



**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](http://www.stmarysholliston.com)

[parish@stmarysholliston.org](mailto:parish@stmarysholliston.org)

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 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 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,

Today we hear of a moment of growing pains in the early Church. As the number of disciples increased, so too did the needs of the community (Acts 6:1-7). The Apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, appointed seven men *"filled with the spirit and wisdom,"* to serve as the first deacons, ensuring that no one was neglected and that charity remained at the heart of Christian life. This passage reminds us that the Church is always both spiritual and practical, grounded in prayer and expressed through service.

How fitting it is that we hear this reading just one week after celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination of Deacon Marty here in our parish. Like those first deacons, Marty has faithfully lived a life of humble service - proclaiming the Gospel, assisting at the altar, and caring for those in need.

I want to again extend my heartfelt thanks to all who helped make last Sunday's celebrations so joyful and memorable. These include Abby Kelly-Lanser and our amazing Choir, Mary Beth Harris and Joanne Martinelli, Jennifer and Rodman Burgett, John and Tracy Abucewicz, Peter and Maureen Eagan, and Janet and Tony Alexander.



And most especially, we thank you, Deacon Marty, for your decades of faithful and generous service. Your ministry is a living witness to the enduring mission first entrusted to those seven men in the Acts of the Apostles.

As we turn the calendar to May, the Church invites us into a special closeness with Mary, the Mother of God. The tradition of dedicating May to Mary developed over centuries, rooted in the natural symbolism of spring - a time of new life, beauty, and growth. Just as the earth blossoms, so too are we invited to let our spiritual lives flourish under Mary's gentle guidance.

Mary is the perfect disciple, the one who said "yes" to God with her whole being. In today's Gospel (John 14:1-12), Jesus tells His disciples, *"Do not let your hearts be troubled... I am the way and the truth and the life."* Mary lived this trust completely. Even in moments of uncertainty and sorrow, she remained steadfast, believing in God's promises. In honoring her this month, we are drawing closer to Christ through the one who knew Him best. The one who showed us how to love Him.

A beautiful way to embrace this Marian month is through simple, intentional acts: praying the Rosary, creating a small Marian space in your home, or offering daily intentions through her intercession. In doing so, we allow her example of faith, humility, and love to shape our own discipleship.

As St. Louis de Montfort once wrote, *"When the Holy Spirit finds Mary in a soul, He flies there."* May our hearts become such places - open, humble, and ready to receive Christ more fully through the loving presence of His Mother.

God bless you.

Rev. Mark J. Coiro



**She stands where blossoms open without sound,  
a quiet crown resting not on gold, but surrender.**

**Morning gathers at her feet,  
petals, prayers, the soft breathing of earth  
awakening.**

**She does not command the light;  
she receives it,  
and in receiving, becomes its mirror.**

**Around her, May unfolds,  
green rising from hidden places,  
life answering a call it never heard aloud.**

**She is queen in the way a garden is,  
not ruling, but allowing,  
not holding, but bearing.**

**And in her stillness,  
something eternal leans close to the world again.**

**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, 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



**CROWNING OF MARY:** Our parish will celebrate the May Crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the 11:30 AM Mass today, Sunday. This beautiful tradition serves as public recognition of Mary as the Queen of Heaven and Earth, symbolizing her unique role in the history of salvation. By placing a crown of blossoms upon her statue, we honor her “yes” to God and invite her maternal protection over our community during this month dedicated to her grace. We thank our 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders for sponsoring this annual event!

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>May 2</b>
5:00	Wanda Peloquin
7:30	Mission Trip Mass
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>May 3</b>
7:30	People of St. Mary’s
9:30	George J. Bourque, 15 <sup>th</sup> Anv.
<b>11:30</b>	<b>Crowning of Mary</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>May 4</b>
9:00	Fr. Haley
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>May 5</b>
9:00	Joyce Marie McKenna (Living)
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>May 6</b>
9:00	Holy Souls in Purgatory
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>May 7</b>
9:00	Rev. Philip J. DesRosiers
<b>Friday</b>	<b>May 8</b>
9:00	Pasquale and Francesca DiCenso
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>May 9</b>
5:00	Joan Mullen
7:30	People of St. Mary’s
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>May 10</b>
7:30	Judy Cruz
9:30	Costantina DiCenso
11:30	Fr. Haley

**MAY 10, MOTHER’S DAY:** A special Blessing of Mothers will take place at all Masses next weekend. Lovely Flower Bouquets will also be available Saturday and Sunday this weekend in support of our High School Summer Mission Trip to Mississippi. \$20.00 a bouquet - cash, check or Venmo. Your donation brings a smile to Mom’s face and helps our teens travel to do a week of outreach among the poor. Thank you!

**MAY 14, ASCENSION THURSDAY, A HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION:** Vigil Mass, Wednesday, May 13, at 6:15 PM. Feast Day Masses, Thursday, May 14, at 9:00 AM & 6:15 PM. The Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after the Feast of Pascha (Easter). Since the date of Pascha changes each year, the date of the Feast of the Ascension also changes. The Feast is always celebrated on a Thursday and marks an event of such importance that it is a Holy Day of Obligation. This means that Catholics attend Mass this day as on a Sunday. The Feast itself commemorates when, on the fortieth day after His Resurrection, Jesus led His disciples to the Mount of Olives, and after blessing them and asking them to wait for the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit, He ascended into heaven. Where He has gone, we hope one day to follow!

**MAY 17, CLASS OF 2026 MASS FOR GRADUATES!:** On Sunday, May 17, at 11:30 AM, St. Mary’s will offer her 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Mass for Graduates. This year our parish has teens graduating from seven different schools.

The Mass will include a special Blessing of Graduates, the Presentation of the 2026 Blessed Mother Scholarship, and Student Class Speaker Alex Robie. The Mass is followed by a light reception in Fr. Haley Hall, and a Group Class Photo for the Newsletter. Come congratulate our graduates!



# Stewardship Matters

*“A Christian steward is one who receives God’s gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.”*

## PARISH OFFERTORY LAST WEEKEND:

Automatic Giving:	\$ 2,869.00
WeShare:	\$ 6,232.71
Offertory Envelopes:	\$ 8,641.00
Total Offertory:	\$ 17,742.71

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/>.



## 2026 CATHOLIC APPEAL UPDATE:

Dollar Goal: 100%  
Donor Goal: 87%

Thank you to all who have already made their Appeal Gift. We have made our parish’s assigned goal, in part due to a \$25,000 gift from a single family. We are very grateful to them and to all who have done what they could.

**The challenge now is that 13% of those who donated last year have not done so yet, and many more families still have never donated.**

No one is asked to do more than they can, but all are asked to do something - according to their means - to support the good works of our Catholic Church.



Printed Appeal materials are available outside the Religious Education Office. Please use them, or visit: <https://bostoncatholicappeal.org/>. Thank you!

On Saturday, May 16, all are invited to attend a very special presentation by miracle recipient Deacon Jack Sullivan which will be followed by a Healing Service in the church. The event starts at 1 PM in the church. The Healing Service is from 2 - 2:30 PM.



On August 15, 2001, Deacon Jack Sullivan was healed from a crippling spinal disorder after praying for the intercession of Cardinal John Henry Newman. His sudden, complete recovery was presented to the Vatican as part of its investigation into the beatification of Cardinal Newman. On July 3, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI announced that the healing was in fact a miracle which led to Newman’s beatification in England on September 19, 2010. Deacon Sullivan participated as a Deacon in John Henry Newman’s beatification Mass with Pope Francis as celebrant. Cardinal Newman was later canonized as a saint by Pope Francis on October 13, 2019.

In his presentation, Deacon Sullivan will speak about his miraculous healing, his devotion to Saint John Henry Newman and the subsequent healings he has been blessed to be a part of, here and abroad, through the intercession of St. John Henry Newman. After his presentation, Deacon Sullivan will lead a healing service for all, followed by individual blessings for those seeking St. Newman’s help. Deacon Sullivan has the only first-class relic of St. John Henry Newman other than the original relic in the UK and will bring the relic with him to the healing service.

*“Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, Lead Thou me on! The night is dark, and I am far from home. Lead Thou me on! Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me.”*  
- St. John Henry Newman

Written during a period of physical illness and spiritual searching, these lines emphasize the beauty of “intellectual humility.” It suggests that we don’t need to have the entire map of our lives laid out; we only need enough light to take the very next step with confidence.



A CONCERT CELEBRATING

# VIRTUE'S VOICE

*Reflections on Faith and Freedom*

ST. MARY'S IN HOLLISTON

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL

★ ★ **FRIDAY, MAY 29 | 7:00 PM** ★ ★

Join us for the return of our annual Spring Choir Concert, celebrating the United States' 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the virtues that uphold the dignity of all people.

ST. MARY'S MUSIC MINISTRY

ABIGAIL KELLEY-LANSER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

THIS PROGRAM IS FUNDED IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE HOLLISTON CULTURAL COUNCIL, A LOCAL AGENCY WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL, A STATE AGENCY.

## FOR WOMEN

**ST. MARY'S MOM'S PRAYER GROUP:** Please join us **this Tuesday, May 5 from 9:45 - 11 AM**, in Fr. Haley Hall as we pray together, read reflections by the liturgical season, and share prayer intentions. Children of all ages are welcome with toys and coloring activities available. For information, please contact Lauren Onak at 954-803-9942.



The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of our WINGS 2026 Spring Season “One Body - Living Faith in a Fragmented World” is **this Wednesday, May 6** at 10 AM in Father Haley Hall and over Zoom. Our speaker



will be Catherine Duggan who will speak on “A Shared Pulse: Radical Compassion.” Catherine will share how she evangelizes others using primarily online resources via her Podcast: [Walk Boldly with Jesus](#). Catherine has an M.Ed. in Special Education, is married with three boys, is a certified life coach, and a

certified spiritual coach. Babysitting is available; please register in advance. Email

[stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com) to register or call Jen at 617-852-9632 or Diane at 508-259-7795.

**Radical compassion is not a soft alternative to truth, but its living expression in a fractured world; it is the courage to see Christ in every person, especially where wounds, divisions, and misunderstandings run deepest.**

**To live our faith today is to refuse the temptation of indifference or easy judgment, and instead to draw near - listening, accompanying, and loving with a steadfastness that mirrors the mercy we ourselves have received.**

**In this way, compassion becomes a quiet but powerful force for unity, healing what argument alone cannot mend, and revealing that even amid fragmentation, the Body of Christ is not broken but waiting to be made visible through us.**

## FOR MEN

**Cor ~ ST. MARY'S FAITH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM FOR MEN:** Don't miss our final *Cor* meeting of the Spring 2026 season on Thursday, May 28. We will meet as usual in Fr. Haley Hall at 7 PM and cover the important topic of the Sacraments.



At our most recent meeting, we learned about Jesus' true presence in the Eucharist, and about some of the amazing Eucharistic miracles that defy scientific explanation. At our next meeting, we will look into some of the other Sacraments of the Catholic Church, and see how those Sacraments, like the Eucharist, are much more than they may appear on the surface, with each conferring unique spiritual benefits.

The mission of *Cor* is to provide Catholic men an opportunity to gather together and support each other as they seek to deepen their relationships with God through scripture, catechesis, prayer and small group discussions. *Cor* will not meet during the summer, but meetings will resume in the Fall.

All men of St. Mary's parish age 18 and older are welcome to join us for faith enrichment, scripture, catechesis, prayer and brotherhood. For more information, contact [StMarysCor@gmail.com](mailto:StMarysCor@gmail.com).

## FOR ALL

We are reminded in today's Mass Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, that after the Resurrection “*the word of God continued to spread, and the number of disciples. . . increased greatly.*” That growth of faith was born from the witness of the disciples and from people's openness to God's grace.

We are now the ones being charged with witnessing to Christ at this time in history. Recall Jesus' words to the disciples in the Gospel. “*Do not be afraid. . . whoever believes in me will do the works that I do.*”

When we speak about Jesus - the Way, Truth and Life, we need only to rely on His grace, and Christ will bring our efforts to a good end.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION



### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AT FATIMA SHRINE: Do you love helping people and keeping things organized? We're looking for

a welcoming, detail-oriented Office Manager to help our shrine run smoothly and joyfully. This role supports our staff and the shrine's goals, manages daily office operations, and ensures that everyone who walks through our doors feels at home. If you're friendly, dependable, and inspired by your faith and the church's global outreach, we'd love to hear from you! To apply: Send your résumé to Fr. Carl Chudy, [cchudy@xaverianmissionaries](mailto:cchudy@xaverianmissionaries) | or text to 862-264-7000. Call for more information at 508-429-2144.

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS 18<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

**CHARITY RAFFLE:** The Knights have begun selling tickets to their Annual Charity Raffle. The proceeds from this raffle go to local charities such as the Holliston [Senior] Center, O'Connell House, Homes for our Troops, and the Doug Flutie Foundation for Autism. One ticket is \$5 and a book of five for \$20. First prize is \$1,000. The raffle drawing will take place at the K of C Golf tournament on June 26. Knights will sell tickets at Shaw's in Medway on May 22 and 23; at Roche Bros. in Millis on May 15 and 16; and at Shaw's in Ashland on June 6 and 7. The direct contact to purchase raffle tickets is [stmaryshollistonkofc@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryshollistonkofc@gmail.com).

**FY26 CORIs NOW DUE:** It is that time of year again! CORIs must be renewed each year for all St. Mary's volunteers, along with reviewing the RCAB Code of Conduct. If you have not already completed your FY26 CORI, you can complete these forms in the Religious Education office.

**PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES & FATIMA FROM OUR LADY OF FATIMA SHRINE:** We are organizing a pilgrimage to Lourdes and Fatima from September 1 - 10, 2026. It will cost \$3,974.00 double occupancy, including all meals, tips, and local travel. It will be a marvelous opportunity to bring our prayers of peace and unity in our world today to Our Lady in very special ways. Contact our office at 508-429-2144 or [holliston@xaverianmissionaries.org](mailto:holliston@xaverianmissionaries.org). You can also contact Fr. Carl Chudy for more information at [cchudy@xaverianmissionaries.org](mailto:cchudy@xaverianmissionaries.org).

## FOR THOSE IN NEED

**A REQUEST FROM OUR DAUGHTER PARISH:** St. Joseph's Medway Homeless Ministry is looking for volunteers to join our Monday evening outreach! We travel to Boston from 5 - 8 PM to bring food and clothing to the homeless. We are looking for additional drivers to join our rotating team.



No weekly commitment is required - serve as your schedule allows. Contact St. Joseph's Parish Center for more details at 508-533-7771. God bless you.

**THE ROSE FOR LIFE:** The Rose this week is sponsored by the Reilly Family. Please join them in prayer for an unborn child. Please call Mary Beth at 508-429-4427 to become part of this beautiful affirmation of life.

**HOLLISTON PANTRY SHELF:** Food items needed at the Pantry: white vinegar (16 oz), juice boxes (apple, orange, fruit punch), canned regular coffee (11 oz), canned decaf coffee (11 oz), Chips Ahoy Cookies, Ritz crackers (13.7 oz Box), and canned beets (16 oz). Donations may be dropped off in the tan bin by the main parking lot doors right here at St. Mary's, or to the bins outside 73 Charles Street.

**PROJECT RACHEL POST-ABORTION HEALING RETREATS:** Are you - or someone you know - seeking peace after an abortion? The Project Rachel ministry of the Archdiocese of Boston extends a special invitation to women experiencing regret from a past abortion to attend a Come to the Waters of Healing one-day retreat. Upcoming dates are Saturday, February 28 (Greater Boston), Saturday, April 11 (Merrimack Valley), and Saturday, May 16 (Boston/South). Locations are confidential. For more information on the retreats or other services, contact Project Rachel at 508-651-3100 or [help@projectrachelboston.com](mailto:help@projectrachelboston.com).

# FOR OUR YOUTH

## MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP!

Our End of Year Parent Potluck Meeting is Sunday, May 17, from 6:30 - 8:30 PM! Parents of our MSYG teens are invited to come and enjoy the night, which includes an awesome MSYG Slideshow. Raft-mate Sign-Ups and Brownstone Quarry Sign-Ups will take place at the May 17 Meeting. And don't forget about the Giant Three Town Scavenger Hunt on Friday, May 15!

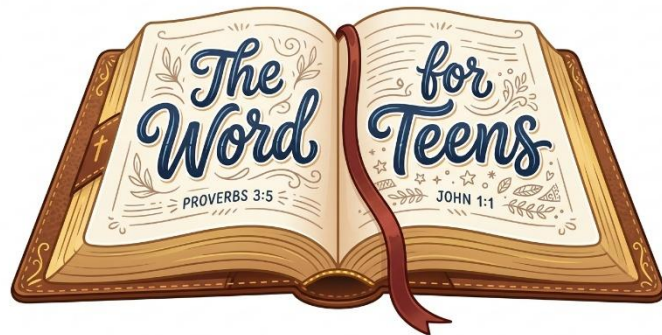


## HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP!

Our next TGIF Meeting is our FAMILY POTLUCK DINNER on Sunday, May 31, from 6:30 - 8:30 PM in Fr. Haley Hall. This is a wonderful evening for TGIF teens and their

families to celebrate the year, honor our seniors and watch the slideshow.

Scan the QR Code to follow along on our adventures which are filled with Faith, Fellowship and Fun. For more information about TGIF High School Youth Group, contact: Lisa Dufault [tgif@stmarysholliston.org](mailto:tgif@stmarysholliston.org).



There's something powerful in the way St. Peter describes Jesus as the "living stone" - rejected by people, yet chosen and precious in God's eyes. For teenagers today, that can hit close to home. Everyone knows what it feels like to be left out, misunderstood, or judged. But this reading reminds us that rejection doesn't define our worth - God does. And in His eyes, you are chosen, loved, and essential.

Peter doesn't stop there - he says that you are living stones too, being built into something greater: a spiritual house. That means your life has purpose beyond what you see day to day. Every act of kindness, every moment you choose what is right over what is easy, every time you stand up for your faith - you're helping build something lasting, something holy.

It's also a reminder that faith isn't meant to be lived alone. Stones come together to form something strong. In the same way, you're part of a community - the Church - where you belong. Even when you feel uncertain or struggle with doubts, God is still working in you and through you.

And then comes the most beautiful truth: *"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation."* That's not just poetic language - it's your identity. You are chosen. You are called. You are meant to shine God's light in a world that often feels dark.

So when life feels overwhelming, or when you question your value, remember this: you are not random, and you are not alone. You are a living stone, carefully placed by God, with a role no one else can fill. Let that truth give you confidence, peace, and the courage to live boldly as His disciple.

**CLOW ~ CHILDREN K-6 ~ CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD:** The children remain in the church to listen and learn what Jesus teaches us in His Gospel message.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES:**

DAY	GRADE	GRADE
Sun., May 3	CGS-A 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-6 at 4:00 PM
Mon., May 4	GR-8 at 7:00 PM	
Tues., May 5	GR-6 at 4:00 PM	GR-7 at 7:00 PM
Wed., May 6	GR-7 at 7:00 PM	
Thur., May 7	GR-8 at 7:00 PM	
Sun., May 10	CGS-B at 8:00 AM	GR-1 at 8:10 AM
	GR-4 at 10:45 AM	GR-5 at 10:45 AM

**PARISH MAY DEVOTION SPONSORED BY GRADES 3, 4 AND 5:** The May Devotion will take place **today**, following the 11:30 AM Mass. The children in Mary's Court will crown the statue of Mary. Fr. Mark will lead the blessing and recitation of the Rosary. Please join with the children in the May procession at the close of the Mass.

**CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD (CGS) OPEN HOUSE ~ SUNDAY, MAY 3 FROM 9:30 AM TO 1:00 PM:** Come and visit our Atrium where the children ages 3 - 5 (Pre-K and K) can experience the Montessori model for faith formation. Our first year in our Atrium is ending soon and we encourage families with young children to register early for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Faith Formation Program. Classes for CGS start in October with two sessions, one at 8:00 AM and the other at 10:45 AM on the same Sunday. Ask about the opportunity to be trained as a CGS Catechist or Assistant. The reward is satisfying partnering with a child on his/her faith journey!

**EMPOWERING GOD'S CHILDREN SAFETY SESSION FOR GRADE 5:** Any family wishing to Opt-Out their child must complete and submit an Opt-Out form to the Religious Education Office. Grade 5 - Sunday, May 17 at 10:45 AM.

**GRADE 2 REVIEW CLASSES:** Grade 2 children will have their review classes on Sunday, May 17 and Wednesday, May 20. Attendance is important on how to reverently receive the Holy Eucharist.

**FIRST COMMUNION MASS:** Our First Communion Mass is on Saturday, June 6. Please offer prayers for the children as they prepare to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL WEEK: JULY 20 - 24, 2026.**

**WHO:** Children entering Kindergarten through Grade 6. Teens entering Grade 7 and up and Adults are needed as VBS volunteers!

**WHEN:** 9 AM to 12:00 Noon each day.

**COST:** \$75/child, \$200/family max. Tuition assistance is available if needed.

**REGISTRATION:** Open now through June 1, but our max is 100 campers. Use QR Code or click:

<https://forms.gle/DfxUbFgn41QtqM7V7>

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR 2026-2027:** Our classes for this year will soon be ending and planning for next year has started. Online Registrations for all grade levels will be open on July 1, 2026. Be on watch for the Registration mailing outlining our class offerings, days, and times. Register and pay by locking in placement and your choice of classes before you depart for a restful summer and vacation. **NOTE:** Since there will be two sessions for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offered in the Fall, the children who are now in PRE-K will be moving up to Kindergarten in the Atrium. These families will have first choice for the 8:00 AM or 10:45 AM time slots if they register early.

**FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH:** If your child has missed several years of Religious Education, it is never too late to prepare them for a lifelong relationship with God. Our Catholic faith, founded by Jesus Christ, provides a good moral foundation based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Please contact us if your child needs to be prepared to receive the Sacraments of Baptism or First Communion, at 508-429-6076 or [religioureddre@stmarysholliston.org](mailto:religioureddre@stmarysholliston.org).



**POPE LEO XIV**

**REGINA CAELI**

*St. Peter's Square*

*4th Sunday of Easter, 26 April 2026*

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*Brothers and sisters, good afternoon and happy Sunday!*

As we continue our journey through the Easter season, today's Gospel presents us with Jesus' comparison of himself to a shepherd and also to the gate of the sheepfold (cf. *Jn* 10:1-10).

Jesus draws a contrast between the shepherd and the thief. Indeed, he says that "anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit" (v. 1). He goes on to make this even clearer: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (v. 10). The difference is clear: the shepherd has a special bond with his sheep and can therefore enter by the gate of the sheepfold. On the other hand, if someone has to climb over the fence to get in, then he is certainly a thief who wants to steal the sheep.

Jesus is telling us that he is bound to us by a relationship of friendship, for he knows us, calls us by name, guides us, and - just as the shepherd does with his sheep - searches for us when we are lost and binds up our wounds when we are sick (cf. *Ezek* 34:16). Jesus does not come as a thief to take away our life and our freedom, but to lead us along the paths of righteousness. He does not come to ensnare or deceive our conscience, but to illuminate it with the light of his wisdom. He does not come to taint our earthly joys, but to open them to a fuller and more lasting happiness. Those who entrust themselves to him have nothing to fear, for he does not deprive us of life, but comes to give it to us in abundance (cf. v. 10).

Brothers and sisters, we are invited to reflect on, and especially to be vigilant over, the gate to our heart and our life, because whoever enters may either increase our joy, or steal it from us like a thief. "Thieves" can take many



forms. They could be: people who, regardless of appearances, suppress our freedom or fail to respect our dignity; beliefs and biases that prevent us from viewing others and life with serenity; mistaken ideas that can lead us to make negative choices; or superficial and consumeristic lifestyles that leave us empty on the inside and push us to live constantly beyond ourselves.

And let us not forget those "thieves" who, by pillaging the earth's resources, waging blood-thirsty wars, or fueling evil in any form, do nothing but rob each of us of the possibility of a future marked by peace and serenity.

We must ask ourselves: Who do we want to guide us in life? Which "thieves" have tried to break into our fold? Have they succeeded, or have we managed to ward them off?

Today, the Gospel invites us to trust in the Lord. He does not come to take anything from us. On the contrary, he is the Good Shepherd who increases life and offers it to us in abundance. May the Blessed Virgin Mary always accompany us on our journey and intercede for us and for the whole world.

