

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

Adoration Schedule:

First Fridays from 9:30 -
10:30 AM and as announced.

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!

Confession: Saturdays from Noon to 12:45 PM, or by appointment.

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. Congratulations!



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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

On this Feast of the Holy Family, the Church invites us to contemplate a family that is at once holy and vulnerable, chosen and yet exposed to danger. In today's Gospel, we encounter a striking and unsettling truth - the Son of God enters our world not only in poverty, but also in flight.

Joseph, awakened by God's warning, rises in the night and leads Mary and the Child away from their homeland. The Holy Family becomes a family on the move, displaced, uncertain, and dependent upon the hospitality of others. They become refugees.

This is not an incidental detail of the Christmas story. It reveals something profound about the God we worship. Jesus does not merely show compassion for the suffering from a safe distance; He enters fully into the precariousness of human life.

In Egypt, the Holy Family knows what it means to live as strangers in a foreign land, carrying fear and hope in their hearts. From the very beginning, Christ identifies Himself with those who are threatened, uprooted, and unseen.

The Feast of the Holy Family often leads us to reflect on love within the home, on fidelity, obedience, and mutual care. These are indeed sacred virtues, beautifully embodied by Mary and Joseph. Yet today's Gospel broadens our vision. It challenges us to see that the holiness of the family is not preserved by isolation or comfort, but by trust in God amid uncertainty.

Joseph's righteousness is revealed not in words, but in courageous action. Mary's faith is expressed not in control, but in surrender. Together, they show us that faithfulness sometimes means leaving behind what is familiar in order to protect life.

In remembering that the Holy Family were refugees, we are invited, gently but firmly, to examine our own hearts. How do we respond to immigrants and refugees today? Do we see them first as problems to be solved, or as persons to be

encountered? As mothers and fathers seeking safety for their children? As brothers and sisters who, like the Holy Family, carry stories of fear, resilience, and hope?

The Church does not ask us for simple answers to complex issues. Prudence and justice are necessary in shaping public life. But the Gospel demands more than abstraction. It asks for compassion rooted in Christ. It asks us to resist indifference and to reject language that strips others of dignity. To remember that *every* human person bears the image of God. When we welcome the stranger, defend the dignity of the displaced, and advocate for humane treatment of migrants and refugees, we are not engaging in politics; we are living the Gospel.

The Holy Family teaches us that love is costly and that faith is active. May their example unsettle us where we have grown too comfortable and soften our hearts where they have become hardened. May the plight and flight of Mary, Jesus, and Joseph inspire us to build communities where no one is invisible.

As we celebrate this feast, let us pray for families everywhere, especially those forced to flee violence, poverty, or persecution. And may our parish and nation be places where the stranger is received as Christ Himself. For indeed, He once came to us as a child in need of refuge. And still does so today.

God bless you.

Rev. Mark J. Coiro



[Click HERE to read the 2025 USCCB Special Pastoral Message on Immigration.](#)

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
 Mrs. Lisa Dufault, HS 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: \$ 3,907.50
 WeShare: \$ 3,959.58
 Envelopes: \$ 10,831.00
 Total Offertory: \$ 18,698.08

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/>.

2025 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 Industrial HVAC Unit Replacements for the Parish Center, Exterior Church and Rectory Painting and Repairs, the Handicap Door System Installation and more. Your faithful stewardship is much appreciated.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE III:

Andrew Schneeloch & Michelle Bocage

MASS INTENTIONS:

Saturday	December 27
5:00	Departed Members of the Cosby and Reilly Families
7:30	Carmen Chiango
Sunday	December 28
7:30	People of St. Mary’s
9:30	Casey Beaupre
11:30	Ambrosio and Teotima Bolandrina and the Departed Members of the Bolandrina and Barcinas Families
Monday	December 29
9:00	Helen Howley
Tuesday	December 30
9:00	Barbara Glynn
Wednesday	December 31
9:00	Holy Souls
5:30	<i>Mary, Mother of God</i>
Thursday	January 1
9:00	<i>Mary, Mother of God</i>
6:15	<i>Mary, Mother of God</i>
Friday	January 2
9:00	Fr. Salman and the People of our Sister Parish, Our Lady of Fatima, Beit Sahour
Saturday	January 3
5:00	Michael Sanders
7:30	Deborah DeLuca
Sunday	January 4
7:30	People of St. Mary’s
9:30	William Reynolds, 24 th Anv.
11:30	Dianne Gootman



D. J. & C.: The Welcoming Committee and Parish Council invite all families to stop into Fr. Haley Hall after the 9:30 AM Upstairs CLOW Mass NEXT Sunday, January 4, for free donuts, juice and coffee!

EPIPHANY CHALK: Blessed Epiphany chalk will be provided at all Masses next weekend. It may be used by families to bless their home for the New Year.

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
- A Holy Day of Obligation -

Vigil Mass: Wednesday, December 31, at 5:30 PM.

Feast Day Masses: Thursday, January 1, at 9:00 AM and 6:15 PM.

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God finds its origin at the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD. This Council of the Church declared Mary the “theotokos” or “God-bearer,” since she bore into the world Jesus Christ in Whom both human and divine natures are fully present. This feast invites us to prioritize Jesus as we start the New Year, and to be “bearers” of His love in 2026.



FOR ALL PARISHIONERS!

What: Fun Family BINGO with gift cards and other awesome prizes! Snacks and drinks will also be on sale to benefit the Mission Trip.

When: Friday, January 23, from 6:30 - 8:30 PM.

Where: Fr. Haley Hall, St. Mary's Church, Holliston.

Donation: \$20 for an Adult Prizes Card; \$10 for a Kiddie Prizes Card - both are good for two hours of play! Cash, Check, or VENMO accepted.

The Cause: This July, high school students from St. Mary's will travel to Gulfport, Mississippi for a week of faith-filled Mission work and service. This is a life-changing week for the teens and chaperones as they live out their faith, make lifelong friendships, and get to know the people they serve. It is a beautiful extension of our Parish Family's Mission to know, love, and serve God. The estimated cost of the trip this year is \$1,500 per teen.



NEXT SUNDAY MORNING!

Following the 9:30 and 11:30 AM Masses next Sunday, January 4, a bake sale will be held in the lobby outside Father Haley Hall. A student grant from St. Mark's School has made it possible to bake and sell sourdough bread and a variety of other homemade desserts to raise funds for the Michael Lisnow Respite Center in Hopkinton. The Respite Center provides support for individuals with disabilities and their families. All food is homemade, and all proceeds will be donated directly to the Respite Center.



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP ~ TGIF (Teens Gather In Faith):

TGIF goes bowling at Pinz in Milford on **Tuesday, December 30**. Drop off for the event is 11 AM at Pinz with a pickup time of 1 PM! We will enjoy bowling, fun at the arcade, pizza and soda!

JOIN US, for our fifth TGIF Meeting **Sunday, January 25**, from 7 - 8:45 PM in Fr. Haley Hall (bring a friend)! TGIF is open to ALL TEENS in Grades 9 - 12. For more information, contact Lisa Dufault at st.marystgif1870@gmail.com.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP: Our next Meeting is **Sunday, January 11**, from 6:30 - 8 PM. Save the date and invite a friend as we start a New Year of Faith, Friendship, Service, and Fun!

ANNUAL MIDDLE SCHOOL LUAU DANCE: Save the date! **Friday, January 30, 7 - 9:30 PM**. Any and all 6th, 7th, or 8th Grade Middle School Students are invited to attend. The dance is sponsored by St. Mary's Youth Ministry but is open to all Middle School Students from anywhere!



U.S. blood donation facts

And why you should consider donating



Someone in the U.S. **needs blood every 2 seconds.**



One donation can potentially **save up to 3 lives.**



Only **3 percent** of people in the U.S. **give blood in a year.**



One pint of blood is taken during a regular blood donation.



A single car crash victim can require as many as **100 pints of blood.**



Less than 38 percent of the population is **eligible to give blood.**



Less than 10 percent **donate annually.**

Source: RedCross.org

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #14224 SPONSOR RED CROSS BLOOD

DRIVE: On Saturday, January 17 in Father Haley Hall, the Council will sponsor its annual Red Cross Blood Drive. Hours are from 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM. To schedule an appointment, contact 1-800-REDCROSS or visit on-line redcrossblood.org and search by zip code (01746) in the "Find a Blood Drive" field. No walk-ins will be accepted. You must have an appointment. If you have further questions, contact Blood Drive Coordinator Rodman Burgett at 508-653-6130. Every day, blood donors help patients of all ages - accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those battling cancer. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. Please help!

WINTER CEMETERY CLEANUP: In preparation for the winter season, please remove all plant, chime, birdfeeder and ornamental hangers from your Cemetery Lots. With the ground becoming frozen, these can be very dangerous if broken or leaning into the right of way of funeral vehicles. Please also remove all benches, unless it is a stone bench that serves as a headstone. **All listed items still remaining will be removed on Monday, January 5, 2026.**

HOLLISTON PANTRY SHELF: Food items needed at the Pantry: Progresso Soup, Campbell's Chunky Soup, Campbell's Tomato Soup, Ritz Crackers, saltine crackers, canned pears, canned regular coffee (11 oz), canned decaf coffee (11 oz), tuna fish, pasta sauce, pasta (various), Oreo's, Chips Ahoy Cookies and juice boxes. Donations may be dropped off in the tan bin by the main Parish Center parking lot doors right here at St. Mary's. Thank you for helping our brothers and sisters in need.

ROSE FOR LIFE: The Rose this week is sponsored by Ann Chiango in memory of Carmen Chiango. Please join them in prayer for an unborn child. Sponsor a Rose by emailing st.marys1870@gmail.com.

WHAT IS THE ROSE FOR LIFE? In every Sunday bulletin you see the name of an individual or family who has sponsored the "Rose for Life" that week. This tradition began at St. Mary's twenty-eight years ago. The cost of sponsoring the rose is \$10. Part of this goes to purchase a single rose which is placed in front of the statue of Mary in our church every Saturday morning, remaining there all week as a visible reminder to please pray for the health and safety of unborn children. The rest of the offering is given to the Pregnancy Help Program of the Archdiocese of Boston, a beautiful ministry that assists individuals in crisis pregnancies. We currently need many new sponsors for 2026. Please call 508-429-4427 to become part of this beautiful affirmation of life.



POPE LEO XIV

DILEXI TE ~ POPE LEO'S FIRST APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION, January 24 & 31, 2026: Are you interested in reading more about “the close connection between Christ’s love and His summons to care for the poor” (Dilexi Te, #3)? Following up on last year’s discussion of Pope Francis’ Encyclical on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, (Dilexit Nos), St. Mary’s, Holliston Parishioner (also St. Mary’s, Franklin Pastoral Associate), Leo Racine, will be facilitating a Zoom discussion of Pope Leo’s October 2025 Apostolic Exhortation, Dilexi Te: On Love for the Poor. It will take place at 10 AM on the last two Saturday mornings in January: January 24 and 31. Call Leo at 508-429-7476 or email him at leoaracine@msn.com for more information or to register.

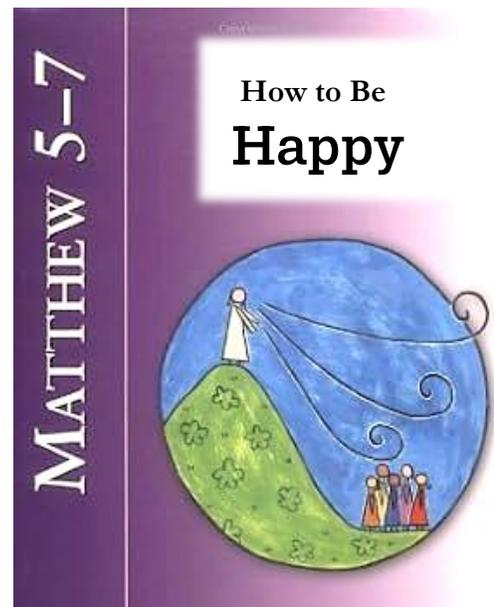
Cor ~ ST. MARY’S FAITH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM FOR MEN: All men of St. Mary’s parish age 18 and older are invited to join *Cor*, a faith enrichment program designed to help and support men as they seek to deepen their relationship with God through scripture, catechesis, prayer and small group discussions. Our next

season of *Cor* will begin in February, 2026. We usually meet at 7 PM on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Further details on dates and location will be provided soon. For more information, or to be added to the email list, contact StMarysCor@gmail.com.



ST. MARY’S MOM’S PRAYER GROUP: Is on hiatus until January 6, 2026. Please join us on Tuesdays in January from 9:45 - 11 AM, in Fr. Haley Hall as we pray together, read reflections according to the liturgical season, and share prayer intentions. During the school year, children of all ages are welcome and there are toys and coloring activities available. For more information, please contact Lauren Onak at 954-803-9942.

WINGS (Women in God’s Spirit): Is pleased to present our 2026 Winter Bible Study in person and via Zoom. **The Winter Season begins Wednesday, January 28 at 10 AM and ends Wednesday, March 4.** WINGS has chosen Kevin Perrotta’s book “Matthew 5 - 7: How To be Happy” as our guide.



Books may be purchased through Amazon or Loyola Press. There are also used copies available. Please let us know if you have trouble with the ordering process. Note that it is not mandatory to purchase the book to participate in the Winter Bible Study. WINGS will email references to the relevant bible verses and selected book commentary each week; however, the book does contain additional relevant material. WINGS requests dues of \$20 per season (unless you have already paid for the year); however, all women are most welcome regardless of ability to pay. Babysitting is provided; please register in advance. Checks payable to St. Mary’s Parish can be mailed to St. Mary’s Parish, 8 Church St., Holliston, MA, 01746 or pay at the door. To register, email stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com or call Jen at 617-852-9632 or Diane at 508-259-7795.

CLOW ~ CHILDREN K-6 ~ CHILDREN’S LITURGY OF THE WORD NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, AT THE 9:30 AM MASS IN THE CHURCH!



CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD FOR GROUP “A” MEETS ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 4 AT 8:00 AM IN SISTER RICCI HOUSE. The children are learning about the Liturgical

colors used in the Church during the year. All objects and articles used in the Atrium are made of natural materials, such as wood and stone. The child in the picture is holding a small white Chasuble. When the children attend Mass with their families they will know the season the Church is celebrating. The doll size Chasubles were sewn by Beth Comstock, a parishioner, as a gift for our Atrium.

DAY	CLASS	CLASS
Sun., Dec. 28 to Fri., Jan. 2	NO CLASSES Christmas Break	
Sun., Jan. 4 2026	CGS-A at 8:00 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
Mon., Jan. 5	GR-2 at 4:30 PM In the Church	
Tues., Jan. 6	GR-2 at 4:30 PM In the Church	GR-9/10 at 7:00 PM
Wed., Jan. 7	GR-2 at 4:30 PM In the Church	GR-9/10 at 7:00 PM
Sun., Jan. 11	CGS-B at 8:00 AM GR-2 at 8:10 AM GR-2 at 10:45 AM	GR-3 at 7:55 AM GR-3 AT 10:45 AM

GR-2 FIRST PENANCE SERVICES ~ WILL BE OFFERED ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 9 AT 6:30 PM AND SATURDAY, JANUARY 10 AT 10:30 AM. Children preparing to receive the Sacrament of First Penance were signed up at the Parent meeting.

GRADE 2 FIRST PENANCE REVIEW: GR-2 Penance Reviews are listed below. Attendance is required. Parents must bring their children to the church by 4:30 PM.

- Monday, January 5 at 4:30 PM for the 8:10 Sunday classes.
- Tuesday, January 6 at 4:30 PM for the 10:45 Sunday classes.
- Wed., January 7 at 4:30 PM for the 4:15 Wednesday classes.

CONFIRMATION PROGRAM 2025-2026: ALL SESSIONS MEET IN FR. HALEY HALL

Grade 7 Confirmation I: Meets on Tuesday, January 13 or Wednesday, January 14 at 7:00 PM.

Grade 8 Confirmation II: Meets on Monday, January 12 or Thursday, January 15 at 7:00 PM.

Grade 9/10 Confirmation: Meets on Tuesday, January 6 or Wednesday, January 7 at 7:00 PM.

GR-3, 4, 5 AND 6 COORDINATOR MEETING: Thursday, January 8 at 7:30 PM in Rooms 3 and 4.

GR-2 TEACHER MEETING ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST: Monday, January 12 at 7:30 PM in Rooms 3 and 4. Attendance is important to review the new Ignatius textbooks.

FOR ALL RELIGIOUS ED FAMILIES! MUST SEE VIRTUS EMPOWERING GOD’S CHILDREN (EGC) SAFETY PROGRAM: The month of January begins our Safety Renewal. Every year the Archdiocese of Boston requires Religious Education Programs to offer the safety classes to children and youth. Parents can view the program at: www.VIRTUSonline.org. Enter the **User Name:** Parent_Boston and then the **Password:** EGCBoston1. When you are in the landing page click on the **education tab** at the top. *Please take the time to view the lesson plans for your child’s grade before the scheduled safety classes begin in January.*



R.E. CLASS SNOW CANCELLATIONS: When Holliston public schools are closed due to inclement weather, the 9 AM Daily Mass and Religious Education classes will not be held. Weather cancellations will be aired on Channel 5 and Channel 7 during the week and on Channel 4 on Saturday & Sunday only. You can also call the R.E. Office at 508-429-6076 and press ext. 28 for cancellation notices.



MONDAY, DECEMBER 22 THROUGH FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 2026. CLASSES WILL RESUME ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2026.

When we fall away from God, the Holy Spirit shakes the depths of our souls. When we live in God’s love, the Holy Spirit watches over our hearts to bring us back to life. May God fill our hearts with His Spirit so that our lives will be filled with meaning and peace!



The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God ~ At the Heart of the Incarnation

On January 1, as the world turns its attention to new beginnings, the Church pauses to contemplate a mystery already given. The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God places before the faithful the central truth of Christmas: that the eternal Son of God truly entered human history, taking flesh from the Virgin Mary. This feast is not an optional devotion or a sentimental add-on to the season, but a doctrinal and spiritual cornerstone of the Christian faith.

The origins of the Solemnity reach back to the earliest centuries of the Church, when reflection on Mary was inseparable from reflection on Christ. In A.D. 431, the Council of Ephesus solemnly affirmed the title of Mary as “Theotokos,” meaning “God-bearer” or “Mother of God.” The debate that prompted the council was not about exaggerating Mary’s role, but about defending the identity of Jesus Christ. To deny Mary the title Mother of God was to suggest that the One she bore was not truly divine.

By proclaiming Mary as Mother of God, the Church safeguarded the truth that Jesus Christ is one divine Person with two natures, fully God and fully man. As St. Cyril of Alexandria insisted, *“If anyone does not confess that Emmanuel is truly God, and therefore that the holy Virgin is the Mother of God, let him be anathema.”* The title “Theotokos” thus serves as a doctrinal boundary, protecting the unity of Christ and the reality of the Incarnation itself.



Liturgically, devotion to Mary’s divine motherhood developed early in Rome, where January 1 was celebrated as a Marian feast within the Octave of Christmas. Theologically, the Solemnity proclaims a truth both humbling and astonishing: that God chose to need a mother. In Mary, divine grace and human freedom meet without conflict. Her fiat *“Let it be done to me according to your word,”* is an act of courageous trust that opens the door to salvation. As St. Irenaeus beautifully observed, *“The knot of Eve’s disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary.”*

For Catholics today, this Solemnity offers profound spiritual consolation. Mary’s divine motherhood assures us that God remains close to the realities of human life. Because she is Mother of God, she is also Mother of all who belong to Christ, interceding for the Church with maternal care. Celebrated at the dawn of a new year, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God invites the faithful to entrust their lives anew to the One who became flesh through her, and Who continues to dwell among us.

Fittingly, January 1 is also observed as the World Day of Peace. Mary, the Mother of the Prince of Peace, points us toward her Son, Who alone can bring lasting peace to our hearts, to our families, and to this hurting world.

The picture (left) is the image above the pipe organ in our church.