that directs us decisively toward him who already came, who will come, and who comes continuously."* – Pope Saint John Paul II

THE 2023 LIVE NATIVITY PAGEANT: All are welcome to join in or watch the real live performance of the nativity. There will also be warm refreshments and cookies. The dates for the show are: Friday, December 22, at 7:30 PM, and Saturday, December 23, at 7:30 PM (Please arrive 30 minutes before to be in the show, costumes provided). The address is 214 Washington Street, Sherborn, MA, in the pasture field (intersection of Route 16 & Western Ave, Sherborn). For more information, please call 508-277-1951.

WINGS WINTER SEASON (Women in God's Spirit): WINGS is a ministry of encouragement and enrichment for women of all ages who seek to deepen their faith and grow in relationship with God and one another. We have successfully concluded our Fall 2023 In Person and Virtual Season "Prayer – A Conversation with God." To view these recorded presentations visit our WINGS webpage <https://stmarysholliston.com/women-in-gods-spirit-w-i-n-g-s/>. Watch for details on our Winter Season starting in mid-January. For additional information about the WINGS ministry, please call Jen Schiller at 617-852-9632 or Diane Collins at 508-259-7795 or visit our webpage <https://stmarysholliston.com/women-in-gods-spirit-w-i-n-g-s/>. Register at: stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com.

ST. MARY'S MOM'S PRAYER GROUP: Please join us at St. Mary's MOM'S GROUP on Tuesday, December 12 from 10:30 AM - 12 noon in Fr. Haley Hall. Every week, we will pray together, read reflections according to the liturgical season, and share prayer intentions. Children of all ages are welcome, there will be a few toys and coloring activities available. Coffee and snacks will be provided. Contact 429-4427 with any questions.

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.

FATIMA SHRINE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DISPLAY: The Xaverian Missionaries will hold their traditional Christmas Lights Display from Thursday, December 7 to Wednesday, December 27, from 5 to 9 PM. Hot chocolate and treats are provided for visitors. All are most welcome!

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.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR



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 St. Mary's Lower Church. 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.



Child's Name: _____

Family Name if Different: _____

Child's Grade Level: _____

Parent's Contact Email: _____

Parent's Contact Phone: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION: Occasionally, we take photographs and videos of the children engaged in choir performances and activities. These pictures are often posted in the weekly Sunday Bulletin, parish Newsletter or Website. We need to have a record of our approval on file in order to video or photograph your child.

Do we have your permission to include your child in pictures or videos such as performing in a concert, Mass or other music event? YES () NO ()

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

SAFETY: In accordance with the Archdiocesan requirement, we need to have two adult parents sit in at each weekly choir rehearsal from 3:30 - 4:15, or 4 - 5:15 PM. Such adults will need to have taken Protecting God's Children and get a current CORI form on file with St. Mary's. **Come see in real-time what your children are learning!** If you can help, please print your information below.

Parent's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

We look forward to having your children participate in our choirs.
Please leave this completed form in the Religious Education Office.

CLOW - CHILDREN K-6: CHILDREN'S

LITURGY OF THE WORD: Today, Sunday, December 10, the second Sunday of Advent, the children will be dismissed from the main church to the lower church with the CLOW leader, to listen and learn what Jesus teaches us in the Gospel reading.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES THIS WEEK

DAY	GRADE	GRADE
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-6 at 4:00 PM
	GR-6 at 5:00 PM	GR-10 at 7:00 PM
Wed., Dec. 13	GR-7 at 6:00 PM	
Thur., Dec. 14	GR-4 at 4:00 PM	GR-5 at 4:00 PM
	GR-10 at 7:00 PM	
Sun., Dec. 17	GR-K at 9:15 AM	GR-1 at 8:10 AM
	GR-4 at 10:45 AM	GR-5 at 10:45 AM
	GR-6 at 4:00 PM	GR-7 at 5:00 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 **12/9** 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 for with 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 10 classes meet on Tuesday, December 12 and Thursday, December 14 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 CANDLES: Advent wreath candles are still available in the Religious Education office for \$6.00.

ADVENT REFLECTION: As the Archangel Gabriel was sent to Mary, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." (*Luke 1:28*). The angel's greeting to Mary as "full of Grace" is proof that she was sinless and saved. For Mary was conceived without sin filled with God's grace to become the purest vessel for Christ to unite His divine with our human nature, fully divine and human, to be our Savior and King. With trust and confidence Mary surrendered to God's plan. During these days of Advent and preparation to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us ponder the beauty and wonder of Christmas and ask Mary to take possession of our hearts so that we say "Yes" to God's will for us.