

**ST. MARY'S PARISH  
8 CHURCH ST.  
HOLLISTON, MA 01746**

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01746  
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**Ash Wednesday**

**Feb. 14**

**Five Services with Ashes ~**

**6:45 AM Liturgy of the Word**

**9:00 AM Mass**

**4:00 PM Liturgy of the Word**

**5:30 PM Liturgy of the Word**

**7:00 PM Mass**

**ASH WEDNESDAY IS A DAY OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT.**

Why do we wear ashes on this day? Ashes symbolize two main things in the Old Testament – death and repentance. Ashes are equivalent to dust, and human flesh is composed of dust or clay (Genesis 2:7). For example, Abraham told God, “I am but dust and ashes” (Genesis 18:27), a reference to his human mortality. We use ashes on Ash Wednesday to remind ourselves of our own mortality. We are all born here, but none of us is staying here. Death may come sooner, or it may come later, but it will surely come. This is not a cause for fear, but for urgency to embrace the Gospel with new vigor. We only have so much time to accept Jesus’ offer of salvation, and follow Him on the Way of the Cross, the way of sacrificial love.

Ashes are also a symbol of repentance for past sins. When the prophet Daniel shamefacedly clothed himself in sackcloth and ashes, they were a sign of his people’s contrition for their rebellion, wickedness and treachery (Daniel 9:3). When Jonah warned the Ninevites that God planned to destroy their city because of their corruption and depravity, the people covered themselves with sackcloth and ashes as a sign of their intention to turn from their evil ways (Jonah 3:6,10). Ashes are a plea to God for mercy and compassion, pardon and forgiveness. Moreover, they are a public admission of guilt, an expression of sorrow for sins that have been committed, a promise to reform and a pledge to resist temptation in the future.

In His own words, Jesus “came to call sinners.” We, too, are sinners. When we come forward to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday, we are saying that we are sorry for our sins, and that we want to use the season of Lent to correct our faults, purify our hearts, control our desires and grow in holiness so we will be prepared to celebrate Easter with great joy. **Our ashes say that we want to come back to Jesus.**

# St. Mary's Parish Newsletter

*February, 2024 ~ Volume 50, Number 1*

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: [st.marysre1870@gmail.com](mailto:st.marysre1870@gmail.com)

Parish Email Address: [st.marys1870@gmail.com](mailto:st.marys1870@gmail.com)

Website: [www.stmarysholliston.com](http://www.stmarysholliston.com)

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

St. Mary's rejoices to welcome these sixteen new families (right), who recently joined our Parish Family. Together may we grow in love of God and neighbor!

We would also like to acknowledge a gift recently received from a St. Mary's family – a defibrillator for our church building. This life saving device has been installed on the back wall of the nave (Town Hall end).

The more people familiar with its operation the better, so please consider watching a training video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yDDh510QRo>.



**The Maloney Family - Andrew, Nicole and Abigail**

**The Murray Family - Kathleen and Ryan**

**The Evitts-Roy Family - Brendan and Caroline**

**The Mohan Family - David, Amy and Smith**

**The MacEvoy Family - Maureen**

**The Donovan Family - Brice Shepardson, Emily and Harper**

**The McDermott-Fiato Family - Christopher, Katie Ann and Patrick**

**The Fiala Family - Kevin, Marissa, Mia and Gabriel**

**The White Family - Barbara**

**The Evans Family - Thomas, Sharon, Emily, Alex and Derek**

**The Guthro Family - Jerome and Ann**

**The Grant Family - Sean, Noelle, Sophie and Ryan**

**The Feldman Family - Kevin, Amy and Ben**

**The Philemon Family - Goussely, Emmanuella, Nyheema, Zaihey and Zaivey**

**The Lydon Family - Chris, Leah, Connor and Lucy**

**The Griffin Family - Cameron, Kayla and Blake**



## *Meet Him In Ashes ~ Wednesday, February 14*



6:45 AM	Liturgy	4:00 PM	Liturgy
9:00 AM	Mass	5:30 PM	Liturgy
		7:00 PM	Mass

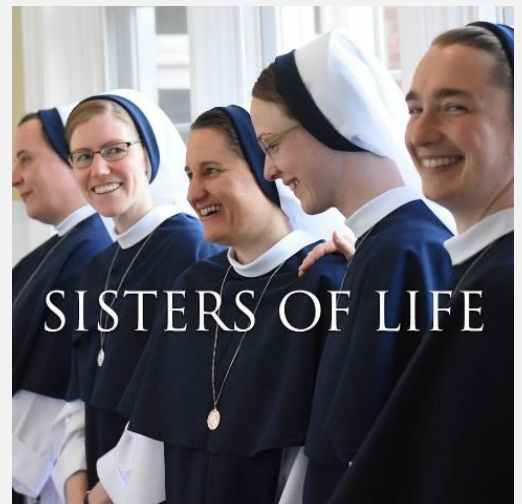
Ashes will be distributed at all five celebrations.

*"Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return ..."*

## *Meet Him With the Sisters of Life ~ Thursday, February 15*

Lenten Holy Hour with the Sisters of Life - Thursday, February 15  
at 7:00 PM at St. Mary's Church in Holliston, MA.

This Lent, St. Mary's is excited to host the Sisters of Life for a special talk and Holy Hour, with a reception to follow. This will be a beautiful opportunity for prayer, contemplation, and fellowship with the Sisters of Life - a vibrant and thriving religious order doing courageous work to support a culture of life. Enjoy live music performed by the Sisters, a Lenten reflection by them, spend time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, and gather for fellowship and refreshments afterward in Fr. Haley Hall.



More about The Sisters of Life: The Sisters of Life are a contemplative/active Roman Catholic community of women religious, who profess the three traditional vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and a fourth vow to protect and enhance the sacredness of human life. They were founded by Cardinal John O'Connor in New York in 1991, and received formal approbation as a religious institute in 2004, under Cardinal Edward Egan. They currently serve in the [Arch]dioceses of New York, Albany, Bridgeport, Philadelphia, Denver, Phoenix, Washington, D.C., and Toronto, Canada. Their missions include serving women who are vulnerable to abortion, giving them the support and resources to be able to choose life for themselves and their children; hosting weekend retreats; evangelization; outreach to college students; and helping women who have suffered after abortion to encounter the mercy and healing of Jesus Christ ([www.sistersoflife.org](http://www.sistersoflife.org)).

This evening is being offered in conjunction with St. Benedict's, and high attendance is expected.

**IT IS THEREFORE A TICKETED EVENT, WITH PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**

You may register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/holy-hour-with-the-sisters-of-life-tickets-775640831607?aff=oddtcreator>. Don't forget to print out and bring your ticket!





## *Meet Him On the Road ~ Saturday, February 24*

Join us for a Lenten Retreat Hour from 10:30 - 11:30 AM in St. Mary's Church. Deacon John Barry will Expose the Blessed Sacrament for Eucharistic Adoration. During this time of prayer, he will offer the reflection, "Lent - The Road To Hope!" We live in a world where attachment to material things, status, work and even

loved ones can dominate our attention and confine our spiritual life. The things we have become attached to, if they are not of God, can enslave us and lead us away from the Lord and His plan for our holiness. Some of our unnatural attachments may arise from suppressed emotional wounds or from misconceptions about our true identity and our purpose in life. Our retreat will focus on reclaiming who we are and recognizing some potentially unhealthy attachments. By shifting our thinking, and our habits of excess during the Lenten season, we can open pathways for God's grace to help us in our journey toward freedom and a holier and more meaningful life.

## *Meet Him In Adoration And A Good Confession ~*

In addition to the usual Saturday Noon to 12:45 PM Confession time, during Lent St. Mary's Thursday night Eucharistic Holy Hours will also have the opportunity for Confession, from 7 - 8 PM in the church. Each Lenten Holy Hour includes an intention for which we ask you kindly to pray during your time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament:

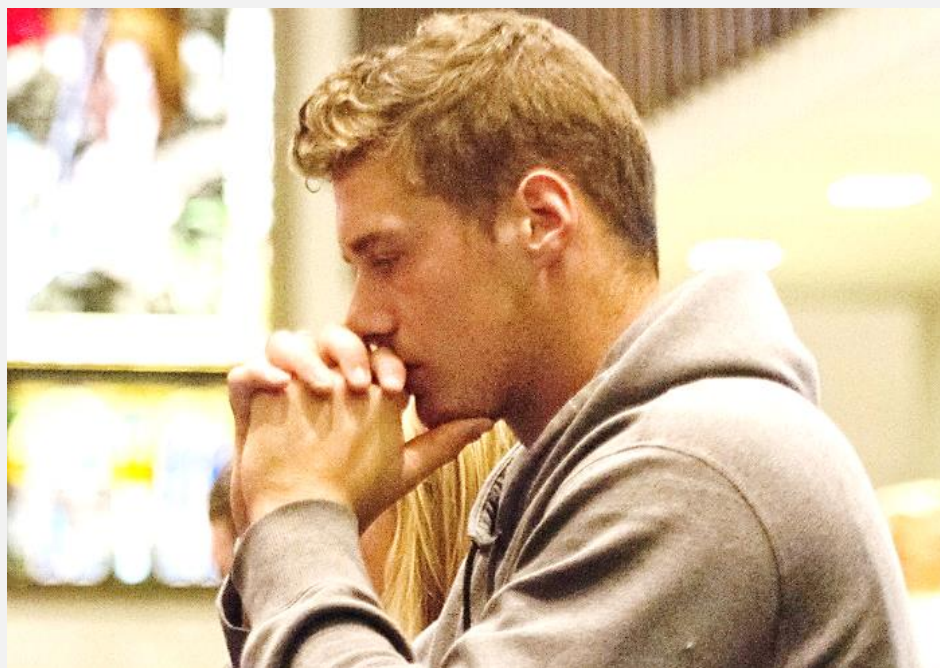
February 22: Please pray for Peace in Palestine and Israel.

February 29: Please pray for Peace in Ukraine.

March 7: Please pray for Peace and Unity in our Nation.

March 14: Please pray for Reverence for all Human Life.

March 21: Please pray for Freedom from Addictions.



*"Our Lord himself I saw in the venerable Sacrament of Confession. I felt as if my chains fell, as those of St. Peter, at the touch of the divine messenger."*

— St. Elizabeth Ann Seton





## *Meet Him Around The Table.*

### *Friday Lenten Suppers ~*

Join us for a great meal, prayer and deepening your community connection to your St. Mary's family!

**Fridays at 6 PM: February 16, 23; March 1** (*beginning at 5:30 PM as the St. Paul Boys Choir performs at 7 PM*), **8, 15 and 22,**

Our Lenten Suppers will take place in Fr. Haley Hall and will include a range of food options while observing Friday's abstinence from meat - as well as child friendly food.

Families with young children are encouraged to come and not feel burdened about bringing a meal, please let your St. Mary's community lift you up. This also applies to any individual / couple / family feeling burdened where bringing a meal would prevent you from attending. We are all in different seasons of life, let your St. Mary's family be a safe landing spot for you this Lent!

If you'd like to help, please email Natalie Pomarico at [st.maryslentensuppers@gmail.com](mailto:st.maryslentensuppers@gmail.com). You will be added to the Lenten Supper Volunteer Group. A weekly 'Sign Up Genius' goes out via email to the volunteer base and individuals sign up for available food/drink slots. Volunteer participation varies week to week, some volunteer once during the six weeks, some commit to every week and others dip in and out of helping. Thank you!

## *Meet Him With The St. Paul's Boy Choir ~*

Friday, March 1, 7 - 8 PM in St. Mary's Church. Bless your Lent with an evening of rapturous music by the internationally acclaimed Boys Choir of St. Paul's Choir School in Cambridge. Directed by Richard Webster, the Choir will perform selected works from the classical repertoire, including pieces by Dering, Bach, Vivaldi, Rheinberger, and Lallouette.



The Concert is free and open to all.

For more information about St. Paul's Choir School, please visit [www.saintpaulschoirschool.us](http://www.saintpaulschoirschool.us).

\* The Lenten Friday Soup Supper will start early this night, at 5:30 PM, so that you can attend both.



## *Meet Him For Forty Hours ~*

*Sunday, March 10 - Tuesday, March 12*

**40 Hours Devotion:** In celebrating this devotion, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the altar at St. Mary's for forty continuous hours. The church will be open throughout and people may stop in at any time to visit with the Lord in prayer. The Forty Hours Devotion nurtures the love of the faithful for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Additionally, three special dimensions surround this devotion:

- the protection from evil and temptation;
- reparation for our own sins and for the Poor Souls in Purgatory;
- and deliverance from political, material, or spiritual calamities.



### **Sunday, March 10**

11:30 AM	Opening Mass
6:00 PM	Evening Prayer
8:00 PM	Scripture Reflection

### **Monday, March 11**

9:00 AM	Morning Mass (Hall)
Noon	Holy Rosary
6:00 PM	Evening Prayer
8:00 PM	Scripture Reflection

### **Tuesday, March 12**

9:00 AM	Closing Mass with Benediction
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Anyone and everyone is welcome at any time without signing up. But we need a minimum of two people committed to each specific hour the Blessed Sacrament is Exposed for Adoration. Please sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805094DA5AB29A3FC1-40hours2>.

## *Meet Him With the Saints ~ Sunday, March 17*

The Holy Relics of more than one hundred saints will be Exposed for Veneration at St. Mary's on Sunday, March 17, from 6 - 8 PM in the church. They include relics of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Therese of Lisieux (the Little Flower), and St. Anthony of Padua. Also, some of the rarest relics of the Passion will be present.

The Exposition will begin with a presentation and teaching about relics that is aimed at answering most questions the guests come with. Spiritual points are made about praying, intercession, and healing. Emphasis is on the Gospel message of healing to bring people to encounter Jesus.

There is no cost, but a free will offering basket will be available to support the Relic Ministry. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be available during the Relic Exposition for anyone facing serious illness - mental or physical.





**Loving God,  
during this sacred season of Lent,  
bring me closer to You.**

**Prepare a place in my home and heart for silence  
and solitude, so that I may re-discover  
the grace of a prayer filled life.**

**Help me to fast from those things that threaten  
the well-being of body and soul,  
and remind me of the grace of simplicity.**

**Enlarge my heart so that I give to those in need  
and, in so doing, rediscover  
the grace of gratitude and generosity.**

**May this season be a grace-filled time  
to rekindle my love and faith in You. Amen.**







## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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

This past summer, a lot of work was done to repair and spruce up Sister Ricci House. As our parish grows, more space is needed for various groups, and we had to get the rooms there into better shape.

We also cleaned out the Sister Ricci House basement, and in the course of doing so found two old stained-glass windows from our pre-renovation church. They were leaning in a dark corner, covered with dirt and grime.

We brought the windows up and outside, then scrubbed the many layers of dirt off of them. I discovered that they leaned perfectly into / against two windows in a back room off the rectory kitchen, which is where they now reside.

Every time I pass through that room, I am struck by the beauty of the colored light they produce, somehow made even more beautiful because the glass had been obscured and in darkness for so long – unable to serve its true purpose.

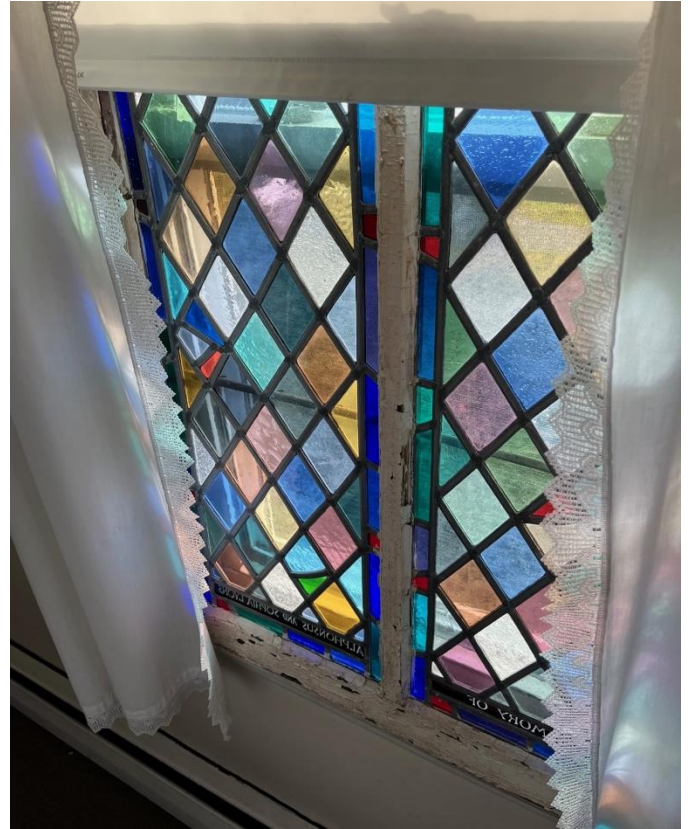
Those windows speak to me of the Lenten Season about to begin. Our souls are magnificent things, meant to receive and shine with the light of God's grace and love. But they can become darkened by sin, obscured by worldly concerns.

The forty days of Lent are that precious time when through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving we scrub away all that which is not of God. We work to remove the stains of selfishness, pride, and passing pleasures, so that once more the light of God can enter our souls undimmed.

The colored light from the two rescued windows shines onto both the white curtains beside them and onto the white wall opposite them. Just so, when we spend these forty days in true penance and preparation for Easter, then God will use us to shine upon and bless the people He places in our life's path.

God bless you!

Rev. Mark J. Coiro



## بيت ساحور BEIT SAHOUR

Thank you to all who contributed so generously to the January collection in support of the "Holliston - Holy Land Friendship Scholarship." The total cost for each student is \$1,050 US. That includes tuition, all school fees, books, and uniform.

In response to a request from our Sister Parish, Our Lady's in Beit Sahour, the St. Mary's Parish and Finance Councils had both voted unanimously to scholarship four Palestinian Catholic children this school year, instead of our usual two.

The current war has made it impossible for many to meet tuition, and our support this year will truly be a light and a lifeline for these children.

They are: Pellar, a 7<sup>th</sup> Grade girl; Farah, a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade boy; Bisan, a 7<sup>th</sup> Grade girl; and Andrea, an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade boy.

In the end, the collection took in more than \$5,000 - enough to sponsor a fifth student. We notified Fr. Issa and Principal Anton of this good news and have just received the following reply.

*Dear Father Mark*

*Many thanks for your prayers and for St. Mary's continuing the sponsoring of our needy students. Your generosity helps us in keeping hope alive among the Christian families here in Bethlehem and Beit Sahour. About the new sponsorship, here is the information about the fifth student.*

*Hana Awadh is a student in the Fifth grade. [photo below]. He has two sisters, one of them studying at the school. [Also shown in the photo].*

*Hana belongs to a family who are suffering from the socio-economic situation besides some medical problems. Lately, the father had a surgery in his foot (for the second time) due to maltreatment. the mother has a thyroiditis.*

*The father used to work in olivewood while the mother is a housewife.*

*Your sponsorship to the family is highly appreciated as it will help the parents to take care of other issues and to fulfill the other needs of the family such as home rent, medical care and so on.*

*Once again, on behalf of the students and their families I would like to thank you and the people of our Sister Parish in Holliston for your continuing support and the sponsoring of our Parish Students.*

*God Bless You.*

*Anton J. Jaraysah  
School Principal*

**Hana Awadh**



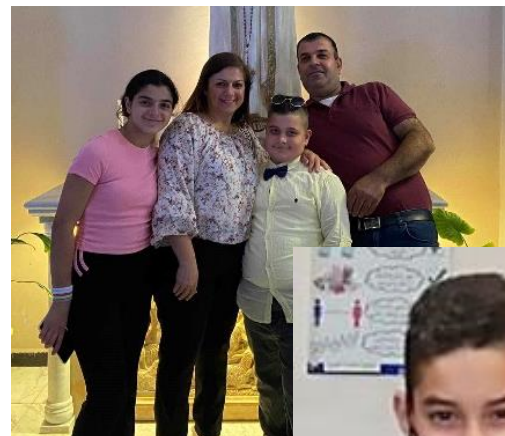
**Bisan and Fares**



**Farah and Family**



**Pellar and Family**



**Andrea**

*Please pray for  
these children and  
for peace in the  
lands made holy  
by Christ!*







*"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

**WINTER BIBLE STUDY BEGINS JANUARY 31!**  
WEDNESDAYS 9:45-11:15AM - FR. HALEY HALL & ON ZOOM



### Join WINGS Winter Bible Study!

Each week inspiring speakers will help us to enrich our spiritual growth through the study & sharing of scripture! We will continue our fall theme of prayer using Kevin Perrotta's "Becoming a Praying Person" as our guide.

**Free childcare is available!**

### SCHEDULE:

- **Jan. 31 – Chapter 1: "A Childless Wife's Anguish" –**  
*Dr. Aldona Lingertat, Adjunct Professor, St. John's Seminary*
- **Feb. 7 – Chapter 2: "Crimes and Repentance" –**  
*Sr. Dorothea Masuret, St. Joseph Spiritual Ministries*
- **Feb. 14 – Chapter 3: "A Prophet Wrestles with God" –**  
*Deacon Ron Dowding, St. Mary's Parish*
- **Feb. 21 – Chapter 4: "Praying for Success" –**  
*Yvonne Racine, Theology Teacher, Ursuline Academy*
- **Feb. 28 – Chapter 5: "My Soul Magnifies the Lord" –**  
*Joe Javorski, Bible Study Leader*
- **Mar. 6 – Chapter 6: "Shipwreck!" –**  
*Joe Javorski, Bible Study Leader*



### How to Join

Send us an email – that's it! Not quite ready to join? Drop in to a meeting or visit our website and Facebook for more details. Suggested dues are \$20/season but all are welcome to attend regardless of ability to pay.

### Contact us



stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com



scan for website



facebook.com/wingsholliston





# WELCOME BACK CHILDREN'S CHOIR!

At the 9:30 AM Mass on Sunday, January 28, St. Mary's was delighted to welcome back our Children's Choir. In addition to singing throughout the Mass, they came up to the sanctuary after Communion to offer a special

hymn incorporating Sign Language. To Sign Up for the Choir, or if you have any questions, contact Abbey at [musicatstmarysholliston@gmail.com](mailto:musicatstmarysholliston@gmail.com), or call her at 508-429-6076. Let us sing to the Lord a new song!



## Lift Up Your Voice!

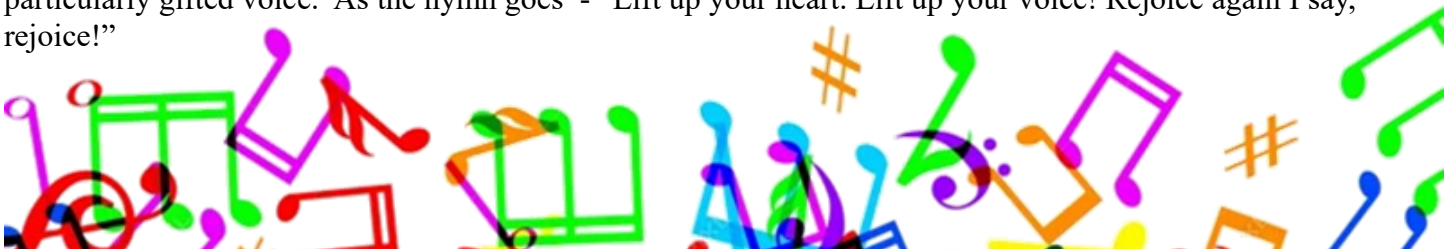
By Parishioner Sue Cote

I'm so grateful that the Children's Music Ministry is back at St. Mary's! They add so much to our services and make us very proud.

When I was a child, one of the strongest memories I have is of my dear father singing with enthusiasm in church. He wasn't a particularly gifted singer, but he relished the music of the church. All of it. The melodies, the lovely lyrics tied to the lessons of the week and the triumphant tympani and trumpets of Easter services brought him obvious joy. In my parish we sang all the verses to each hymn except the optional (underscored) ones so there was a lot of singing!

It wasn't until I joined St. Mary's Parish that I heard St. Augustine's famous expression "He who sings prays twice." What a lovely thought! All of that humming of the tunes, that marveling at the turn of phrase, and those memories of singing these hymns since childhood are a form of prayer. I never got a chance to ask my dad if he knew of St. Augustine's words. I do know that seeing him sing with enthusiasm told me that he was happy to be at church and thinking about the message, and it taught me to do the same.

Seeing other adults in our congregation sing in the presence of their children fills me with the same joy. I think all of our choirs, but particularly the restored Children's and Youth Choirs, would be lifted up and supported if we all followed suit, even if we are not gifted singers. So please join me. I'll be singing loudly, but not with a particularly gifted voice. As the hymn goes - "Lift up your heart. Lift up your voice! Rejoice again I say, rejoice!"







# St. Mary's High School Youth Group

## Teens Gather In Faith!

**COOKIES FOR OUR PUBLIC SERVANTS:** At their December Monthly Meeting, the teens of TGIF decorated nearly 200 Christmas cookies. They were sugar cookies cut into Christmas shapes and baked the day before by members Paget O'Brien and Anna Gebski. After the Meeting, teens delivered them to the Holliston Police Station and Fire Department. The December Meeting also had a final presentation about the 2024 TGIF Mission Trip to Mississippi. At their January 28 Meeting, more than eighty teens registered for that beautiful week of outreach to those in need. Well done!

**NEXT TGIF MEETING: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024 FROM 7 – 8:45 PM. SAVE THE DATE!**







## Troop 14 Holliston

Boy Scouts of America  
St. Mary's Parish \* February, 2024

Meetings: Monday Nights 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Contact: Chris Baribeau, Scoutmaster  
508-579-4357

Email: [Troop14Holliston@yahoo.com](mailto: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.

Troop 14 has embraced the winter season and is ready for cold weather activities!

### DECEMBER

**CAMPOUT:** Troop 14 Scouts and Leaders spent the first weekend of December at our favorite summer camp location of Camp Squanto in Plymouth. This was a cool weather campout that gave Scouts a chance to plan and pack for the cold temperature since they were sleeping in unheated cabins. Activities included hiking the camp perimeter by the many cranberry bogs and ponds, testing their debris hut building skills, and practicing orienteering.

The Scouts also had an opportunity to work on cooking requirements at each meal. The evening included a campfire and the popular cracker barrel where many sugary treats were eaten. The Scouts had a fun weekend and were able to embrace the weather that included cold temps and rain.



**CHRISTMAS PARTY:** To celebrate the Christmas season, the Troop held its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Christmas party during the last Troop meeting of 2023. The meeting included an opening prayer, followed by a Yankee Swap gift exchange, and finished with a party that included ice cream and desserts. The Scouts had a great time getting in the Christmas spirit and were even surprised by a visit from Santa.







# St. Mary's Parish Middle School Youth Group

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

**DECEMBER 2023:** Our Youth Group was kept busy spreading the Christmas Spirit this month – Caroling at two Senior Facilities and raising a record \$2,824 for the poor of Haiti through the Cookie Walk! *Check out photos of both events on the next two pages of this Newsletter.*

**JANUARY 2024:** While the January 26 Snowtubing Trip was postponed to February 9 due to rain, the January 5 Trip to see the Boston Celtics play the Utah Jazz was a blast! Nearly seventy teens watched as Jayson Tatum scored 30 points and hit five 3-pointers to help the Celtics defeat Utah 126-97. It was a great game, in which the Celtics never lost the lead. Thanks to our group's matching fluorescent green baseball hats, we also did not lose any teens! 😊 *Pics below.*

**FEBRUARY 2024:** Our February Meeting is Sunday, February 4 from 6:30 – 8:30 PM, a half hour longer because of the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Battle of the Sexes - a fast paced competition between boys and girls requiring knowledge, skill, and teamwork to take home the trophy! There will be faith, friendship, fun and signups for the February 20 Vacation week trip to the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Quincy Market, and Blue Man Group!





# THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AT ST. MARY'S!



**TGIF teens sort the 5,027 items St. Mary's collected for the Cardinal's Emergency Winter Clothing Drive for Immigrants and Refugees.**



**St. Mary's Middle School Youth Group Cookie Walk.**

**A record \$2,824 is raised for the suffering poor in Haiti!**



**St. Mary's Middle School Youth Group carols at Mission Springs and Timothy Daniel's Nursing Home.**



*"Christmas is the spirit of giving without a thought of getting. It is happiness because we see joy in people. It is forgetting self and finding time for others. It is discarding the meaningless and stressing the true values."*



# THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AT ST. MARY'S!

