



ST. MARY'S PARISH
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HOLLISTON, MA 01746

May Newsletter 2022
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A FUN AND FAITH FILLED FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT

On Saturday, March 26, St. Mary's Grade Two Children made a Retreat in preparation for their First Holy Communion in June. The day began by meeting Jesus in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with their parents. This prayer time was guided by Deacon Marty.

Following Adoration, the families divided into groups and visited various interactive stations where the children made their First Communion banners with the help of many teen volunteers.

Then the children participated in a dramatic play with Mrs. Najat Whalen called "Let My People Go!" Finally, the families watched a movie about the "Miracles of Jesus". At the close of the retreat, refreshments were served to everyone by High School volunteers.

We look forward to welcoming these children to the Table of the Lord as part of our Eucharistic Fellowship!

St. Mary's Parish Newsletter

May, 2022 ~ Volume 48, Number 5



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

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Honoring Sister Ricci ~

On Sunday, April 3, St. Mary's 11:30 AM Mass was offered for Sister Mary Ricci Lloyd. Sister was the Pastoral Associate at our parish from 1980 to 2004, and went home to God on April 4, 2016. Four Nuns from Sr. Ricci's Order were in attendance, including Sister Lee Hogan, CSJ – President of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Boston. Sister Hogan spoke at the Mass about Sister Ricci's simple, joyful commitment to her God, her work, and the people she served. Sister Ricci's special love for children and the people of St. Mary's was also mentioned, as were her sparkling blue eyes and the light and love of God that radiated from her.

Following the Mass, all processed to St. Mary's old "Annex Classroom Building," which was then blessed and rededicated as "Sister Ricci House." The blessing included the unveiling of a new sign. This building will continue to be used for the religious instruction of the children that Sister loved so well, as well as for some new office space currently being configured.

Through the generosity of St. Mary's Parishioners to the 2021 Grand Annual, the electrical wiring in the building has all been upgraded, including the replacement of some antique knob and tube wiring. In the near future, a large photograph of Sister Ricci with our Special Needs Group will be hung, along with a memorial plaque describing her ministry at St. Mary's. It is a comfort to know that many years from now, Sister's name will still be spoken at the Parish she served so faithfully and well!





FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Good People of St. Mary's,

I am the eldest of four children; however my mother experienced two miscarriages before I was born. The second of these was so serious that doctors advised my parents that another pregnancy would pose a great risk to her health and possibly even her life. It was the late 1960's, though, and natural family planning was not then as medically exact as it is today. As a result, my mother became pregnant with me.

The day they received the news, my parents made a decision to ask the Blessed Mother's prayerful intercession. That night, and every subsequent night of the pregnancy, they placed their hands on my mother's abdomen and prayed a special prayer of consecration to the Virgin Mary. They asked Mary to intercede with her Son to keep both my mother and I safe. Nine months later, I was born, and both my mother and I were healthy.

My mother has often said that she thinks it was those nine months of prayer I received in the womb that later caused me to become a priest. Whether or not she's right, I have always felt a special connection to Mary through those events surrounding my birth.

Nor am I alone. At the Cross, Jesus very deliberately entrusted all of us to His Blessed Mother's care, saying to the beloved disciple, "son, there is your mother," and to Mary, "mother, there is your son." One of Jesus' final acts was to share His own mother with us, so that in her we might always have a strong advocate and avenue to His divine love.

As we come now to May, the month specially dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, I invite you reclaim her as your own spiritual mother. Lay your troubles before her in prayer, even as once the hosts of the wedding at Cana made Mary aware that the wine was running out. Be confident that just as Mary took this situation to Jesus, so she will carry your challenges, hurts, hopes, and deepest needs to the One Who there turned water into wine.

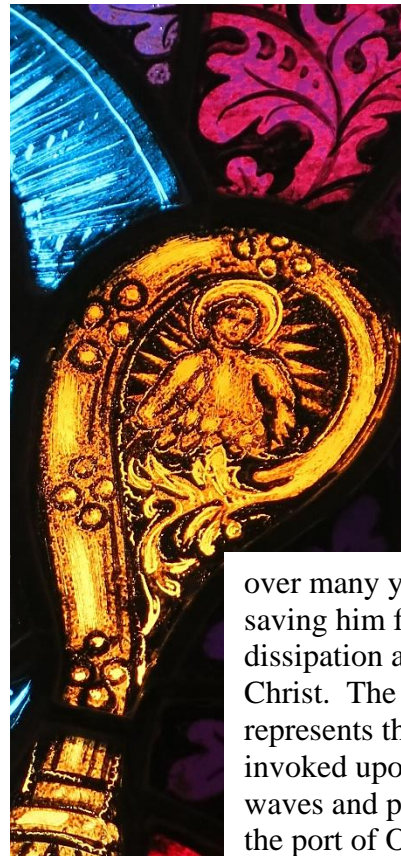
Especially if your faith has been running dry – if you have stopped praying, if you have stopped attending Sunday Mass, if you have stopped feeling the nearness and constancy and love of God in your life – let Mary help you. Ask her to help bring you back to her Son, that He might transform the water of your doubts into the rich wine of faith.

A hallmark of Catholic prayer is the rosary, and there is no better way to embrace your Blessed Mother and ask her aid than by praying the holy rosary, especially if you have fallen out of the habit. It was at Fatima that the Blessed Mother asked Catholics to pray the rosary each and every day for the intention of peace in the world, a prayer we are certainly in need of today.

Additionally, the rosary has great power to bring unity and peace to those families who pray it together, and I hope that every family of our parish will pray the rosary at least once together during Mary's month.

God bless you.

Rev. Mark J. Coiro



A MOTHER'S LOVE ~ Have you ever noticed that there is a figure inside the crook of the bishop's crozier in the Saint Augustine stained glass window in our church? This is St. Monica, the long-suffering mother of St. Augustine, whose prayers

over many years he credited with saving him from a life of dissipation and bringing him to Christ. The light surrounding her represents the heavenly grace she invoked upon her son, and the waves and palm fronds represent the port of Ostia, where she died.



MAY 8, Mother's Day ~ A special Blessing of Mothers will take place at all Masses this weekend. Consider making a donation this day to Birthright of Framingham. The Birthright Center is staffed entirely by volunteers who offer friendship, emotional support and practical assistance to women in a crisis pregnancy. Birthright does not charge for its services, but relies on donations from generous supporters to continue helping pregnant women in need. Your support is deeply appreciated. Checks can be made out and mailed to "Birthright of Framingham," 79A Main St., Framingham 01702. Any and all contributions are gratefully accepted.

MAY 14, Electronics Recycling Event ~ On Saturday, May 14, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM in St. Mary's Church parking lot St. Mary's Knights of Columbus Council #14224 is teaming with Green Team Junk Removal to hold an Electronics Recycling Event. All funds raised will be used to help the Council with their efforts to assist others in need. Here is what can be accepted: PC monitors, CPU's, motherboards, hard drives, power supplies, RAM memory, peripheral cards, keyboards, telecommunications equipment and boards, printers, gaming systems, amplifiers, routers, flat-screen TVs and flat-screen computer monitors. A minimum total donation of \$10 is requested for the first three items and \$5 for each additional item. SPECIAL: Your hard-to-get-rid-of AIR CONDITIONERS will be accepted for a \$15 separate fee each. Help the Knights' charitable efforts while getting free of electronic junk!



MAY 15, Class of 2022 Mass for Graduates! ~ On Sunday, May 15, at 11:30 AM, St. Mary's will offer her 10th Annual Mass for Graduates. This year our parish has teens graduating from seven different schools. The Mass will include a special Blessing of Graduates, the Presentation of the 2022 Blessed Mother Scholarship, and a Student Class Speaker. The Mass is followed by a light reception in Fr. Haley Hall, and a Group Class Photo for the Newsletter. Come congratulate our graduates!

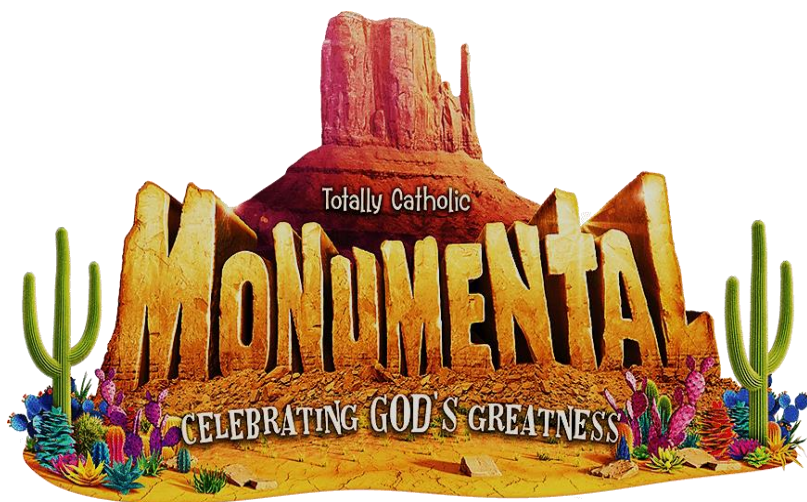
MAY 26, Ascension Thursday, A Holy Day of Obligation ~

Vigil Mass, Wednesday, May 25, at 6:30 PM

Feast Day Masses, Thursday, May 26, at 9:00 AM & 7:00 PM



The Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after the Feast of Pascha (Easter). Since the date of Pascha changes each year, the date of the Feast of the Ascension also changes. The Feast is always celebrated on a Thursday, and marks an event of such importance that it is a Holy Day of Obligation. This means that Catholics attend Mass this day as on a Sunday. The Feast itself commemorates when, on the fortieth day after His Resurrection, Jesus led His disciples to the Mount of Olives, and after blessing them and asking them to wait for the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit, He ascended into heaven. Where He has gone, we hope one day to follow.



GET READY FOR "MONUMENTAL ~ CELEBRATING GOD'S GREATNESS!" ST. MARY'S 15th ANNUAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, COMING JULY 25-29, 2022!

Go off-road for a Monumental adventure through the colorful canyons and sunbaked trails of the southwest. By exploring God's awesomeness, kids form a rock-solid faith for the road ahead. MONUMENTAL is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences that kids see, hear, touch and even taste! Teamwork-building games, cool Bible songs, tasty treats and creative crafts are some of the activities that help faith flow into real life. Each day kids meet new Bible Buddies to remind them of God's love; and create crafts to bring home the memories.

VBS Registration is now open to those entering kindergarten through Grade 6. Registration is limited to 100 children. All forms are online at stmarysholliston.com, under Registration, Youth Ministry, Vacation Bible School. We provide child care for children under age 5 whose parents are volunteering the entire week at VBS. Teen volunteers must be in Grade 7 or above. <https://stmarysholliston.com/vacation-bible-school/>.

Contact Patty Baribeau at stmarysvbsholliston@gmail.com with any questions/concerns/interest, especially if you are interested in helping with planning this week of Fun, Faith & Friends!

REGISTER FOR FALL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BY JUNE 17, 2022!

The deadline to register your child / children for Religious Education Classes in Fall of 2022 is **Friday, June 17, 2022**. Class time choices are on a first come first served basis.

Be sure to get your preferred time and day by registering on time. (A late fee of \$50 per family will be added after June 17.)

The Registration Form is available on the St. Mary's Website: stmarysholliston.com, under Register / Parish Forms on the main page. Forms should be accompanied by full payment made out to St. Mary's Parish. Scholarships or payment plans are available.

Open to families with children entering Pre-K through Grade 10. Registrations have been mailed to current students. If you are new to Holliston and want to register your children please contact us at 508-429-6076 or at st.marysre1870@gmail.com. Welcome!





RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NOTICE:

Registrations for the 2022-2023 Religious Education Program will be sent out this week and may also be found on St. Mary's website under Parish Forms (see previous page). Please take the time to review the contents of the registration letter and grade level class schedules for mid-September. Grades 9 and 10 students will meet on a different Sunday each month and attend the 11:30 AM Sunday Mass followed by their class session. Grade 8 will meet on alternate Monday and Tuesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. There will be an opportunity for Grades 3, 4, 5

and 6 to meet on the same weekdays to assist families with their schedules. Grade 7 will meet on alternate Sundays from 4:30 to 6:00 PM and on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Please send back the Religious Education Registrations along with the tuition for your children before June 17, 2022 to reserve the day and class times to meet your family schedule.

GRADE COORDINATORS ARE NEEDED: At this time, we are seeking Grade Coordinators for Grade levels 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9. Grade Coordinators assist in the development of the curriculum in conjunction with the RE staff and Master Calendar developed by the DRE for the upcoming fiscal year. They also assist with providing project materials for the teachers; assist with assigning students to classes once registrations are received; communicating with follow up phone calls and Email messages; assist with recruiting volunteer teachers; and working with the staff on all correspondence to teachers and families as well as providing copies to the appropriate staff member and requesting secretarial support with advanced notice. If you are able to take on this volunteer position, you will be trained. Please contact our Religious Education Office if you can make a commitment to this important ministry at 508-429-6076.

PARENTS ARE THE FIRST TEACHERS OF THE FAITH:



The goal of our program is to provide opportunities for spiritual formation along with religious education. Teachers and their students grow both in living their faith and in knowledge of it. In addition to studying the curriculum for each grade level, members of our classes pray with and for each other, reflect together on the gospel for the upcoming Sunday, and work on seasonal projects.

The most important thing to remember about any Parish Religious Education Program is that it is meant to

complement the faith education being offered to Catholic children by their parents. The parents are the first teachers of a child's faith. At their child's Baptism ceremony, parents commit to raise their children "in the practice of the faith." This means bringing the children faithfully to Mass each and every weekend, teaching them how to pray at home, and setting a good example of Christian living.

In other words, parish Religious Education is the "icing on the cake." A child's participation in Sunday Mass and the faith shared with them at home constitute the "cake" – the experience that gives form and substance and meaning to what the children learn in parish Religious Education.



At St. Mary's Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 16, two adults were fully initiated to the Catholic Faith. Shown above with her family, third from the right, Rose Sampane received the Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation. Shown in the center, below with her family, Sharon Brovelli received the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation. Both women have been studying in St. Mary's R.C.I.A. Program since last fall and were warmly welcomed by the people of St. Mary's. A reception for them was held in the Parish Center Lobby and Library following the Mass. We are delighted to now count Sharon and Rose among our sisters in faith and look forward to walking with them in Christ. Welcome!



GOOD FRIDAY STATIONS OF THE CROSS



On Good Friday, April 15, St. Mary's Religious Education Program sponsored a beautiful Stations of the Cross Liturgy. This year the part of Jesus was played by Liam Breen, a fourth grader, who together with the other children reenacted the moments of Our Lord's Passion. The format was a living tableau, with children acting out each Station atop a stage specially set up in front of the church altar. Three Altar Servers processed around the church, stopping at the appropriate wall Stations as the celebration progressed. The congregation participated through prayers and sung responses appropriate to the Station being portrayed. Thank you to Deacon John Barry for presiding, and to Mrs. Fran Crespi who directed the children. Most of all, thank you children for helping us experience Christ's love!



Lenten Boy Choir Concert



On Friday, April 1, the Boys Choir from the Archdiocesan Choir School at St. Paul's in Cambridge presented a memorable Lenten concert at St Mary's. The boys arrived Friday afternoon for a brief rehearsal, and they were then hosted by St. Mary's Middle School Youth Group teens for pizza and refreshments. The young boy-singers were open and amenable; and they were very appreciative of such a warm welcome!

Mr. James Kennerley, the Director of Music at Saint Paul's Church and Choir School, directed the ensemble. Dr. Jonathan Wessler accompanied at the organ. The program included works of the traditional repertoire by Mozart, Bach, and Pergolesi. More contemporary settings included works by John Rutter and Johnny Dankworth.

We thank everyone who helped make this concert a success. The audience filled most of the central nave of the church. Thanks to the parents who brought their children to volunteer for this event, as well as all involved in the organization of the pre-concert reception. Most of all, thanks to the boys for the beautiful music! Learn more about the Archdiocesan Choir School at: www.saintpaulschoirschool.us.





St. Mary's Parish Middle School Youth Group

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



PAINTBALL: On Thursday, April 21, the MSYG had its annual Spring Paintball Battle at PnL Paintball in Bridgewater. The day started with a safety instruction and prayer for peace in Ukraine. Fr. Mark talked with the kids about the evils of real warfare and stressed that we play paintball as a sport and for teambuilding. Wouldn't it be great if all the world's guns shot paint! The Blue and Red Teams battled it out in contests inside the Ghost town and enjoyed various scenarios in the woods and barrel fields. Thanks everyone for a great day in the beautiful outdoors. Special thanks to our adult chaperones who made it possible!





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MSYG COSMIC BOWLING

Friday, March 25: Seventy-five MSYG teens spent this night Cosmic Bowling at AMF Lanes in Cranston, RI. This is the largest ten pin bowling alley in New England! Our group enjoyed the blasting rock music, flashing strobe lights, fluorescent lanes, and of course much friendship. Laurianny Dos Santos got the high score of 103, winning a \$30 Dunkin Donuts card.



MSYG END OF YEAR CLOSING CEREMONY & POTLUCK SUPPER MAY 15, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

All MSYG moms & dads are invited to this annual End of Year Celebration. Please bring your potluck item as assigned. The night will include:

- Delicious Pot Luck Supper
- Prayer & Closing Ceremony
- Awards & Honoring of 8th Graders
- Sign Ups for Brownstone Quarry
- Sign Ups for Scavenger Hunt
- Summer raft team sign ups
- A Giant Slideshow Movie of all this past year's events



SUMMER CALENDAR

Sunday, June 26 - Monday, June 27: 8th Grade Kennebec River Rafting Trip.

Friday, August 5: Brownstone Quarry.

Friday, August 19: 6th & 7th Grade Deerfield Whitewater Rafting Trip.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

St. Mary's Council #14224 May, 2022

MONTHLY ROSARY:

The next Rosary will be **Wednesday, May 18 in St. Mary's Church at 7:00 PM.** The Rosary is open to all parishioners and current COVID-19 policies are in effect. As quoted in the March 2017 Columbia magazine, "Knights need to be men of prayer."

Grand Knight: Albert Scaramella
Deputy Grand Knight: Tom Brodo

GOLFERS! SAVE THE DATE, SIGN-UP SOON: Our Council is presenting the First Annual "Swing for Charity" Golf tournament on **Friday, June 3 at Pinecrest Golf Course.** Net proceeds will be **donated** to the **Holliston Pantry Shelf.** The Tournament format will be Best Ball with a shotgun start at 8:00 AM. Cart, post golf lunch at Anthony's on the Green and prizes are included in the \$125 per golfer fee. Optional contests will be conducted for additional donation fees. Gather your foursome and visit **KofCswingforcharity.com** or contact Knight John Curran at (617) 306-9835. **All golfers are invited.**

ELECTRONICS RECYCLING DRIVE: On Saturday, May 14 the Council is teaming with **Green Team Junk Removal** to hold an Electronics Recycling event in the St. Mary's parking from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM. Here is what can be accepted: PC monitors, CPU's, motherboards, hard drives, power supplies, RAM memory, peripheral cards, keyboards, telecommunications equipment and boards, printers, gaming systems, amplifiers, and routers. Flat-screen TVs and flat-screen computer monitors will be accepted. **No CRT TVs please.** A minimum total of \$10 is requested for the first three items and \$5 for each additional item. **SPECIAL: AIR CONDITIONERS** will be accepted for a separate \$15 fee each. Funds raised will be used to help the Council with their efforts to assist others in need.

K of C COUNCIL #14224 FOURTEENTH ANNUAL CHARITY RAFFLE: The Council is selling chances for our annual Charity Raffle. Your vital support has enabled the Council to donate over \$250,000 so far to charities including the Holliston Pantry Shelf, Veteran's organizations, Habitat for Humanity, Holliston Senior Center, and others. Please continue to support our raffle in our efforts to aid those needing food or aid. Tickets will again be \$5 each or a book of five tickets for \$20. Prizes from \$1000 to \$100.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE FOR 2022: All good St. Mary's men eighteen and older 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.



ANNUAL EASTER MULCHING:

On Saturday, April 16, the Knights worked hard to beautify and spruce up St. Mary's Grounds in anticipation of Easter the next day. The Knights provided and spread mulch around the sign and various planting beds. Well done!



**Uncovering Hidden
Treasure**

women in
WINGS
God's spirit

**Catholic Social
Teaching in the World Today**

Reflections from our Spring 2022 Season

Go to: **stmarysholliston.com/women-in-gods-spirit-w-i-n-g-s**
On our Parish Website, scroll down to the bottom, to watch our spring speakers.



Learning How to Love

St. Mary's young adult parishioners Jenna Calabrese and Olivia Hastie are living the call to love every human being with the heart of God. They joined WINGS to share their experiences of living and loving adults with disabilities at *L'Arche* communities within the United States. **Jenna Calabrese** is pursuing a gap year working as a full-time live-in assistant at *L'Arche* St. Louis. She plans to attend the Washington University of Medicine's program in Occupational Therapy this fall. Jenna credits the adults at *L'Arche* with teaching her **"the importance of balancing humility with boldness."**



Olivia Hastie is the Student Government Director of Spiritual Life and the Chair of Holy Cross' Spring Break Immersion Program which is where she found *L'Arche*. Since 2020, Olivia has spent time in three *L'Arche* Communities: two weeks between the DC and Jacksonville Communities, and a full summer at the Boston North Community. In the fall, Olivia will be attending Harvard Divinity School. Olivia shared that her experience at *L'Arche* taught her **"that love is always enough."**



Living the Gospel Way of Life

WINGS member Pat Campo LeBlanc's cousin is living St. Francis of Assisi's "Gospel Way of Life" in her Wisconsin community. In 1997 Pam Patterson and her husband Ben felt called to provide a safe, loving environment for children/teens in need. Today they run **Agape House** (www.agapehouseheals.org) which has grown to provide counseling services, mentoring, school, and a safe home for girls. Pam joined WINGS to share how she relies on God for everything – 100% donor funded ministry. "With prayer, God has made Agape House a reality. We could do nothing without Him." Go to the website above to support this worthy ministry.



Leaning in: Race and Justice

Muriel Kramer, LCSW, joined WINGS to share the sad reality of our justice system based on her work with marginalized populations experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder (SUD), and serious mental illness (SMI). While in school Muriel was an intern with the MA Bail Fund (MBF) and learned firsthand how the justice system works differently for the poor, people of color, and those that struggle with SUD and/or MI. To learn more and get involved, go to www.massbailfund.org



Spreading Joy

Thomas Slicklen has a powerful conversion story from drug addict to man of faith and service. Tom shared his story with WINGS, witnessing to the power of God's love and grace in his life. As President and Founder of Provision Ministry, Inc., Tom is spreading joy and making a profound difference in the lives of countless people every day. Go to www.provisionministry.org to learn more and get involved.



It's About People

Fr. Jerry Osterman gave a powerful presentation on the issue of Immigration. He spoke from personal experience ministering to thousands of people seeking a better life. "Immigration is at the heart of the Gospel. **It has to do with the dignity of the human person.** Unfortunately, over the last 12 years it has become less about the person and more about politics. **Immigrants are about people.** The bishops have a website called *Take Action*. Our Church offers several channels for involvement. Be educated - get beyond the politicization of the issue. This is a human issue. www.justiceforimmigrants.org



Say NO to Physician Assisted Suicide in Massachusetts

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD NOW!

The Massachusetts State Legislature is considering passing into law two deeply troubling bills this session which would legalize Physician Assisted Suicide. The bills, House 2381 and Senate 1384, are identical in text and titled “*An Act relative to end of life options*”.

“The Catholic Bishops of Massachusetts stand united in our strong opposition to Physician Assisted Suicide. It is an affront to life and a dangerous precedent for determining end of life issues. Physicians are trained to care for the ill, not to hasten death.”¹

Here are some troubling facts to consider before you act:

- 1) The bills would allow a physician to provide a deadly drug mixture to an individual diagnosed with less than 6 months to live that, when consumed, would cause death.
NOTE- The diagnosis could be wrong. Countless individuals have outlived that 6-month diagnosis and enjoyed many more precious months and years with family and friends.
- 2) No Real Safeguards - A vulnerable individual who is physically disabled, depressed, or fears being a “burden” may be subject to undue influence by others to take the drug mixture, especially if there is a financial benefit as an incentive.
- 3) The primary focus of elected officials should be dedicated to legislation providing quality health care, mental health care and palliative care to the sick and dying – particularly in the underserved, poor and minority communities that suffer the most at the time of need.

How can your voice be heard?

Call or email your legislators, let them know you are a Massachusetts voter, and say NO to Physician Assisted Suicide! Log on to www.macatholic.org and follow the links to find contact information for:

- Members of the legislative Joint Committee on Health Care Finance who will be considering these bills.
- Your individual State Senator and Representative via address and zip code link.

For individuals without internet access, please call the Massachusetts Catholic Conference at 617-746-5630 for legislative contact information.



¹ Boston Pilot - Statement of the four Roman Catholic Bishops of Boston, Fall River, Springfield, and Worcester (December 8, 2017)



2022 Easter 'Urbi et Orbi' Message of Pope Francis

Dear Brothers and Sisters, a Happy and Holy Easter!

Jesus, the Crucified One, is risen! He stands in the midst of those who mourned him, locked behind closed doors and full of fear and anguish. He comes to them and says: "Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:19). He shows the wounds in his hands and feet, and the wound in his side. He is no ghost; it is truly Jesus, the same Jesus who died on the cross and was laid in the tomb. Before the incredulous eyes of the disciples, he repeats: "Peace be with you!" (v. 21).

Our eyes, too, are incredulous on this Easter of war. We have seen all too much blood, all too much violence. Our hearts, too, have been filled with fear and anguish, as so many of our brothers and sisters have had to lock themselves away in order to be safe from bombing. We struggle to believe that Jesus is truly risen, that he has truly triumphed over death. Could it be an illusion? A figment of our imagination?

No, it is not an illusion! Today, more than ever, we hear echoing the Easter proclamation so dear to the Christian East: "Christ is risen! He is truly risen!" Today, more than ever, we need him, at the end of a Lent that has seemed endless. We emerged from two years of pandemic, which took a heavy toll. It was time to come out of the tunnel together, hand in hand, pooling our strengths and resources... Instead, we are showing that we do not yet have within us the spirit of Jesus but the spirit of Cain, who saw Abel not as a brother, but as a rival, and thought about how to eliminate him. We need the crucified and risen Lord so that we can believe in the victory of love, and hope for reconciliation. Today, more than ever, we need him to stand in our midst and repeat to us: "Peace be with you!"

Only he can do it. Today, he alone has the right to speak to us of peace. Jesus alone, for he bears wounds... our wounds. His wounds are indeed ours, for two reasons. They are ours because we inflicted them upon him by our sins, by our hardness of heart, by our fratricidal hatred. They are also ours because he bore them for our sake; he did not cancel them from his glorified body; he chose to keep them forever. They are the indelible seal of his love for us, a perennial act of intercession, so that the heavenly Father, in seeing them, will have mercy upon us and upon the whole world. The wounds on the body of the risen Jesus are the sign of the battle he fought and won for us, won with the weapons of love, so that we might have peace and remain in peace.

As we contemplate those glorious wounds, our incredulous eyes open wide; our hardened hearts break open and we welcome the Easter message: "Peace be with you!"

Brothers and sisters, let us allow the peace of Christ to enter our lives, our homes, our countries!

May there be peace for war-torn Ukraine, so sorely tried by the violence and destruction of the cruel and senseless war into which it was dragged. In this terrible night of suffering and death, may a new dawn of hope soon appear! Let there be a decision for peace. May there be an end to the flexing of muscles while people are suffering. Please, please, let us not get used to war! Let us all commit ourselves to imploring peace, from our balconies and in our streets! Peace! May the leaders of nations hear people's plea for peace. May they listen to that troubling question posed by scientists almost seventy years ago: "Shall we put an end to the human race, or shall mankind renounce war?" (Russell-Einstein Manifesto, 9 July 1955).

I hold in my heart all the many Ukrainian victims, the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, the divided families, the elderly left to themselves, the lives broken and the cities razed to the ground. I see the faces of the orphaned children fleeing from the war. As we look at them, we cannot help but hear their cry of pain, along with that of all those other children who suffer throughout our world: those dying of hunger or lack of medical care, those who are victims of abuse and violence, and those denied the right to be born.

Amid the pain of the war, there are also encouraging signs, such as the open doors of all those families and communities that are welcoming migrants and refugees throughout Europe. May these numerous acts of charity become a blessing for our societies, at times debased by selfishness and individualism, and help to make them welcoming to all.

May the conflict in Europe also make us more concerned about other situations of conflict, suffering and sorrow, situations that affect all too many areas of our world, situations that we cannot overlook and do not want to forget.

May there be peace for the Middle East, racked by years of conflict and division. On this glorious day, let us ask for peace upon Jerusalem and peace upon all those who love her (cf. Ps 121 [122]), Christians, Jews and Muslims alike. May Israelis, Palestinians and all who dwell in the Holy City, together with the pilgrims, experience the beauty of peace, dwell in fraternity and enjoy free access to the Holy Places in mutual respect for the rights of each.

May there be peace and reconciliation for the peoples of Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, and in particular for all the Christian communities of the Middle East.

May there be peace also for Libya, so that it may find stability after years of tensions, and for Yemen, which suffers from a conflict forgotten by all, with continuous victims: may the truce signed in recent days restore hope to its people.

We ask the risen Lord for the gift of reconciliation for Myanmar, where a dramatic scenario of hatred and violence persists, and for Afghanistan, where dangerous social tensions are not easing and a tragic humanitarian crisis is bringing great suffering to its people.

May there be peace for the entire African continent, so that the exploitation it suffers and the hemorrhaging caused by terrorist attacks – particularly in the Sahel region – may cease, and that it may find concrete support in the fraternity of the peoples. May the path of dialogue and reconciliation be undertaken anew in Ethiopia, affected by a serious humanitarian crisis, and may there be an end to violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. May prayer and solidarity not be lacking for the people in the eastern part of South Africa, struck by devastating floods.

May the risen Christ accompany and assist the people of Latin America, who in some cases have seen their social conditions worsen in these difficult times of pandemic, exacerbated as well by instances of crime, violence, corruption and drug trafficking.

Let us ask the risen Lord to accompany the journey of reconciliation that the Catholic Church in Canada is making with the indigenous peoples. May the Spirit of the risen Christ heal the wounds of the past and dispose hearts to seek truth and fraternity.

Dear brothers and sisters, every war brings in its wake consequences that affect the entire human family: from grief and mourning to the drama of refugees, and to the economic and food crisis, the signs of which we are already seeing. Faced with the continuing signs of war, as well as the many painful setbacks to life, Jesus Christ, the victor over sin, fear and death, exhorts us not to surrender to evil and violence. Brothers and sisters, may we be won over by the peace of Christ! Peace is possible; peace is a duty; peace is everyone's primary responsibility!

A Prayer for Ukraine



God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

A Keeper for the Love & Hope of Christ

A day of service to My Brother's Keeper – Deacon John Barry

On Saturday, March 26, fourteen members of St. Mary's Parish traveled to My Brother's Keeper in the town of Easton to help deliver food to people of need. Sponsored by our St. Mary's Marriage Fellowship, the group included the Nunes and Keefe families, Regina and David Savage, Linda Scruton, Roberta Maguire, Deacon John and Diane Barry. The benefitting charity, My Brother's Keeper, is a Catholic organization founded in 1988 to spread the Love of Christ to the world by serving those who are less fortunate. Christ's love was evident during our morning of service, as the St. Mary's team put their faith into action.



The volunteers were met by Fr. Tim Mouton C.S.C., who is chaplain of Stonehill College, adjacent to My Brother's Keeper. He began the morning with a prayer at the chapel in the ministry building. The chapel features a 15-foot stained glass window illustrating Jesus with hands outstretched between two individuals (photo left). They share a Communion Host between them. "The face of Jesus represents our loving God," Fr. Tim explained, "He hears the prayers and feels the pain of one of His children who is in need. He answers those prayers by touching the heart of another one of His children who is willing to help. Today that child is you. The Eucharist being shared is the love and hope of Jesus Christ being passed from one child of God to another. Today you will be Christ's hands to share His Body to our community."

After receiving a blessing from Fr. Tim, each volunteer was given several bags of groceries to deliver to local families. Each delivery included two large boxes and four bags of items including fresh produce, meats, cleaning supplies and dry goods. The volunteers eagerly received their gifts and set out on their mission to serve. "We felt privileged to meet five individuals who needed our support," said volunteer Hadley Keefe; "Our children had drawn hand-made cards for each family. One household had four grade-school aged children. Good conversation was prompted by our experience! Each person we encountered was grateful and kind. One woman fully embraced me despite having a mask on, which tells me that she made a choice to overcome concern about her health (in order) to help me truly feel her appreciation. In a day and age when we've become somewhat reluctant to be physically close to one another, this felt meaningful to me."



Another volunteer, Heather Nunes, observed how the mission of service affected her family in a special way. "Making the deliveries was fun and such a blessing to us as it was to them. We especially loved interacting with one single mom and her 2 little ones (3 and 2 years old). They were so thankful; and as we left saying "God bless," the littles started yelling "God bwess you! God bwess you!" over and over again in the (most) adorable way. What a great joy it was to be a part of (this day of service). We can't wait to volunteer with them again."

In the literature from My Brother's Keeper, founder Jim Orcutt, reminds us of the great importance it is to volunteer to serve others. "You can survive for a long time without food, you can survive without heat, you can survive without lights," he states, "but if you have lost hope, then you have lost it all." My Brother's Keeper relies on volunteers like the Saint Mary's Marriage Fellowship, as it strives to ensure that no one in need will ever lose hope, knowing always that they are loved. Recalling the Communion Host in the stained glass window, it was evident how generously that love was passed around during our morning of service. "I felt such unity with those we met this morning," said Hadley; "We truly are all the same. All of us have needs, some of which extend beyond our ready means in one way or another, and we therefore get through life by showing up for one another and being willing to both give and receive."

Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers who spent a Saturday morning encountering Christ and making His Presence known. We would like to plan another day of service next year. Please reference our bulletin for details on how you can help. Anyone interested in volunteering at My Brother's Keeper in the meantime is encouraged to call them directly at 508-238-7512 or email Eric Miller through their website at <https://mybrotherskeeper.org/staff>.

ADULT FAITH RESOURCES

MAY 2022

got faith?

MAY IS THE MONTH OF MARY: May is the month dedicated to Mary, Jesus' Mother and the Mother of our Church; she is also the patron of our parish. The practice of dedicating this month to special devotion to Mary goes back many centuries. At CatholicCulture.org you'll find more information about this practice. Once on the site, search May, the month of Mary. Jennifer Gregory Miller offers a number of ways to celebrate Mary in the month of May. The following are just a few ideas:

- * Celebration of the Word of God, imitating Mary when she pondered all these things in her heart.
- * Praying the Angelus, (or Regina Coeli during the Easter season).
- * Praying the Rosary.
- * Praying Litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- * A Mary Garden or planting certain plants honoring our Lady are age-old ways to honor Mary, particularly through the month that bring flowers. ("March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers.")

JUST WONDERING: Have you ever wondered about the origins of the Hail Mary prayer? Here is a bit of information to help with your understanding of the basis of the first half of this text. The line "Hail [Mary] favored one, full of grace... with you" is the greeting given to Mary by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:28). "Blessed are you among women...fruit of your womb" are the first words spoken by Elizabeth to Mary when Mary comes to visit her (Luke 1:42). These words also echo what is spoke to Jael (Judges 5:24) and Judith (Judith 13:18), women of the Old Testament, who, in the strength of their faith, destroyed enemies of their people. This further recalls the text in Genesis 3:15 where God tells the serpent that the offspring of the woman (Eve) will crush its head, prefiguring the future destruction of Satan by Mary's son Jesus.

PRAYER: Sacred Space, a website sponsored by the Irish Jesuits, offers the opportunity to pray quietly with the scriptures each day. Go to <http://www.sacredspace.ie/> for this experience. Loyola Press provides a daily three minute retreat at their website. Enjoy the many possibilities!

MOTHER'S DAY PRAYERS: Mother's Day is May 8. Looking for a special prayer for that unique person you call Mom? At <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Mothers/> you will find a variety of prayers for Mothers, including Prayer for a Birth Mother from an Adoptive Mother, Prayer from a Single Mother, For Mothers Coping with Moody Teenagers, Prayer of Gratitude for my Mother, Prayer for a Mother with Alzheimer's Disease, Prayer for an Expectant Mother, and Prayer for a Mother who has died.

