



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

Return Service Requested

Non-profit
Organization
u.s. postage
paid
Holliston, MA
01746
Permit no. 2



Ash Wednesday

Feb. 17

**Four Services with Ashes
Applied by 6 Inch Q-Tips
Special Procedures Below**

6:45 AM Liturgy of the Word

9:00 AM Mass (*Livestreamed*)

4:00 PM Liturgy of the Word

6:30 PM Liturgy of the Word

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

SPECIAL ASH WEDNESDAY PANDEMIC PROCEDURES THIS YEAR:

Ashes will be applied using 6-inch Q-Tips.

A new Q-Tip will be used for each penitent.

Masks will be worn by all and the ministers will be wearing plastic gloves.

The gray communion tables will be employed to maintain distance.

The words normally spoken individually when the ashes are applied will be spoken to everyone all at once by the Presider. The application of ashes will therefore be done in silence.

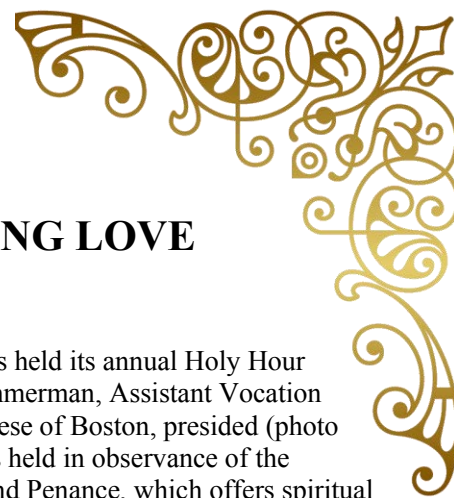
All normal Pandemic Procedures will be in effect for Ash Wednesday, including advance Sign-Ups, temperature taking and sign in at the church doors, masks, and social distancing apart from those in your family group. Those without a reservation will be admitted unless pandemic capacity is reached.

We strongly encourage you to Sign-Up in advance, as our pandemic capacity is only 140 seats out of 600 normally available. **Advance Sign-Ups end at 9 PM on Tuesday, February 16.**

Reserve a spot at your preferred Ash Wednesday Service here: <https://stmarysholliston.com/>

St. Mary's Parish Newsletter

February, 2021 ~ Volume 46, Number 4



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

Rectory: 429-4427, 879-2322
Religious Education Center: 429-6076
Fax: 429-3324 ~ Music: 429-6076

Religious Education Email: st.marysre1870@gmail.com
Parish Email Address: st.marys1870@gmail.com
Website: www.stmarysholliston.com

ENCOUNTERING LOVE

By Deacon John Barry

On January 18, St. Mary's held its annual Holy Hour for Life. Fr. Michael Zimmerman, Assistant Vocation Director for the Archdiocese of Boston, presided (photo left). The Holy Hour was held in observance of the National Day of Prayer and Penance, which offers spiritual support to the pilgrims of the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. This year's march, held on January 29, was available for virtual participation, (<https://marchforlife.org/2021-virtual-events/>).

Every year since 2013, on the evening of Martin Luther King Day, St. Mary's has held a Holy Hour with praise, worship, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, is indicative of the spirit in which the pro-life movement has operated since its inception. In his speech, Dr. King referenced the founding fathers of our nation, saying, "When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note..." That note, he insisted, was for the "unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

For more than two decades his relative, Dr. Alveda King, has been an outspoken promoter of civil rights for the unborn. But the Holy Hour for Life was not only about the issue of abortion. Attendees prayed also for anyone affected by tragedies, including those who have been wounded by the coronavirus pandemic, loneliness, alienation, addiction, euthanasia and suicide.

In his reflection on the Old Testament Reading [2 Maccabees 7:1, 20-31] and the Gospel [John 6:24-35], Fr. Zimmerman addressed three chasms which we must be willing to cross if we are to be truly pro-life. Those chasms, he said, are age, race and detachment. In his experiences, Fr. Zimmerman gave examples of times when he had crossed those chasms, and how each encounter was a joyful, life-giving and love-inducing experience. "So it is good that we are here, before Jesus the Bread of Life," he concluded. "Let us ask Him for the grace to go out and encounter and love all of His Father's children."

After the Holy Hour, several parishioners stayed with clergy as the Knights of Columbus lead the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. We are grateful to Holliston Cable Access Television for covering the event. Many thanks as well to our lector Deacon Ron Dowding, our cantor Anna Sheehan, our director of music Kevin Lyczak, our greeters Virginia and Nick Calapa, Jim Merski and the Knights, as well as George Martell for his expert photography and video, along with the many attendees who joined us in person and online. It was truly an encounter of love and life.



OUR SISTER PARISH بيت ساحور OUR LADY OF FATIMA IN BEIT SAHOUR



FATHER ISSA RECOVERED FROM COVID 19

A few weeks before Christmas, the Pastor of our Sister Parish, Fr. Issa Hijazeen, was diagnosed with the COVID Virus. St. Mary's prayed for him at Mass for many weeks, and finally got the good news that he had recovered.

In an email to Fr. Mark he said, *"I am doing fine now. I had a lot of work in the parish during the recent period. In two these weeks, I will be blessing the homes. In the parish, things are good, we have few patients of Covid 19, one of them was very difficult, but we thank God that he has recovered."*

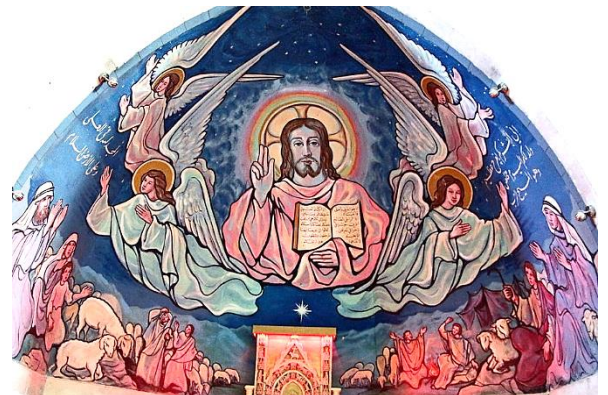
"When we Christians in the Holy Land heard about the spread of Coronavirus in China, we could never have imagined that it would arrive here," said Father Issa in an interview. *"The story began on March 5, 2020 in Beit Jala, a village very close to ours, where four hotel workers tested positive for the virus. The news shocked us, especially in Beit Sahour, because two students from our parish school belong to the family of the infected people. Fear spread among students and teachers but, thanks to the rapid measures taken, the crisis was contained and the school closed without further cases or episodes."*

Father Issa recounts: *"On 5 March a state of emergency was declared for the whole region of Bethlehem, and two weeks later for all of Palestine. The Catholic Church responded to the emergency and took the necessary measures: Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa announced the instructions for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, first for the Bethlehem region, and then for the whole diocese of the Latin Patriarchate, asking that the Divine Liturgy be broadcast on TV and on social media."*

In person Masses have now resumed in the Holy Land, but with smaller numbers of people who must pre-register and wear masks, with additional sanitizing and distancing precautions. *Please pray for us; we too will continue to pray for you from the Holy Land,*" promised Fr. Issa.

ST. MARY'S HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE POSTPONED

Originally scheduled for 2020 as part of St. Mary's 150th Anniversary Celebration, then moved to March 2021, our Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land has again been postponed by the pandemic. It will now take place early in 2022, the exact new dates to be announced as soon as hotel reservations are confirmed by our Tour Company. We thank all our pilgrims for their patience and understanding. We will get there yet! And a highlight of the journey will certainly be meeting Fr. Issa and the people of our Sister Parish in person. We so look forward to celebrating Mass with them in Beit Sahour (interior Church photo above).



On a happy note, St. Mary's January 9 and 10, 2021 Collection for the inaugural "Holliston – Holy Land Friendship Scholarship," was successful. Sufficient funds were raised to fully fund the education of one girl and one boy for a year at the Beit Sahour Patriarchate School. Well done people of St. Mary's!



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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

Lent is the season for Confession, so I will start this note by making one. I never learned how to type. That's my confession. I never learned how to type.

I started to - my senior year of high school I signed up for a typing course. But I wasn't very good at it. I was afraid the class might bring down my grade point average. And since I already had more credits than I needed to graduate, I dropped the course.

To this day I type with only two fingers. With plenty of mistakes. If this were the age of typewriters, I would be in big trouble. But happily, we live in the age of computers. So if I mess up while typing, it's not the end of the world. I can just go back and review my work on the computer screen before printing it out. I can correct my errors before committing myself to a finished product.

Which is kind of what we are all called to do during Lent. To correct errors. These forty days are an opportunity to look back and review our lives over the past year. To check for mistakes or omissions in our work and deal with them.

Fasting, Almsgiving, Prayer and especially Confession - those are how we can edit and delete out the errors of the past. Because as long as we're breathing, then our life is like so much text on a computer screen. Nothing is final. Any mistakes can still be fixed, with the grace of God.

We would never consider printing out an important piece of work without first hitting spell check to look for mistakes. Well, Lent is the Church's version of spell check. A time to stop and look for things to fix, ways to improve, the great work of our lives. Before the time comes to turn in the final draft. Something we all have to do, sooner or later.

"Remember you are dust, and unto dust you shall return," the Church reminds us on Ash Wednesday.

Because if life is like a computer screen where you can always still fix mistakes - then death is like the print button. Causing everything we've wrought in life to come forth in final, finished form. Subject to the scrutiny, and the judgement, of God.

As you know, in early December I tested positive for COVID 19. What you may not know is that I have a lung condition that put me at serious risk if I contracted the virus. Within five days of being diagnosed I wrote my will, bought a grave, and picked the photo for my spot on the "wall of pastors" in the St. Mary's Parish Center. (I went with Young Elvis).

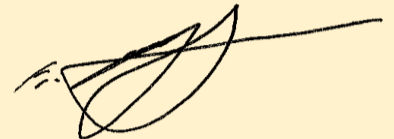
More importantly, I made a good Confession, received the Anointing of the Sick, and reached out to friends and family to connect, express my love, and in one case to forgive.

Happily, I came through my illness with comparatively minor symptoms. But it spurred me to do some important things that I had put off, thinking I had plenty of time remaining to accomplish them.

Similarly, the Ash Wednesday reminder to *"Remember you are dust, and unto dust you shall return,"* is meant not to frighten us, but to spur us to a greater spiritual urgency. To urge us not to put off loving, forgiving, giving, or any of the other important things that God has called us to accomplish during our short, uncertain time upon this earth.

Ash Wednesday is February 17. Lent is upon us.

Happy editing!



Rev. Mark J. Coiro

WELCOME!

With joy we receive these eight new families to our parish. May we be a true blessing to each other.

The Hopke Family ~ Frederick, Katherine, Benjamin & Elijah

The Melanson Family ~ Steven, Laura & Olivia

The Sherman Family ~ Frederick

The Maccagnano Family ~ Richard, Diane, Christopher & Lauren

The Denman Family ~ Matthew, Allison, Harper & Matthew, Jr.

The Schiaroli Family ~ Richard and Marilyn

The McKiernan Family ~ John and Nancy

The Rousseau Family ~ Mark, Sue & Rachelle



Meet Him In Ashes ~ Wednesday, February 17



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

Pre-Sign Up at <https://stmarysholliston.com/>.

Advance Sign-Ups end at 9:00 PM on Tuesday, February 16.

9:00 AM Mass Live-streamed to Facebook and Holliston Cable Access.

Meet Him For An Hour ~ Sunday, February 21

Lenten Holy Hour from 2:00-3:00 PM in St. Mary's Church. Deacon Ron Dowding will Expose the Blessed Sacrament for one hour of Eucharistic Adoration. During this time of prayer, he will offer "A Lenten Reflection for the Year of the Eucharist." Lent is the time for repentance, for spiritual renewal, for forgiveness, and for strengthening our relationship with Jesus. The Lenten Retreat will be live-streamed at <https://www.facebook.com/MusicAtStMarysHolliston>. Parishioners who attend in person will follow all the Sunday Mass pandemic safety procedures.

Meet Him Tuesday Evenings ~

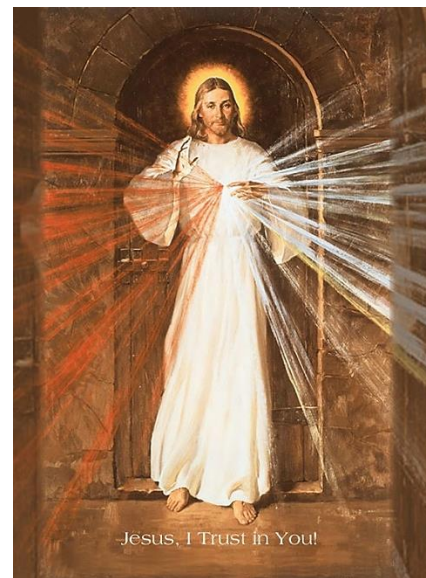
Evening Prayer, part of the Church's official daily prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, will be offered virtually for Lent on Tuesdays, February 23 and March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 at 7:00 PM. This beautiful prayer consists of psalms, hymns, and intercessions. It is easy to learn. Join us and find peace at day's end. You can participate in the prayer via the Music at St. Mary's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/MusicAtStMarysHolliston>.

Meet Him in His Divine Mercy ~

During the Season of Lent, Parishioner Mitch Liro and Deacon Ron Dowding invite you to a series of weekly meetings to learn about and explore The Divine Mercy. The program is open to anyone. Each meeting will consist of viewing brief, professionally produced videos, short discussions, and recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

We will meet in the comfort of our own homes via ZOOM on Wednesday evenings for 60-90 minutes. Meetings will be at 6:30 PM on February 24, and March 3, 17, 24, and 31. For additional information or to signup, contact Mitch Liro at 508-429-6098 (mjlsjl67@gmail.com) or contact Deacon Ron at 508-429-3961 (ronald.dowding@verizon.net).

"Sacred scripture is the greatest story ever told; and the story of The Divine Mercy is the Second Greatest Story Ever Told." - Rev. Michael Gately





*Meet Him With
Saint Joseph ~
Wednesday,
February 24, 7:00 PM*

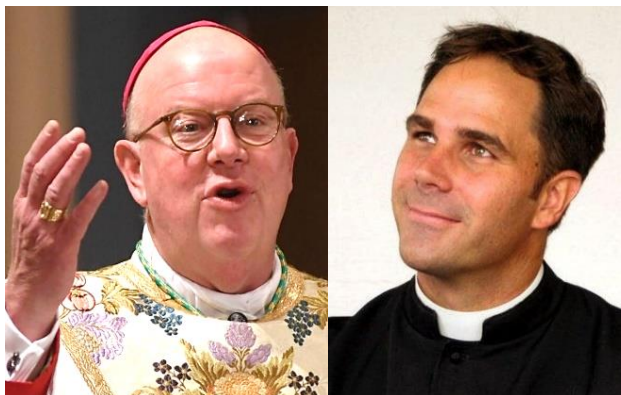
Virtual Lenten Retreat Evening. Pope Francis has declared this to be the Year of St. Joseph, marking the 150th anniversary of the saint's proclamation as patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1870. The Year of St. Joseph began on December 8, 2020 and will conclude on December 8, 2021. The Catholic Church honors St. Joseph as the foster father of Jesus. He is also invoked as the patron saint of workers, fathers, and a happy death.

Why is St. Joseph such a popular patron, such an important figure for Catholics of all times and places? What do we really know about him? What does he have to teach us about what it means to follow Christ and experience the fulfillment that comes from spiritual maturity?

Join us as we journey through this Lenten Season with Saint Joseph and hear from these engaging speakers.



St. Joseph
Guardian of the Redeemer



Bishop William D. Byrne
Bishop of Springfield, MA
A reflection on the spirituality of St. Joseph.

Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC
Priest, Author, Consecration to
St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our
Spiritual Father. Fr. Calloway will
bring to life the wonders, the power,
and the ceaseless love of St. Joseph,
Universal Patron of the Church.



Register by clicking this link: www.sjs.edu/lentenretreat.
or by scanning right:



Meet Him In His Miracles ~

Father Haley Hall:

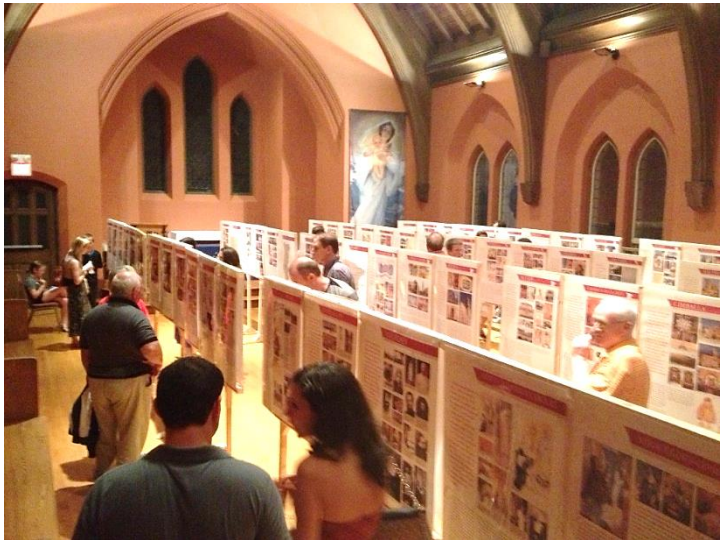
Friday, February 26, 5:00 – 8:00 PM

Saturday, February 27, 12:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Sunday, February 28, 10:30 AM – 3:00 PM

This Lent, St. Mary's Parish, Holliston, will host
The International Exhibition of Eucharistic
Miracles.

Designed by Carlo Acutis from Italy, the exhibit is
intended to spread awareness of the Eucharistic
miracles around the world. Since the actual relics and miracles cannot travel, the exhibit consists of
Vatican-approved text and photographs and is arranged like an art exhibit.



What is a Eucharistic miracle? Catholics believe that the consecrated host used in Holy Communion is the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. A Eucharistic miracle is any miracle that involves the Eucharist but in many of the miracles documented, they have happened during times of great doubt. Sometimes a consecrated host will bleed and drops of blood will fall on the chalice, the linens or on the floor. The Eucharist will bleed and sometimes the face of Jesus will be seen.

The exhibit displays around forty of the miracles from many countries around the world. Text is offered in English and Spanish, with a portion in Vietnamese and some for children. The exhibit will include the miracles of Lanciano, Italy, and Santarem, Portugal. These two miracles are considered by many to be the most important miracles involving the Eucharist.

For those who might desire to see scientific facts, the exhibit presents those supporting the miracles so that they can see that God is present in and with His creation at all times. The consecrated wine or precious blood has many times over the centuries turned into actual blood, which remains alive. Scientific evidence and testing support the fact that the blood from the miracles is living blood and the flesh is actual heart tissue from a suffering, dying man.

Normal human blood dies after fifteen minutes but the blood of the miracles is found to be living after hundreds of years. Interestingly, the blood from the Eucharistic miracles and from the Shroud of Turin, as well as from religious statues that bleed all over the world, has been found to all be of the same AB type blood. The miracles have been investigated by scientists and doctors from all over the world who admit that science can only take them so far, leaving them unable to explain the rest of the miracle, perhaps something to be left to faith alone.

We hope with the exhibit that we can increase people's understanding of and faith in the True Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. In the Eucharist, Jesus is still with us in a powerful way, offering much-needed joy and stability in a confusing and chaotic world. All are welcome, full pandemic protocols apply.



Meet Him For Forty Hours ~ Sunday, March 14 - Tuesday, March 16

Forty Hours Devotion: In celebrating this devotion, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the altar at St. Mary's for forty continuous hours. 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. Please pray for an end to the worldwide pandemic, and for all those harmed by it.



Sunday, March 14

11:30 AM Opening Mass

Tuesday, March 16

9:00 AM Closing Mass with
Benediction

Normally the church is open to the public throughout the Forty Hours. Regretfully, Pandemic safety regulations make that impossible this year. So only the three persons signed-up for each hour may enter. Sign-Up for a specific hour at <https://stmarysholliston.com/> starting February 27.

Meet Him With Cardinal O'Malley ~ Weeknights March 22-26 at 7:00 PM

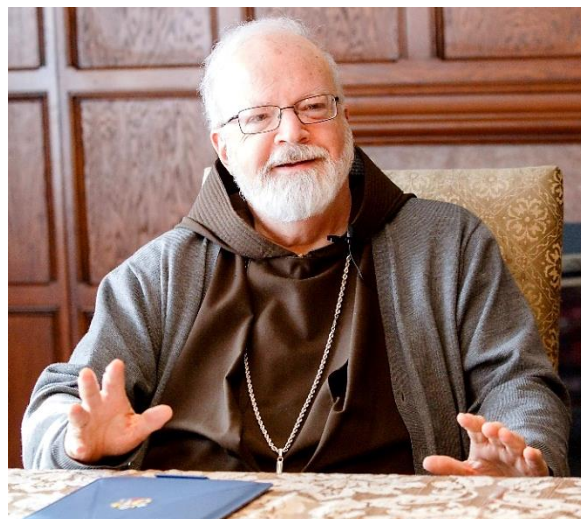
Join our Archbishop, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, for a five evening Virtual Lenten Retreat the week before Palm Sunday. The event will be broadcast on Boston Catholic Television.

You may watch online at: <https://www.catholic.tv.org/>.

Cable television option include:

Comcast Channel 268, Verizon Channel 296, and RCN Channel 85.

You may enjoy last Lent's Retreat with His Eminence at: <https://www.bostoncatholic.org/virtual-retreat-cardinal-sean>.



Building Family Bonds During COVID-19



Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, families have been faced with the challenge of establishing a 'new normal' in their daily lives. The disruptions that families experience with the closure of schools, childcare centers, workplaces, as well as many other services, can be a cause of tension and distress. Whatever your family situation, there is an opportunity to find grace in the midst of this crisis. Families can use this time as an invitation to focus on relationships and on building strong family bonds.

Here are a few suggestions on how to use this time well, (see the online version of this article at <https://stmarysholliston.com/monthly-newsletters/> to click the underlined resource links):

Pray Together

- Visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Exposed for Adoration 24/7 in the 3rd floor St. Mary's Rectory window facing Washington Street. Say a prayer together from the rectory sidewalk or lawn.
- Pray the Rosary – [here's a tutorial](#) if you need a refresher. Try starting with just one decade and offer it for an intention important to your family. Close with Archbishop Gomez' [Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe](#) (also in [video form](#)).

- Pray the Stations of the Cross – you can do this at home with a simple cross or crucifix. Use these meditations [on the USCCB website](#) or pray the [Stations of the Cross for Marriages and Families](#).
- Meditate on the Scriptures – consider praying [the daily Mass readings](#) as a family.
- Attend Mass if you feel you can do so safely. Or celebrate and observe Sunday with a Livestreamed Mass. St. Mary's 11:30 AM Mass is live-cast every Sunday at: <https://www.facebook.com/MusicAtStMarysHolliston/>. You may also watch it live on Holliston Cable Access: Verizon Fios Ch. 33 or Comcast Xfinity Ch. 96. Alternately, many virtual Mass times and opportunities may be found at: <http://www.catholicstv.org/masses>.

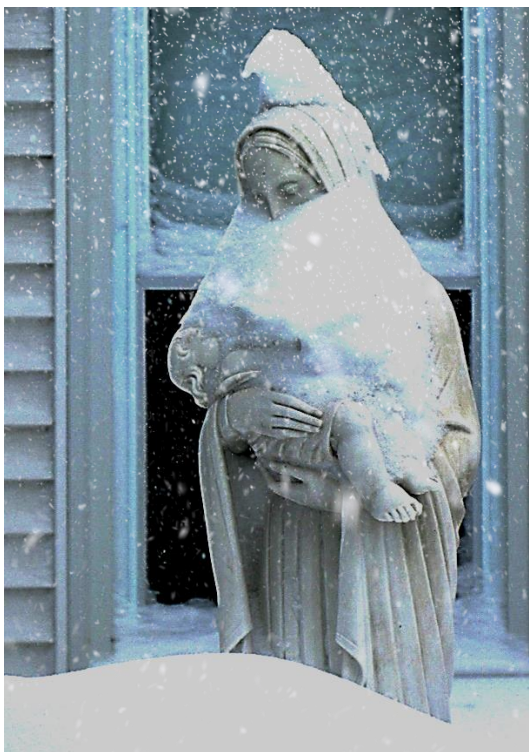
Build and Fortify Your Relationships

- Set aside time to pray with your spouse – Check out these [Four Simple Steps to Pray with Your Spouse](#).
- Consider using extra time to enrich your marriage – several [marriage encouragement and enrichment resources](#) have online courses available.
- Be Kind – [Pope Francis' resolutions for couples](#) are a great place to start.

Have Fun Together

- Do something fun as a family – bake a pie, bring out a board game, get creative with craft supplies, or take a nature walk at a nearby trail.
- Plan a celebration for feast days – celebrate St. Patrick's Day (March 17) with some homemade green baked goods, St. Joseph's Day (March 19) with an Italian Dinner, or the Annunciation (March 25) with waffles or 'white food' in honor of our Lady.
- Don't stop Date Nights – [here are some suggestions](#), most of which can be done at home.
- Start building a family photo album or photobook. Organize your photos and plan some home videos.

Above all, find ways to invite God to walk with and be part of your family in these challenging times!



STEWARDS

IN ALL SEASONS

WEATHERING THE PANDEMIC STORM ~

The 2020 Christmas Collection, down by 66% from the previous year, demonstrates the challenge of stewardship without in person Mass attendance. Many are now praying along with St. Mary's Masses virtually, but with people not physically present in the church and no basket being passed, the Parish Offertory and important Second Collections can be significantly impacted.

We therefore urge all parishioners to please make the switch to [Automatic Giving](#) or [WeShare](#).

These online services protect your Parish's Offertory from the impact of travel, illness, (time of pandemic), severe weather, etc. They allow you to maintain your support without having to remember to mail or drop off envelopes. Even if you are at Mass in person again, these forms of giving mean not having to remember to bring checkbooks and envelopes with you.

Learn how to make the switch at:

<https://stmarysholliston.com/how-to-give/>

"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."





Troop 14 Holliston

Boy Scouts of America
St. Mary's Parish * February, 2021

Meetings: Monday Nights 7:00 - 8:30 PM
(Currently online).

Contact: Chris Baribeau, Scoutmaster
508.579.4357

Email: Troop14Holliston@yahoo.com

Website: www.hollistonTroop14.com

St. Mary's Boy Scout Troop 14 is meeting outdoors and online during the Pandemic. If interested in joining Troop 14, contact the Scoutmaster. It is an ideal organization for Boys 11-17 years old.

SCOUTING DURING A PANDEMIC: Conforming to the Governor's "Stay-at-Home Advisory" resulting in no overnight campouts, Troop 14 held "Day" activities over the past two months. On December 6, 2020, a dozen Scouts and leaders, along with a handful of 2nd year Webelos, ventured to Callahan State Park in Framingham. After hiking various trails around the park, the Scouts cooked dinner consisting of chicken, rice and meatballs in between a couple of good ol' winter snowball fights.



On January 17, 17 Scouts and leaders headed to Medfield State Hospital for their next winter adventure. Hiking 6.4 miles along the Charles River and through the grounds of the State Hospital, they ended their day with a campfire, cooking chicken parmesan and attempting to roast chestnuts over an open fire.



TROOP 14 HAS TWO NEW EAGLE SCOUTS: Congratulations go out to Troop 14's Trevor Fleischman and Brendan Climer, both of whom have completed all requirements and passed their Eagle Board of Reviews to earn Scouting's highest rank. Trevor's Board was on January 20, and Brendan's Board was on January 28. Congratulations Trevor and Brendan on this major life achievement!

SCOUT SUNDAY: Annually, during the first week of February, the Boy Scouts of America celebrates its founding 111 years ago. In the mid-1940's, Scout Sunday was added to the celebration to remind the Scouts of the 12th Point of the Scout Law, "A Scout is Reverent" and the promise to do their "Duty to God."

Normally, Troop 14 hosts a Pancake Breakfast at St. Mary's on Scout Sunday, but this year it was cancelled by the pandemic. We look forward to its return in 2022! For the same reason, this year's Scout Sunday Mass was moved from 9:30 AM to the 11:30 AM Livestreamed Mass, allowing those Scouts not able to attend in person to participate virtually instead. Scouts served the Mass, offered two Scripture Readings, and provided the "Scout Is Reverent," Banner. During the Mass, Fr. Mark offered a blessing of all the Scouts and their Leaders, (below).

This year, Scout Sunday also featured a new chasuble recently donated to the Parish. The vestment is off white, with panels of "Black Watch Tartan," in honor of St. Mary's Troop 14, who have worn this tartan since the 1960's. Click this link to learn more about how this tradition began: <https://stmarysholliston.com/wp-content/uploads/TROOP-14-Black-Watch-Tartan.pdf>.

The World Boy Scouting Emblem is embroidered in gold on the front of the chasuble. This emblem is rich in symbolism. The fleur-de-lis was chosen by Lord Baden-Powell as the main symbol for Scouting. He reasoned that the fleur-de-lis was commonly used as the symbol for north on maps, and a Boy Scout was to show the way in doing his duty and helping others. The three plumes of the fleur-de-lis are symbols for Service to Others, Duty to God, and Obedience to the Scout Law. These three principles form the Scout Promise which is made by new Scouts as they join the movement.

The Scouting fleur-de-lis includes two five-pointed stars, which symbolize knowledge and truth. A "bond" tying the three plumes together symbolizes the family of Scouting. The Scouting Emblem includes a rope which encircles the fleur-de-lis and is tied in a reef knot at the bottom. The rope is there to symbolize the family of the World Scouting Movement and the knot symbolizes the strength of the unity of all Boy Scouts throughout the world.

SCOUT SUNDAY PRAYER OF BLESSING:

**Almighty God,
Bless these young men who have committed
themselves to the pursuit of Scouting.**

**Allow their minds to be broadened,
their hopes to be raised,
and their futures to be filled with promise.**

**As they learn more about You and Your ways,
may they be inspired to reach out in service
to all in need – becoming true disciples in our
world today.**

**May all their efforts guide each of them
to know you, to love you, and to serve you -
now and throughout their lives.**

**We ask this blessing through Jesus Christ,
Our Risen Savior and Lord.**

Amen.





MEMORIAL GIFT OPPORTUNITY ~

They have served us well for almost seventeen years, but St. Mary's Funeral Chasuble & Coffin Pall are getting a bit worn and pilled. These items are an important part of every Funeral Mass celebrated at our parish. The names of those in whose loving memory they are donated appear on labels sewn on and are prayed for when the priest vests.

If interested in donating one of the new Funeral vesture items, please email Mary Beth at St.Marys1870@gmail.com for details. Thank you.

ANNIVERSARY HISTORY BOOK UPDATE ~ The 150th Anniversary History of

St. Mary's Book is nearing completion at last! I have been writing the chapter on our beautiful stained-glass windows and the parishioners memorialized on them. Ancestry and Family Search have been used for background data and, in some cases, I have spoken to relatives of the deceased. However, I could use more information, especially on Helen S. Howard (1891-1929) and William Heaton (1894-1954). If you know them or know relatives of them, please let me know.

One of the windows is dedicated to St. Vincent's Court of the MA Catholic Order of Foresters. If you know anything about this Chapter's activities at St. Mary's, or the year it disbanded, please email me at betty.febo@gmail.com. If you have been thinking about contacting me with any stories, memories or photos of St. Mary's, now is the time. Thank you for your help! Betty Febo





Deepen Your Faith in 2021 Give yourself the gift of God's Word

St. Mary's WINGS Winter Season
Wednesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM
via Zoom beginning January 27, 2021

I Am the Bread of Life, John 1-10

Study Book By: Kevin Perrotta



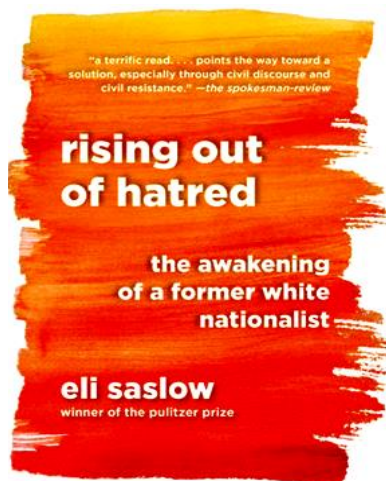
St. Mary's Deacon Ron Dowding kicked off our Winter Program on Wednesday, January 27 with an inspiring introduction to the Gospel of John. (John 1:1-34).

February 3, 2021	(John 1:35-2:12)
February 10, 2021	(John 4:1-42)
February 17, 2021	(John 6:25-69)
February 24, 2021	(John 10:1-33)

Our weekly program includes a **thought-provoking speaker** providing insights and reflection on selected Scripture followed by small group discussion. The study book is available for purchase on Amazon or through Loyola Press, but we encourage you to participate even if you do not have the book. Suggested dues are \$10 for those who are able, unless you have already paid for the year.

Women of all ages are encouraged to participate in WINGS.

Email: stmaryswingssecretary@gmail.com to sign up or call Jennifer Schiller 617-852-9632 or Diane Collins 508-259-7795 with questions. If you have received our Fall and Advent Zoom links, you will automatically be sent the link for the Winter program.



BOOK DISCUSSION ~

“RISING OUT OF HATRED.” Deacon Marty will be hosting a Book Discussion on Thursday, February 25 via ZOOM. The discussion will take place from 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM. The book for discussion is “Rising Out of Hatred,” by Eli Saslow. If you would like to participate in the discussion, please email Deacon Marty at mebmab4@msn.com. The discussion will be limited to 10 people. A second session can be added if there is sufficient interest. Read Deacon Marty’s review of the book on page 15 here: <https://rb.gy/n3rty9>.



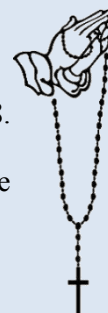
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

St. Mary's Council #14224 February, 2021

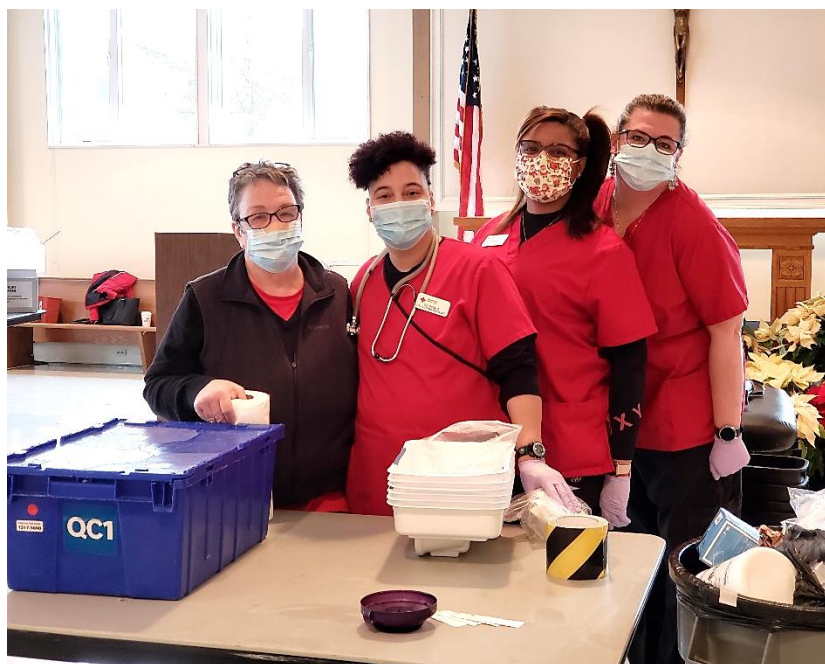
Grand Knight: Albert Scaramella
Deputy Grand Knight: Tom Anguish

MONTHLY ROSARY:

The next Rosary will be **THURSDAY, February 18**. This Rosary will be a group "ZOOM" conference at 7:00 PM. "ZOOM" details will be sent to all Council Knights.



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE AT ST. MARY'S: The Council sponsored the drive on Saturday, January 16, 2021. It was a success with 48 pints donated, exceeding last year's donations. The Council Blood Drive Coordinator was Knight Rodman Burgett. The Council thanks all blood donors. (Photo Below).



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS "KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS" POSTER CONTEST:

The Council thanks all youth participants in grades 1-8. The winners are: Grade K-2, Declan Hanlon; Grade 3-5, Nolan Browne; Grade 6-8, Eleanor Browne. The winners received a cash prize and their posters have been entered into the State Council Poster Contest.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS "COATS FOR KIDS" 2020:

The Council participated in the Supreme Council program for the 13th year. This year, in addition to the Council's purchase of one set of winter coats, four other Council Knights donated four sets so a total of 60 winter coats were donated to Project Just Because in Hopkinton. They distributed the 60 winter coats to needy families in the Middlesex area.

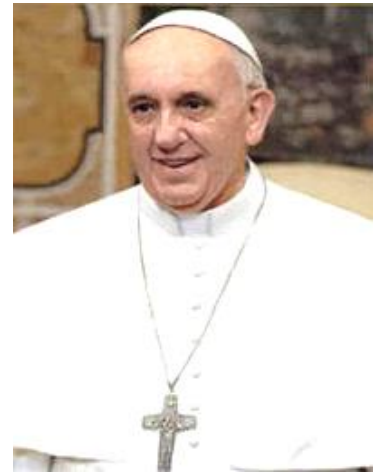
MONTHLY ROSARY AND COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD BY "ZOOM": Due to COVID-19, the Council recited the Rosary and held the business meeting via "ZOOM" in January. Note the February Council meeting will be held on **THURSDAY, February 18** instead of Ash Wednesday.

WORCESTER DIOCESAN CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE: The conference will be held on March 20 at Assumption College if COVID restrictions allow the gathering. Otherwise, the Conference will **STILL proceed** "with a dynamic online remote format." If health restrictions close the Assumption College location, "...attendees can participate at home via internet OR view at a COVID safe venue" (locations to be announced). If the Conference is remote, all speakers will be presenting, and vendor real time interactions will be online. All St. Mary's men are invited. For ticket information go to firstmensconf.org or call Joan at 508-929-4345. All unused tickets from last year's cancelled conference will be honored.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE FOR 2021: All St. Mary's men eighteen and older who are practicing Catholics in good standing, are invited to join our Council. The Knights of Columbus is the largest Catholic men's lay organization in the world. Our Council respects members limited time but needs new members to share our faith journey as Catholic men. For membership information contact Grand Knight Albert Scaramella at 508-561-0584 OR ajscaramella@comcast.net OR you can now join ON-LINE by going to the Supreme K of C website kofc.org/joinus. On-line membership allows you to obtain all K of C benefits including outstanding insurance plans and optional membership in our St. Mary's Council. A special is offered for new e-members and annual dues are waived until June 30, 2021 by using the coupon code MCGIVNEY2020 when signing up online for membership.

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE XXIX WORLD DAY OF THE SICK, FEBRUARY 11, 2021

***“You have but one teacher and you are all brothers”
(Mt 23:8). A trust-based relationship to guide care
for the sick.***



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The celebration of the XXIX World Day of the Sick on 11 February 2021, the liturgical memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lourdes, is an opportunity to devote special attention to the sick and to those who provide them with assistance and care both in healthcare institutions and within families and communities. We think in particular of those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, the effects of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. To all, and especially to the poor and the marginalized, I express my spiritual closeness and assure them of the Church's loving concern.

1. The theme of this Day is drawn from the Gospel passage in which Jesus criticizes the hypocrisy of those who fail to practice what they preach (cf. Mt 23:1-12). When our faith is reduced to empty words, unconcerned with the lives and needs of others, the creed we profess proves inconsistent with the life we lead. The danger is real. That is why Jesus uses strong language about the peril of falling into self-idolatry. He tells us: “You have but one teacher and you are all brothers” (v. 8). Jesus' criticism of those who “preach but do not practice” (v. 3) is helpful always and everywhere, since none of us is immune to the grave evil of hypocrisy, which prevents us from flourishing as children of the one Father, called to live universal fraternity. Before the needs of our brothers and sisters, Jesus asks us to respond in a way completely contrary to such hypocrisy. He asks us to stop and listen, to establish a direct and personal relationship with others, to feel empathy and compassion, and to let their suffering become our own as we seek to serve them (cf. Lk 10:30-35).

2. The experience of sickness makes us realize our own vulnerability and our innate need of others. It makes us feel all the more clearly that we are creatures dependent on God. When we are ill, fear and even bewilderment can grip our minds and hearts; we find ourselves powerless, since our health does not depend on our abilities or life's incessant worries (cf. Mt 6:27). Sickness raises the question of life's meaning, which we bring before God in faith. In seeking a new and deeper direction in our lives, we may not find an immediate answer. Nor are our relatives and friends always able to help us in this demanding quest.

The biblical figure of Job is emblematic in this regard. Job's wife and friends do not accompany him in his misfortune; instead, they blame him and only aggravate his solitude and distress. Job feels forlorn and misunderstood. Yet for all his extreme frailty, he rejects hypocrisy and chooses the path of honesty towards God and others. He cries out to God so insistently that God finally answers him and allows him to glimpse a new horizon. He confirms that Job's suffering is not a punishment or a state of separation from God, much less as sign of God's indifference. Job's heart, wounded and healed, then makes this vibrant and touching confession to the Lord: “I had heard of you by word of mouth, but now my eye has seen you” (42:5).

3. Sickness always has more than one face: it has the face of all the sick, but also those who feel ignored, excluded and prey to social injustices that deny their fundamental rights (cf. Fratelli Tutti, 22). The current pandemic has exacerbated inequalities in our healthcare systems and exposed inefficiencies in the care of the sick. Elderly, weak and vulnerable people are not always granted access to care, or in an equitable manner. This is the result of

political decisions, resource management and greater or lesser commitment on the part of those holding positions of responsibility. Investing resources in the care and assistance of the sick is a priority linked to the fundamental principle that health is a primary common good. Yet the pandemic has also highlighted the dedication and generosity of healthcare personnel, volunteers, support staff, priests, men and women religious, all of whom have helped, treated, comforted and served so many of the sick and their families with professionalism, self-giving, responsibility and love of neighbor.

A silent multitude of men and women, they chose not to look the other way but to share the suffering of patients, whom they saw as neighbors and members of our one human family. Such closeness is a precious balm that provides support and consolation to the sick in their suffering. As Christians, we experience that closeness as a sign of the love of Jesus Christ, the Good Samaritan, who draws near with compassion to every man and woman wounded by sin. United to Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit, we are called to be merciful like the Father and to love in particular our frail, infirm and suffering brothers and sisters (cf. Jn 13:34-35). We experience this closeness not only as individuals but also as a community. Indeed, fraternal love in Christ generates a community of healing, a community that leaves no one behind, a community that is inclusive and welcoming, especially to those most in need.

Here I wish to mention the importance of fraternal solidarity, which is expressed concretely in service and can take a variety of forms, all directed at supporting our neighbors. "Serving means caring ... for the vulnerable of our families, our society, our people" (Homily in Havana, 20 September 2015). In this outreach, all are "called to set aside their own wishes and desires, their pursuit of power, before the concrete gaze of those who are most vulnerable... Service always looks to their faces, touches their flesh, senses their closeness and even, in some cases, 'suffers' that closeness and tries to help them. Service is never ideological, for we do not serve ideas, we serve people" (ibid.).

4. If a therapy is to be effective, it must have a relational aspect, for this enables a holistic approach to the patient. Emphasizing this aspect can help doctors, nurses, professionals and volunteers to feel responsible for accompanying patients on a path of healing grounded in a trusting interpersonal relationship (cf. New Charter for Health Care Workers [2016], 4). This creates a covenant between those in need of care and those who provide that care, a covenant based on mutual trust and respect, openness and availability. This will help to overcome defensive attitudes, respect the dignity of the sick, safeguard the professionalism of healthcare workers and foster a good relationship with the families of patients.

Such a relationship with the sick can find an unfailing source of motivation and strength in the charity of Christ, as shown by the witness of those men and women who down the millennia have grown in holiness through service to the infirm. For the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is the source of the love capable of giving full meaning to the experience of patients and caregivers alike. The Gospel frequently makes this clear by showing that Jesus heals not by magic but as the result of an encounter, an interpersonal relationship, in which God's gift finds a response in the faith of those who accept it. As Jesus often repeats: "Your faith has saved you".

5. Dear brothers and sisters, the commandment of love that Jesus left to his disciples is also kept in our relationship with the sick. A society is all the more human to the degree that it cares effectively for its most frail and suffering members, in a spirit of fraternal love. Let us strive to achieve this goal, so that no one will feel alone, excluded or abandoned.

To Mary, Mother of Mercy and Health of the Infirm, I entrust the sick, healthcare workers and all those who generously assist our suffering brothers and sisters. From the Grotto of Lourdes and her many other shrines throughout the world, may she sustain our faith and hope, and help us care for one another with fraternal love. To each and all, I cordially impart my blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran.

Franciscus

ADULT FAITH RESOURCES

FEBRUARY, 2021

got faith?



“FAITH SPEAKING” VOLUMES: *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future*, written last year by Pope Francis, is this month’s featured book. Reflecting on his view of the world and its needs, a view which has been strengthened by our common experience of the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis firmly believes that “we need a movement of people who know we need each other, who have a responsibility to others and to the world; we need to proclaim that being kind, having faith, and working for the common good are great life goals...” (p. 6). The three chapters of the book reflect the manner in which the Pope proposes that we respond to every crisis we face. The first chapter states that we must see the full situation in front of us for what it really is, and how it came to be. The chapter on choosing presents solid information about discernment, or listening for the voice of the Spirit in our lives. In the third chapter, Pope Francis says that we need “to recover our sense of belonging” to “a people” with a shared story and dignity (p. 97)...and act. The Pope ends his book with a poem called *Hope*, written by Alexis Valdés. *Let Us Dream* is available from online booksellers.

SUNDAY READINGS: We begin this month of February in Ordinary Time and end it in the Season of Lent; Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, is celebrated on February 17. On the first two Sundays of Lent, we hear Gospel stories of Jesus’ healing powers. Once Lent begins, the Old Testament readings focus on God’s covenant with humanity. The story of Noah is presented on the First Sunday of Lent, February 21, and we hear the story of Abraham and Isaac on the Second Sunday of Lent, February 28. You can read about the importance of the term “covenant” at <http://bit.ly/Covenants365>. You can also sign up for a free Bible study on the topic of covenants at the St. Paul Center, founded by Scott Hahn; here’s the link: <http://bit.ly/StPaulCenter>.

“JUST” WONDERING: February is Black History Month. See the article on the History Channel’s website, <http://bit.ly/360nrlu>, about the origins of the designation of this month as one to remember and celebrate Black History; you’ll find a note about this year’s theme as well. You can read a number of Catholic reflections on the Movement for Black Lives Matter at <http://bit.ly/USCCBBLM>.

PRAYER: Evening Prayer, part of the Church’s official daily prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, will be offered virtually on Tuesdays, February 23 and March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 at 7:00 PM. You can participate in the prayer via the Music at St. Mary’s Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/MusicAtStMarysHolliston>.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES: February 11 is the date of the Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes; it is also known as the World Day of the Sick, instituted by Pope St. John Paul II in 1992. You will find Pope Francis’ message for the World Day of the Sick at <http://bit.ly/2Y1Wp91>. For more information about Our Lady of Lourdes, you can read the article on the Catholic News website, <http://bit.ly/3c06yLG>, or see Word on Fire’s Ten questions about Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Bernadette at <http://bit.ly/3p35qKW>.

SPOTLIGHT ON CATHOLICISM IN ACTION: Feeding the hungry is one of our Catholic corporal works of mercy. There are several Eastern Massachusetts Catholic entities that put this work of mercy into practice: the Cor Unum Meals Center of St. Patrick’s Parish in Lawrence, the weekly food pantry at St. Bridget’s Parish in Framingham and the Boston Archdiocesan Catholic Charities organization’s five food pantries. Not Catholic in name, though merciful in nature, the Holliston Pantry Shelf, works to meet the challenges of food insecurity here in our own town. Finally, at <http://bit.ly/3sNU4Ni>, the Archdiocese presents the issue of buying and sharing food as part of its focus on environmental stewardship; Meatless Mondays (<http://bit.ly/39XF0ns>) are mentioned, too. Plenty of food for Lenten thought here! ---Leo Racine