

**ST. MARY'S PARISH
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**ST. MARY'S TO HOST HOLY
SEPULCHRE MASS ON THE
FEAST OF OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF PALESTINE.
Sunday, October 25
at 3 PM. All Are Invited.**

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre is a worldwide Catholic Order of Chivalry that is comprised of lay and clerical members. One of the oldest international Orders of Knighthood, it was founded in 1099 to safeguard the Holy Sites in the Holy Land, especially the Tomb of Christ.

Today, members of the Order commit themselves to continue growing in their knowledge and love of Jesus, and to supporting the Church's works of mercy in the Holy Land - particularly through schools, hospitals, clinics and the Latin Patriarchate. They assist in the preservation of a living and viable Christian presence in the Holy Land held dear by all Catholics as the land where our Lord was born, preached, died and rose to save us.

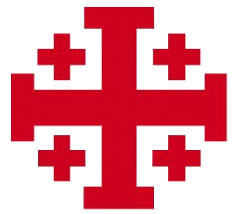
2026 marks the Hundredth Anniversary of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in the United States. There will be several special events to mark this Centennial, and Saint Mary's, Holliston has been chosen as the site for one of them. This is due to our strong support of the Order's Mission, including our Sister Parish in Beit Sahour.

Please save the date for Sunday, October 25, when at 3 PM we will be hosting a special Mass for the Feast of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine. Knights and Dames of the Holy Sepulchre are coming from throughout the Lieutenancy, but the Mass is open to all. Join us as we pray for Peace in the Holy Land and the world.

Photo Above: A copy of the Icon of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine that we have acquired in anticipation of the Feast Day Mass. The original is housed at the Order's Headquarters in Rome. Painted by the nuns of the Israeli monastery of Beit Jamal, the icon portrays Mary with the city of Jerusalem nestled in her arms, thus embracing symbolically all its inhabitants: Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike, all welcomed in her embrace - a powerful and revolutionary message of peace. Pope Francis commented on the icon in the Palazzo della Rovere, saying: *"Mary looks at us in such a way that one feels embraced by her."*

St. Mary's Parish Newsletter

Fall, 2026 ~ Volume 52, Number 6



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

Rectory: 429-4427

Religious Education Center: 429-6076

Music Program: 429-6076

Religious Education Email:
religiousedsec@stmarysholliston.org

Parish Email Address: parish@stmarysholliston.org

Website: www.stmarysholliston.com

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



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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

As we prepare for our special celebration of the Feast of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine, I have been thinking about a simple line from Saint Paul: *"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it"* (1 Corinthians 12:26). Those words have particular meaning for us because the Christians of the Holy Land are not strangers to us. Through our Sister Parish relationship with Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Beit Sahour, they are quite literally our brothers and sisters in Christ.



[Two Photos - St. Mary's and Beit Sahour Parishioners in Palestine.]

Many parishioners have been asking me recently: How are they doing? What is actually happening in Beit Sahour?

Unfortunately, the answer is a difficult one. Beit Sahour, the traditional home of the Shepherds' Field, lies immediately east of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank. It is also home to one of the oldest continuous Christian communities in the world. Our Sister Parish is not simply a shrine preserving memories of Christianity's past. It is a living Catholic community, with families, children, Scouts, religious sisters, parish ministries, and a Latin Patriarchate school whose history reaches back to 1864.

That distinction is important. Christians in the Holy Land sometimes speak of themselves as the "living stones." The holy places matter enormously, but Christianity cannot be preserved there merely by protecting ancient churches while the Christian families who worship in them slowly disappear.

That danger is becoming increasingly real. A recent report provided to us describes Christian unemployment in the region at an extraordinary 54 percent. Tourism and pilgrimage, upon which generations of Christian craftsmen, hotel employees, shopkeepers, guides, drivers, and restaurant owners have depended, have been devastated. For young Christians finishing school

or university and finding little prospect of employment, emigration increasingly appears to be the only viable future. The report puts the challenge starkly: Christians are not asking to become “a historical curiosity.” They want the opportunity to work, raise their children, practice their faith, and remain with dignity in the land where Christianity began.

The troubles have now touched our Sister Parish in an intensely personal way. Many of you remember Father Louis Salman, who became Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima last year. In addition to serving as pastor, he had a particular ministry among Palestinian Catholic youth. He is also a Jordanian Citizen. (The Latin Patriarchate covers Palestine, Israel, Jordan, and Cyprus).

This past May, Israeli authorities refused to renew Father Salman’s residency permit, effectively requiring him to leave the West Bank and return to Jordan. According to reporting citing an official of the Latin Patriarchate, the Israeli authorities objected to social-media posts they characterized as “incitement.”

Church and other sources described Father Salman’s public positions as calls for justice and peace, defense of Palestinian dignity and freedom, criticism of the occupation, and rejection of violence. Because he is a Jordanian citizen dependent upon Israeli authorization to reside in the West Bank, the refusal to renew his permit meant that he could no longer remain with his parish.

Father Salman celebrated his final Mass at Our Lady of Fatima on May 10 before an emotional congregation and returned to Jordan. He wrote afterward that he had left “*the land I loved*” to return to his homeland while continuing his mission of the Gospel and justice.

The Latin Patriarchate subsequently reassigned him as Pastor of the Twelve Apostles Parish in Zarqa North, Jordan. At the same time, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa appointed Father Eyad Bader as the new Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Beit Sahour. For our friends in Beit Sahour, therefore, this was not an abstract debate over immigration regulations. Their pastor was suddenly gone.

And now the land immediately beside Beit Sahour is threatened. At the eastern edge of Beit Sahour lies Ush al-Ghurab, a hilltop of enormous importance to the town. After the Israeli military left a former base there, Beit Sahour hoped to develop the area for civilian purposes. Among the plans was a children’s hospital, with American assistance. That hospital was never built. The land remained largely unavailable for Palestinian development because it lies in Area C, where Israel exercises planning and administrative control.

The story has now taken a disturbing turn. Settlers established a new outpost there, and in June the Israeli government placed approximately 116 dunams of land within the jurisdiction of the new settlement, including the former military compound, surrounding lands, and part of a public park belonging to Beit Sahour. As recently as this past week, reports indicate that the outpost is continuing to expand, with additional mobile homes being brought into the area.



The World Council of Churches issued an unusually strong statement in June, warning that the settlement would further isolate Beit Sahour, accelerate the loss of Palestinian land, and threaten the future of one of the Holy Land’s oldest remaining Christian communities.

https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-statement-on-ush-ghurab-settlement?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

That last point deserves our attention. This is not merely about losing another hillside. Ush al-Ghurab represents one of the few remaining directions in which an already constrained Beit

Sahour can naturally grow. When young families cannot build homes, when businesses cannot expand, when land becomes inaccessible, and when employment disappears, the eventual result can be emigration. A church building may remain standing while the Christian community surrounding it gradually vanishes.

Nor has the pressure been confined to disputes over maps and land. Palestinians in Beit Sahour have experienced actual violence and intimidation. In April, settlers reportedly detained and beat a Palestinian man in the Ush al-Ghurab area; days later, settlers uprooted newly planted olive trees and attacked homes on the eastern side of the town.

Later that month, armed settlers fired live ammunition toward Palestinians who were on their own land in the Jabal Harasa area, although thankfully no injuries were reported. And as recently as August 14, an armed settler was filmed firing into the air and pointing his weapon toward Palestinians and Israeli peace activists who had accompanied local landowners onto threatened property near Beit Sahour.

These incidents help us understand why our brothers and sisters there speak not simply about losing land, but about an increasing atmosphere of fear and uncertainty surrounding their community.

The situation is equally troubling in Palestinian health care. Israel collects significant customs and tax revenues on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. The prolonged withholding of those revenues has contributed to a severe Palestinian fiscal crisis. According to the United Nations, by June more than one-third of essential medicines in the West Bank had reached zero-stock levels - including 180 of 520 essential medicines and 50 of 97 cancer treatment drugs. More than 11,000 scheduled surgeries had reportedly been postponed since the beginning of this year.

Access itself is another problem. During the first six months of 2026, more than one-fifth of Palestinian applications for permits to obtain specialized medical treatment in East Jerusalem or Israel were either denied or not approved in time for the patient's appointment.

And the situation has deteriorated further. By the end of July, the World Health Organization had recorded 98 attacks or interferences affecting health care in the West Bank during 2026, affecting 83 health-transport vehicles and 11 health facilities. Checkpoints, road closures, and military operations continue to delay ambulances, patients, medical personnel, and mobile clinics.

These statistics can become numbing. But behind "shortage of medicine" is a cancer patient waiting for treatment. Behind "movement restriction" is an ambulance waiting at a checkpoint. Behind "postponed surgery" is a frightened family.

On June 21, 2026, Israeli forces arrested Dr. Mazen Rantisi, a 71-year-old Palestinian family physician and chair of the HWC board, during a pre-dawn raid on his Ramallah home. He is widely known as the "doctor of the poor" because of his long service to low-income Palestinians. Forces then took him to HWC headquarters, searched the offices, and a military order closed the headquarters for a year.

The action extended beyond Dr. Rantisi. HWC's financial director, Tayseer Abu Shalbak, was also arrested, and further raids in late June and early July resulted in the



[Photo, Dr. Mazen Rantisi].

detention of people associated with the organization in several West Bank cities. AP reported, for example, that women with current or former HWC connections were taken from their homes during nighttime raids in Hebron and Nablus.

HWC is a significant Palestinian nonprofit healthcare organization. According to the organization and international health advocates, its network includes twelve health centers across the West Bank, providing primary and specialized medical care and other services, particularly to poor and underserved communities.

In recent weeks another danger has emerged that could affect virtually every Palestinian family and

institution in the West Bank: banking. The Palestinian economy depends heavily upon the Israeli shekel, and Palestinian banks require relationships with Israeli banks to process shekel transactions. Those relationships allow salaries to be paid and businesses to function, permitting the importation of such basic necessities as food, fuel, and medicine.

Two Israeli banks had announced plans to terminate those correspondent-banking relationships. Financial officials warned that if those connections disappeared, the consequences would be catastrophic for the Palestinian economy. The transactions involved amount to approximately 51 billion shekels - about \$16.6 billion - each year.

The issue has become serious enough that a group of United States senators wrote to the Administration just days ago warning of the danger of economic collapse and urging action to preserve the banking relationships. There is, thankfully, a very recent development. As I write this on August 31, Israel Discount Bank has agreed, following international pressure, to postpone its September 1 cutoff. So the immediate crisis has been averted for the moment - but only for the moment.

Imagine living with that degree of uncertainty: whether the banking system through which your employer pays you, your business purchases goods, your hospital obtains supplies, and your family conducts ordinary life will continue functioning from one month to the next. Why should this matter to us? Because these are our brothers and sisters.

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre has understood this responsibility for centuries. Its members today support the Church in the Holy Land, precisely so that there may remain a living and viable Christian presence in the places where Our Lord was born, preached, died, and rose again.

This October, that mission will come particularly close to home. On Sunday, October 25, at 3 PM, St. Mary's will host a special Mass for the Feast of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine, as part of the centennial observances of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in the United States. Knights and

Dames will join us, but the Mass is open to everyone. There could hardly be a more appropriate moment for it.

Our beautiful icon of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine, portrays Mary holding Jerusalem within her arms - not one population, one religion, or one political cause - but the people of the Holy Land. Christians, Jews, and Muslims are symbolically gathered in her maternal embrace. That is precisely the spiritual vision the Holy Land needs.



(Yellow Dome Right - Muslim Dome of the Rock. Blue Domes Center - Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Center Left - the Jewish Wailing Wall.)

The Church does not ask us to believe that one people must suffer so that another may flourish. We reject antisemitism. We reject terrorism and violence against innocent Israelis. And with equal clarity, we cannot be indifferent when Palestinian families lose land, freedom of movement, livelihoods, medical care, economic security, or hope for their children's future.

As the prophet Isaiah dreamed, God's holy mountain is meant to become a place where the Lord "*will wipe away the tears from all faces*" (Isaiah 25:8). And Our Lady herself sang of a God Who remembers the lowly and acts with mercy from generation to generation.

Peace worthy of the name cannot simply mean the absence of gunfire. Christian peace requires justice, human dignity, security, freedom, and the possibility of a future - for everyone.

Our friends at Our Lady of Fatima in Beit Sahour are trying to hold onto precisely that future. They continue celebrating Mass. They continue

educating children. They continue serving their neighbors. They continue raising families. And despite extraordinary pressures, the overwhelming majority of Christians of the Holy Land still want to remain in their homeland.

They are asking the wider Church not to forget them.

We will not.

As we prepare for the Feast of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine, let us entrust Father Eyad and his new ministry, Father Salman in Jordan, the families of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, and all the peoples of the Holy Land to Mary's intercession.

Let us pray especially that the Christians of Beit Sahour - the descendants of a community that has borne witness to Christ in the land of His birth for centuries - will never become merely a memory.

May there always be living stones in the land of the Living God.

And may Mary, Queen of Palestine, gather all her children beneath her mantle and obtain for the land of her Son that peace which the world cannot give.

Our Lady, Queen of Palestine, pray for us.
Pray for Beit Sahour.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
Amen.

Rev. Mark J. Coiro



FROM FR. EYAD

Dear Brothers and Sisters of St. Mary's,

Peace and blessings to you from Beit Sahour, in the Holy Land. My name is Fr. Eyad Bader, and it is a great joy for me to introduce myself to you as the new Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

My vocation began when I was only eight years old, when I started serving at the altar. That small seed continued to grow until God led me to the seminary and to religious life. In 1998, I joined the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, where I continued my formation and was ordained a priest in

2006. I served with the Congregation for ten years before joining the Latin Patriarchate in 2016.

Since then, God has blessed me with the opportunity to serve in different communities, including two years in Italy and several years in the parishes of North Zarga and Madaba in Jordan, and Beit Jala in the Holy Land. On August 10, 2026, I began a new chapter in my priestly ministry as Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Beit Sahour.

Beit Sahour is known as the City of the Shepherds, where the shepherds heard the angels announce the birth of Jesus and the message of great joy. For this reason, I have chosen a simple motto for my ministry: "To Sow Joy."



For me, true joy is more [Photo, Fr. Eyad Bader]. than an emotion; it comes from the presence of Jesus Christ among us. My desire is to make Christ present in the lives of our people through prayer, presence, service, dedication, and sacrifice, while building on the good work of the priests who served this parish before me.

I am especially grateful for the friendship between Our Lady of Fatima Parish and St. Mary's in Holliston. I hope to continue and strengthen the relationship begun by Fr. Issa and Fr. Louis. Although we are separated by distance, we remain close in Christ and in prayer.

I ask you to pray for me, that the Lord may give me wisdom, strength, humility, and a generous heart to serve His people faithfully. Please know that you and the people of St. Mary's will also be remembered in my prayers.

From the Holy Land, a land that suffers and longs for peace and freedom, we remain united with you in prayer and hope. And, God willing, we look forward to welcoming you back one day to Beit Sahour and to Our Lady of Fatima Parish. It would be a great joy to welcome you here and to pray together, both in our parish church and at the Shepherds' Field.

May the joy announced by the angels remain alive in all our hearts - the joy of Christ, who is always present among us. With prayers and fraternal affection,

Fr. Eyad Bader

*Pastor
Our Lady of Fatima
Beit Sahour*



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES BEGIN THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 4! TEACHERS (CATECHISTS) ARE NEEDED TO FORM OUR YOUTH IN THEIR FAITH!

See the table below for opportunities as a **Catechist** or **Monitor** with scheduled days and times. Please complete the **Volunteer Application** and the **Teacher/Monitor Session Selection** at:

<https://stmarysholliston.com/religious-education/religious-education-volunteer-registration/>.

Opportunities to share your faith and open the hearts and conscience of our young people to build an intimate relationship with God are always open ~ see the possibilities in the chart below!

GRADE	SESSION DAY AND TIME	TEACHER NEEDS	MONITOR NEEDS
SUNDAY			
CGS-A*	8:00 to 9:15 AM Meets weekly	2 Adults * 4 H.S. Teens*	1
CGS-B*	10:45 AM to Noon Meets weekly	3 Adults * 4 H.S. Teens*	1
GR-1	8:10 to 9:25 AM	10 Teachers	Filled
GR-2	8:10 to 9:25 AM	4 Teachers	1
GR-2	10:45 AM to Noon	2 Teachers	1
GR-3	7:55 to 9:25 AM	2 Teachers	1
GR-3	10:45 AM to 12:15 PM	6 Teachers	1
GR-4	10:45 AM to 12:15 PM	4 Teachers	1
GR-5	10:45 AM to 12:15 PM	4 Teachers	1
GR-6	4:00 to 5:30 PM	2 Teachers	1
MONDAY			
GR-8	7:00 to 8:30 PM	5 Teachers	1

GRADE	SESSION DAY AND TIME	TEACHER NEEDS	MONITOR NEEDS
TUESDAY			
GR-4	4:00 to 5:30 PM	3 Teachers	Filled
GR-5	4:00 to 5:30 PM	2 Teachers	Filled
GR-6	4:00 to 5:30 PM	2 Teachers	Filled
GR-7	7:00 to 8:30 PM	5 Teachers	1
WEDNESDAY			
GR-2	4:15 to 5:30 PM	2 Teachers	Filled
GR-3	4:00 to 5:30 PM	4 Teachers	Filled
GR-7	7:00 to 8:30 PM	4 Teachers	1
THURSDAY			
GR-8	7:00 to 8:30 PM	4 Teachers	1

*Volunteer Catechists and Assistants for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd take special training that will be offered on a date soon to be determined.



WELCOME ZACH MORRIS! This Fall St. Mary's is delighted to welcome Mr. Zach Morris to our Religious Education Staff. Mr. Morris will serve as our part-time Confirmation Coordinator, teaching our Grade 8 Confirmation Classes.

Mr. Morris teaches 6th Grade full-time at St. Benedict Classical Academy in Natick. He also serves as the part-time Youth Minister and Confirmation Coordinator at Most Precious Blood and St. Theresa Parishes in Dover/Sherborn.

Mr. Morris has a Bachelor's Degree in Theology from Catholic University and a Master's Degree in Theological Studies from Boston College.

He is a committed Catholic husband and father, and we know he will share his love of the Lord with knowledge and enthusiasm. Welcome!



Contact our
Music Director for
a SIGN-UP FORM!

508-429-6076

music@stmarys.holliston.org

ALL VOICES ARE WELCOME!

CONSIDER JOINING OUR CHILDREN & YOUTH CHOIRS THIS FALL!

Children's Choir

Open to rising Grades 3 - 6, NEXT REHEARSAL: Wednesday, September 23 from 3:30 - 4:20 PM. Join us!

Youth Choir

Open to rising Grades 7 - 12, NEXT REHEARSAL: Monday, September 21 from 4 - 5 PM. Join us!

EXCITING NEW CHANGES / ADDITIONS TO ST. MARY'S LIBRARY

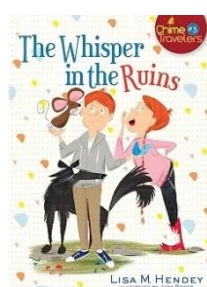
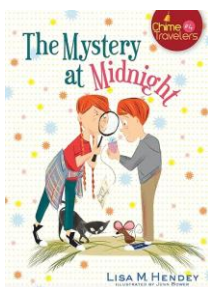


The children's books have been completely re-arranged by topic (Bible, Prayer, Sacraments, Saints, etc.) to allow for easier browsing. No more indecipherable Dewey Decimal numbers! (at least for children!) Check out the new children's books on the shelf by the window. They include a Bible / Saint - based fiction series (The Chime Travelers) for children age 7 - 10. A brother and sister travel back in time to important faith events and learn valuable lessons they can then apply to their own lives.

Don't forget the special section for **Middle Readers (5th - 8th Grade, labelled with a yellow sticker, on a lower shelf toward the window)**. **Young Adult books (YA red sticker) are interspersed with the Adult books).**



Look for book check-out instructions attached to the Book Return/Donation box. Thank you for donating your gently used Catholic books to St. Mary's library. Please send comments or purchase suggestions to betty.febo@gmail.com.





KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEWS & EVENTS



SILVER ROSE PRAYER SERVICE

On Monday, September 14, the Knights of Columbus at St. Mary's hosted a prayer service featuring the Silver Rose as it traveled across the United States.

The service, led by Deacon Ron Dowding, focused on the sanctity of all human life. The Honor Guard from McSweeney Assembly of Westboro added a spirit of solemnity to this meaningful event.



THE CENTER YARD SALE

Members of the St. Mary's Knights of Columbus Council once again helped the Center with its annual fund raiser on September 12.

Knights volunteered their time to help with set-up and break-down, directing traffic, and loading items for transport.



KOFC SOCIAL - OCTOBER 4

The St. Mary's Knights of Columbus invites all men (18+) of the Parish to a cookout and social on Sunday, October 4, 1-3 PM at 15 Wingate Drive, Holliston.

Come learn more about the Knights and our work in the Parish and community.

Questions? Contact Tom Brodo, Grand Knight
stmaryshollistonkofc@gmail.com



TOOTSIE ROLL DRIVE

The Knights of Columbus will be collecting donations after all Masses the weekend of October 10 & 11.

Proceeds support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through programs such as Special Olympics and educational summer camps.



MONTHLY ROSARY

The next Rosary will be Wednesday, October 21, in the Church at 7 PM.

Any and all are welcome to attend.

COR ~ ST. MARY'S FAITH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM FOR MEN



Cor kicked off its fourth season on September 10 and continued its exploration of the Sacraments.

More than a dozen men of the Parish joined together at the meeting to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith. As always, the meeting was marked by an excellent presentation by Deacon Ron followed by lively discussions.

Cor's mission is to bring together Catholic men who are interested in learning about the Catholic faith and in deepening their relationships with God. Our meetings usually include a presentation on a specific topic related to scripture, catechesis or prayer, followed by group discussions.

Past topics have included the historical narrative of the Old Testament, the Psalms, the Prophets, Saints, the different types of prayer, the Acts of the Apostles and the Sacraments.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 24 at 7 PM. The location of the meeting has not yet been determined, but will be announced in the weekly bulletin.

Our meetings are free of charge and include light refreshments.

All men of St. Mary's Parish age 18 and older are invited to join us for faith enrichment, scripture, catechesis, prayer and brotherhood. For more information, contact StMarysCor@gmail.com.

Restoring Hope

An interfaith service for healing from Substance Use Disorder

A Service of Hope for individuals who have struggled with unnatural attachments, and for those who suffer alongside them, including those who are currently struggling, those in recovery, and those whose lives have been lost to the disease. ALL ARE WELCOME!

**Wednesday, September 23, 6:30 PM
at the Fatima Shrine.**

Sponsored by HDACC.



UNSHACKLED

HEALING ADDICTIONS
THROUGH FAITH

UNSHACKLED - Healing Addictions Through Faith

A new TV series from iThirst and Shalom World with Keaton Douglas, Executive Director of iThirst.

- 12 episodes highlight addiction, recovery, and communal tools for healing.
- Watch free on the Shalom World App.

Learn more and watch:

ithirstinitiative.org/unshackled-shalom-world-tv-show/

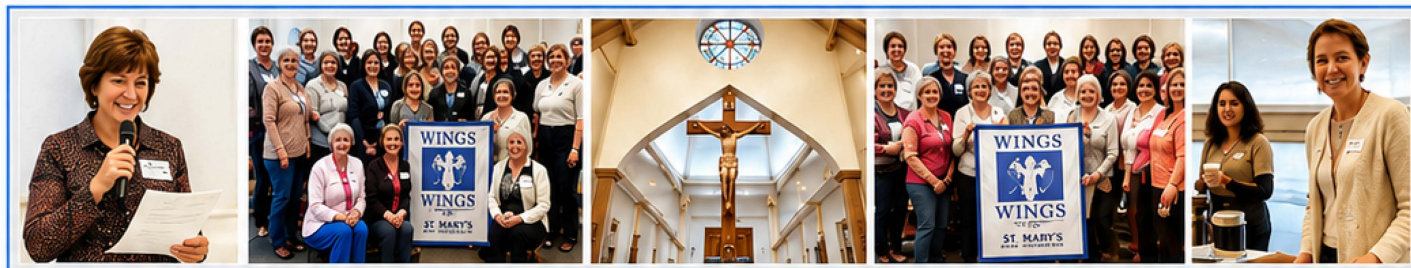
• watch.shalomworld.org/



SCAN TO
WATCH NOW



Join us for our 2026 Fall Season: **"The Spirit Moves"** *How Vatican II Opened the Church to the Modern World*



What is WINGS?

WINGS is an opportunity for women of all ages to grow in faith wherever they are on their spiritual journey. Lifelong Catholic, new Catholic, or just curious – come learn and grow!

We will study and discuss

the beautiful fruits of the Holy Spirit that have shown us how to more deeply experience the richness of our faith.

Join us in Person or on Zoom!

We will meet on six Wednesdays in the fall, beginning October 7. Meetings are held from **9:45 - 11:15 AM** in Fr. Haley Hall and on Zoom.

Drop-ins are welcome.

If you are interested in childcare, please contact us via our email.

Listen, Discuss, Grow! Fall 2026 Schedule

- Returning to the Roots of Our Faith.
- Who is the Church?
- The Joy of Praying Together.
- Developing a Closer Friendship with God.
- Bringing Christ's Love to Our Neighbors.
- Building Bridges of Faith.



Contact Us to Join and to get the Zoom link.



stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com



scan for our Facebook page





TGIF (Teens Gather In Faith): This summer, our TGIF High School Youth Group traveled to Mississippi for a meaningful week of service, faith, and fellowship. Through hands-on work, prayer, and time together, our teens grew closer to Christ and to one another. As we begin the 2026 - 2027 TGIF year, we look forward to more opportunities for our teens to grow in faith, serve others, build friendships, and have fun. **JOIN US AT OUR KICKOFF, SUNDAY, SEPT. 27, 7 - 8:45 PM IN FR. HALEY HALL!**

TGIF (Teens Gather In Faith) Mission Trip Reflection by Teen Declan Cassidy



One year ago, I stood at a crossroads in doubt of myself, in doubt of God, questioning how God was really helping me, questioning if God was really there for me. I held back from saying yes to the mission trip, convinced I wouldn't have anything to share with those we are going to serve. This year, something shifted. I had always heard stories about how this mission trip changes lives, the lives of

those who journeyed on it and the lives of those who we served, but this year I heard something bigger, something more powerful, a call from God to go serve those in the deepest of need.



On our first day of work in Mississippi, we met our first homeowner, Mr. Simpson. God had brought us there to stain a ramp for his wife, who had passed away the previous February, but we soon learned that we were doing something much more powerful than just staining wood, we were standing on holy ground. The next day he shared with our group that he lost two of his children at the age of only 15 to suicide and his grandson at the age of only two to murder.

When he shared this with us, we laid down our paintbrushes. We gathered around him, joined hands, and prayed with him, prayed for him, for all of his family members who had passed, and all of his family members still with us. As the week continued, we moved on to staining another ramp and then building a ramp. We felt that our work with Mr. Simpson was unfinished. We bought supplies. We painted a plaque engraved with the names of his family members who had passed, got flowers, and on the last day journeyed back to his home to install it in loving memory of his family members.



Looking back on the mission trip, Jesus met me right at the crossroads I was stuck at one year ago. This trip didn't just teach me how to build a ramp. It brought me closer to Him, showing me how much more powerful faith is over fear. I keep returning to this quote from Mother Teresa: "Give your hands to serve and your hearts to love." I really believe that sums up the whole trip. The most impactful service isn't just standing out in the sun carrying lumber or rushing to finish a project. It's opening your ears, your hands, and your heart to people who need love the most - and letting Jesus love them right through you. The work in Mississippi, and everywhere else, is never finished.





TGIF (Teens Gather In Faith) Mission Trip Reflection by Adult Chaperone Matt Denault

This was my fourth Mission Trip with TGIF as a chaperone and it was again a wonderful experience. Many people ask those of us who attend these trips about ranking them or what favorite part or experience we can point to. I, like most, will not be ranking any as the best but there

are always defining moments that make each trip special.

Over the years these trips have taught even this adult many things including to be less judgmental of those whom I don't know, to be willing and patient with whatever happens, to be open and vulnerable around others we share values with. On this most recent trip, I learned to let go and be fully present. I fully credit the teens I had in my van for this. It is such a beautiful sight to see these young women and young men giving of themselves to those in need through their hard work. They also were fully themselves throughout the entire week! They were smiling, joyful, loud "in a great way" and living their faith with each other.

We did a variety of work for a homeowner including modifying her deck, making a new dog fence and various other odd cleaning, landscaping and maintenance work to help her out. She lives her faith out loud and the teens embraced that while we were there! We also did some work at Sacred Heart, our host church down in Mississippi, which will go down as a great bonding day for our group as you may have seen the "Instagram Rave" video to illustrate. We then moved on to build some prefabricated pieces for future ramp builds and met some great people who themselves are helping their communities. I hope I'm doing the work justice because not only did we build, mend and clean up places physically, but we built up our faith, mended our hearts, and cleaned our minds. The world has a way of being difficult especially for teens, but seeing what I've seen these past four years, I have hope for a bright future - one filled with love and kindness, brought through faith and fellowship that this group of teens always brings home and lives out loud.

Remember the mission may have started in Mississippi, but it doesn't end there. Continue to bring that home and live out "Faith over Fear!" Check out TGIF on Instagram to see more photos from the Mission Trip. We also post photos and videos of our adventures. Daily gospel is posted each morning!



STMARYS_TGIF



St. Mary's Parish Middle School Youth Group

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



Summer 2026 was full of faith and adventure for our MSYG!

On June 28 - 29 our 7th & 8th Graders were headed to Maine for a Whitewater Rafting Trip to the **Kennebec River**. Fr. Mark celebrated Mass for us, then it was off for Class 3 - 5 Rapids and an afternoon at magnificent Houston Brook Falls!

On July 28 all grades had an awesome day at **Brownstone Quarry**, cloudy but only a bit of rain as we ziplined, cliff jumped, swam, slid down the water slides and giant inflatables!

Then on August 14 our 6th Graders rafted the **Deerfield River** out in the Berkshires, a great "taster" trip for first time rafters.

OUR MSYG FALL KICK OFF AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL IS

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4
FROM 6:30 - 8 PM!**

All teens in Grades 6, 7, and 8 are invited for a new year of faith, friendship, service and fun. Our first fall trip will be to Barrett's Haunted Mansion on Friday, October 23. Save the dates!





Meetings: Monday Nights 7 - 8:30 PM

Contact: Mike Hebert, Scoutmaster
603-520-9045

Email: Troop14Holliston@yahoo.com

If interested in joining Troop 14, contact the Scoutmaster. It is an ideal organization for boys in sixth grade or above. The Troop meets weekly during the school year, Mondays from 7 - 8:30 PM in the Lower Church Hall.

HIGH ADVENTURE: In August, Troop 14 traveled 6 hours to the Maine Northern Woods and completed a summer high adventure trip at Maine High Adventure. Scouts canoed 60 miles and camped out for six nights around Grand Lake Metagamon and the East branch of the Penobscot river. Scouts cooked on an open fire every evening and saw the Milky Way and meteor showers.



CAMP SQUANTO: In July, Troop 14 attended summer camp at Camp Squanto in Plymouth, MA. Scouts earned merit badges, worked on rank requirements, and completed conservation projects while still having time to play in the water and participate in other fun activities. Troop 14 also returned to the medal podium by winning first place in the Apache Relay event. The Apache Relay is a team competition that features a series of physical challenges and camp skills such as knot tying, fire starting, running, canoeing and the most important event, pie eating!

