



THE HOLY ROOD COLLABORATIVE

ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST PARISH
115 MIDDLESEX STREET
NORTH CHELMSFORD

ST. MARGARET
OF SCOTLAND PARISH
374 STEVENS STREET
LOWELL

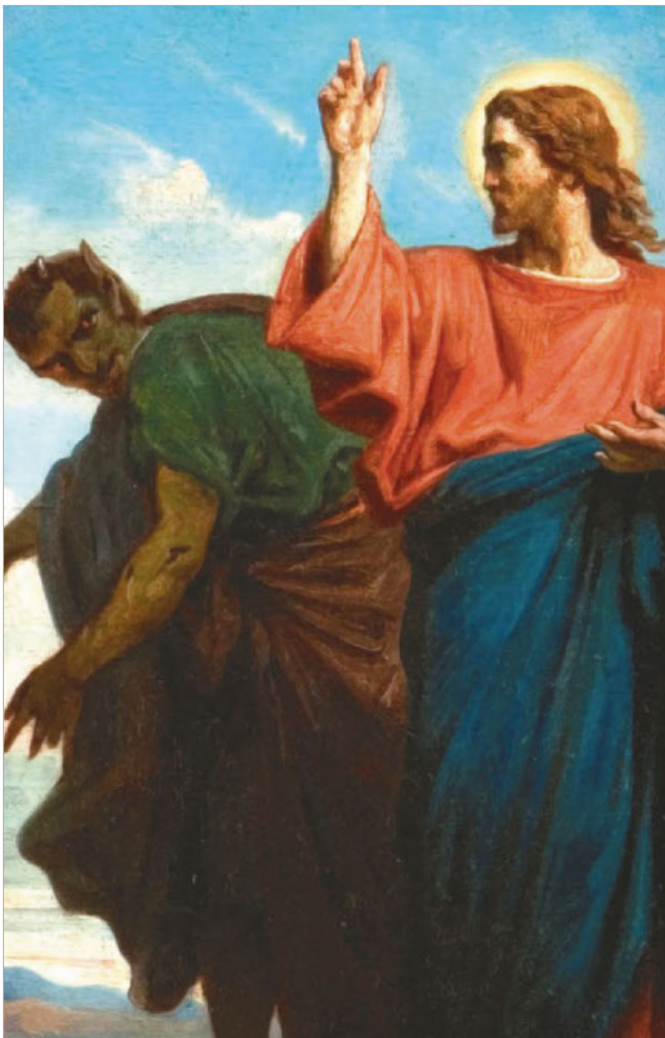
ST. MARY PARISH
25 NORTH ROAD
CHELMSFORD



February 26, 2023 First Sunday of Lent

Then the devil took Jesus up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me."

- Matt 4: 8-9



Parish Office Location and Hours

115 Middlesex Street • North Chelmsford, 01863
(978) 256-2374 | www.theholyrood.org

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Wednesday • 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

Friday • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Weekend Mass Schedule

St. John • Saturday, 4 pm/ Sunday, 9:30 am and 6 pm
• African Liturgy, Sunday, 12 pm

St. Margaret • Saturday, 4 pm/ Sunday, 7:30 and 10 am

St. Mary • Saturday, 4 pm/ Sunday, 7 and 11 am

Daily Mass Schedule

Monday - Friday

7 am at St. Mary • 8 am at St. Margaret • 9 am at St. John

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. John

Tuesday • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Margaret

Wednesday • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • St. Mary

• through Lent: 6:30 - 8 pm • all churches

Saturday • 11 am - 12 noon at St. Mary

• 1 pm - 2 pm at St. Margaret

• 3 pm - 3:45 pm at St. John

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesdays (Sep-Jun) • 9 am - 3 pm • St. Margaret OLL Chapel

Thursdays • 12:00 - 9:00 pm • St. Mary Adoration Chapel

First Fridays • 3:00 - 9:00 pm • St. John OPC Chapel

LIVEVIEW Devotions

Monday - Friday

3 pm • Chaplet of Divine Mercy at St. John

7 pm • Rosary at St. Mary

Prayer Line

To have prayers said for yourself or a loved one, call the parish office and ask for ext. 223. After hours, press 5.

*Please read entire bulletin for potential schedule changes

weekly calendar

Monday, February 27

Bible Study • 10 - 11:45 am • SM PC Conf Room 1
 Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • SJE Church and LIVEVIEW
 Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • SJE Church
 Rosary • 7 pm • SM Church and LIVEVIEW
 Works of Mercy Lenten Retreat (pg 9) • 7 pm • SJE Church/Hall

Tuesday, February 28

Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • SJE Church and LIVEVIEW
 Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • SMS Church
 Rosary • 7 pm • SM Church and LIVEVIEW

Wednesday, March 1

Adoration • 9 am - 3 pm • SMS OLL Chapel
 Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • SJE Church and LIVEVIEW
 Confession • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • SM Church
 The Light is on for You (Confession) • 6:30 - 8 pm • All Churches
 Rosary • 7 pm • SM Church and LIVEVIEW

Thursday, March 2

Charismatic Prayer Group • 10-11 am • SJE OPC
 Rosary Makers • 10:30 am - 12 pm • SM PC Conf Room 2
 Adoration • 12 - 9 pm • SM PC Adoration Chapel
 Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • SJE Church and LIVEVIEW
 BINGO • doors open 3:30 pm/ first game 6:45 pm • SJE Hall
 SM 11 am Choir Rehearsal • 7:30 pm • SM Church

Friday, March 3

Knitting and Crocheting • 2 - 4 pm • SM Hall
 Chaplet of Divine Mercy • 3 pm • SJE Church and LIVEVIEW
 First Friday Adoration • 3 - 9 pm • SJE Adoration Chapel
 Soup and Stations • 6 pm Soup/ 7 pm Stations • SJE Church/Hall

Saturday, March 4

Saturday Men • 7 - 8:45 am • SJE NPC Linehan
 Red Cross Blood Drive • 7:30 am - 3:30 pm • SM Hall
 SMS Prayer Shawl Ministry • 9:15 am - 12 pm • SMS SVdP Room
 Confessions

11 am - 12 pm: SM | 1 - 2 pm: SMS | 3 - 3:45 pm: SJE

St. Mary Bell Choir Rehearsal • 2:30 - 3:30 pm • SM Choir Loft
 Faith and Family Gathering, following 4 pm Mass • SJE Hall

Saturday, March 5

SJE Hospitality Meeting • 10:30 am - 12 pm • SJE Hall



VACATION BIBLE FUN 2023

July 31–August 4

Details Coming Soon...

Weekend Mass Attendance

Weekend Of February 18/19

St. Mary		
4 pm	7 am	11 am
183	117	354

St. Margaret of Scotland		
4 pm	7:30 am	10 am
96	53	175

St. John the Evangelist		
4 pm	9:30 am	6 pm
173	189	85



**Why do golfers
take an extra
pair of socks
when they
go golfing?**



(see page 4)

Clergy

Reverend Brian E. Mahoney, PASTOR
fr.brian@theholyrood.org | (978) 254-0560

Reverend Fernando Ayala, PAROCHIAL VICAR
frfernando@theholyrood.org | (978) 401-9844

Reverend Antonio de Souza, PAROCHIAL VICAR
frantonio@theholyrood.org | ext 310

Reverend Patrick Alemayo, PAROCHIAL VICAR
fr.patrickalemayo@theholyrood.org

Reverend Arnold F. Colletti, SR. PRIEST IN RESIDENCE
frcolletti@theholyrood.org | ext 116

Reverend Raymond Benoit, SR. PRIEST IN RESIDENCE
fray@theholyrood.org | ext 115

Deacon John C. Hunt, Jr., PERMANENT DEACON
deaconjohn@theholyrood.org | (978) 254-2696

Deacon Frank Perez de Alderete, PERMANENT DEACON
deaconfrank@theholyrood.org | (978) 633-5408

Deacon Barry V. Lloyd, SR. PERMANENT DEACON
deac5@comcast.net | (978) 454-6505

Outreach & Parish Ministry

Sr. Lori Fleming, SNDdeN, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE
srlori@theholyrood.org | ext 225

Business Office

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pfiricano@theholyrood.org | ext 220

Tina Sousa, FINANCE SUPPORT
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Elaine Kindler, FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
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Lynn Anne LaDuke, FAITH FORMATION COORDINATOR
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Office Administration

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sue@theholyrood.org | ext 236

Jamie Brown, SCHEDULING COORDINATOR
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Donna Gambon, PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
dgambon@theholyrood.org | ext 248

Rae Russo, PART-TIME FUNERAL COORDINATOR
rae@theholyrood.org | (978) 306-5882

Facilities

Dan Heider, FACILITIES MANAGER
dheider@theholyrood.org | ext 213

Chris Goglia, FACILITIES SPECIALIST
chris@theholyrood.org | ext 233

Bulletin, Website, Social Media

Christine Trznadel, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
christine@theholyrood.org | (978) 254-4406

To promote communication and transparency throughout The Holy Rood Collaborative, you are encouraged to forward any comments and concerns you may have directly to the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils.

Collaborative Parish Council

Parish Council matters can be sent to:
collaborativeppc@theholyrood.org

Scott Davidson (SJE) - Chair

Rob Donnelly (SM)

Hilde Gilman (SMS)

Beth Jacavano (SJE)

Cathy Latina (SM)

Ellen St. George (SJE)

Steve McMillan (SM)

Lorraine Freitas (SMS)

Chad Groenwoldt (SMS)

Drew Jubinville (SJE)

Lori McDonald (SM)

Paul Sneeringer (SMS)

St. John Finance Council

Finance matters concerning St. John can be sent to:
SJ.FC@theholyrood.org

Jeff Brown - Chair

John Bagni

Celeste Dunn

Paul Brzezinski

Grace Ann Steed

St. Margaret Finance Council

Finance matters concerning St. Margaret can be sent to:
SMS.FC@theholyrood.org

Robert Gilman - Chair

Thomas Kirwin

Marc Trudel

St. Mary Finance Council

Finance matters concerning St. Mary can be sent to:
SM.FC@theholyrood.org

Lauren Desforge - Chair

Armand DiLando

Paul Therrien

Ted Powers

Paul Rigazio

If you would like to submit a notice for the bulletin, please do so no later than 12 noon, **TWO** Fridays prior to the weekend in which you would like it published. Submittals should be emailed to christine@theholyrood.org or via US Mail to the Parish Offices at 115 Middlesex Street, North Chelmsford, MA, 01863, ATTN Christine. We will do our best to accommodate your request.

here's what's happening in The Holy



ASL MASS AT ST. MARY

SUNDAY MARCH 5 AT 11 AM



Fr. Shawn Carey, director of the Deaf Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Boston, will be celebrating the St. Mary 11 am Mass in American Sign Language (ASL) on Sunday, March 5. This Mass will be translated into the spoken word.

Fr. Shawn was ordained in the Archdiocese of Boston on May 23, 2009 at Holy Cross Cathedral in Boston. We look forward to his sharing this special ministry with each of

us, especially the hearing-impaired members of our collaborative family.



answer: In case they get a hole in one!



VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children Workshops

The Archdiocese of Boston requires ALL volunteers and employees aged 18 and over, regardless of the ministry in which they volunteer, to attend and complete a one-time "VIRTUS-Protecting God's Children" workshop.

Class size is limited and registration is **REQUIRED** so register TODAY by visiting www.virtusonline.org/virtus or contact Sue in the parish offices Monday - Thursday, 10 am - 4 pm.

Tuesday, Mar 7 • 6 – 9 pm • St. Mary Parish Hall
Register by THIS TUESDAY, February 28

**Failure to complete this required workshop will
prohibit your valued participation as a volunteer.**



This year, our Collaborative will be welcoming 4 individuals into the Church at the Easter Vigil through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

As we enter the Season of Lent these 4 individuals will be entering the final phases of their preparation to become Catholic Christians. We also have 1 adult who is preparing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Confirmation. We ask that you keep them in prayer.

So we can pray for them by name, please note below...

Blitz, Grayson, Mary Jane, Treasure and Laurie

On this First Sunday of Lent, at the St. Mary 11 am Mass, they will participate in The **Rite of Sending**. This Rite "affords the parish community the opportunity to express its approval, to rejoice in the decision of these individuals to receive the sacraments of initiation, and to assure the Catechumens and Candidates of the community's care and support."



Following the celebration of this Rite, the Catechumens will travel to the Cathedral to participate in the **Rite of Election**. At the Rite of Election, the Catechumens will become the Elect, as this rite takes its name from the fact that here, "acting in God's name, the Church makes its 'election,' that is, the choice and admission of those catechumens who have the dispositions that make them fit to take part in the Sacraments of Initiation."

Later in the Lenten Season, the Elect will participate in the 3 Scrutinies.

More on that next week...

Rood Collaborative community

Thursday, March 9 • 6 - 8 pm
St. Margaret Chapel and Sacred Heart Hall
RSVP Required [visit http://bit.ly/3IoizJx](http://bit.ly/3IoizJx)

Back by popular demand! The Capuchins will be back to visit with us. Join them, alongside fellow parishioners, and learn more about this ministry and how and why they serve! A service project to support this ministry will be done as part of this evening.



SPIRITUAL RESOURCES
FOR THE STREET

Capuchin Mobile Ministries is a ministry of spiritual caregiving to the homeless community of Greater Boston. Several times a week, friars and volunteers head out in their well-recognized van to areas where the homeless congregate. They provide food and drink, offer spiritual resources and referrals to social services, listen to their stories, and pray with them.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

The Capuchins are asking for donations of socks (new, packs of any kind, any number), items of spiritual care (new or gently used rosaries, spiritual cards, etc.) and goodwill financial donations to help provide for the ministry's physical and financial needs. **Please bring your donation(s) with you on the evening of the event!** Thank you, in advance, for your generosity!



FIRST WEEK OF LENT

"One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God." -Matt 4:4b

TICKETS AVAILABLE THIS WEEKEND

Tickets (\$25 per) will be sold after ALL Mass at ALL three churches as well as online at bit.ly/3XzDEqj. They will also be available for purchase in the parish offices through Monday, March 6.

TICKETS WILL NOT BE SOLD AT THE DOOR. IN ADVANCE SALES ONLY!

**St. Patrick's
& Dinner Party
& Shamrock Raffle**
Saturday, March 11
St. John Parish Hall
Doors Open at 5 pm/ Dinner at 5:45 pm

MENU: Corned Beef* and Cabbage

Bring your own beer and/or wine

ENTERTAINMENT: Live Music, Raffle, Door Prize



**ALPINE
BUTCHER**
YOUR FAMILY OWNED BUTCHER

* provided by
Alpine Butcher in Lowell



ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Knights of Columbus, Bishop Ruocco Council is sponsoring a \$1000 Scholarship to be awarded to a high-school, graduating senior from The Holy Rood Collaborative that will be attending an accredited school or institution of higher education (2 or 4-year college or trade school) in the fall of 2023.

The application and directives can be found online at www.knights9275.com. Click on COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP in the left-hand sidebar, and the document will be saved to your computer.

To be considered for this scholarship, your application package must be received by the council by April 30, 2023.

Questions? Email knights9275@gmail.com

the Financial Page

Paul Firicano, Business Manager
ext 220 or pfiricano@theholyrood.org

Fiscal Year 2022: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

To view this and ALL past financial reports, visit
www.theholyrood.org; click on the stewardship tab

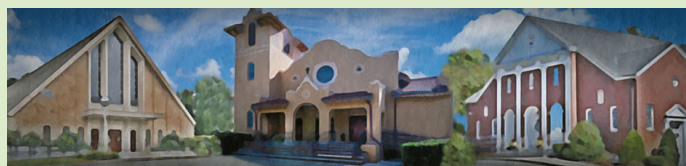
IMPORTANT DONATION REMINDER

When sending in checks, please make it payable to the specific parish—St. John the Evangelist, St. Margaret of Scotland or St. Mary—to which you are making your donation. As each parish maintains their own financial entity, checks made out to The Holy Rood Collaborative cannot be cashed as The Holy Rood Collaborative is NOT a financial entity.

ST. MARY WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of February 18/19	Fiscal Year-To-Date February 19	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$15,000	\$495,000	\$15,000
Actual Received	\$17,983	\$465,533	\$14,107
Shortfall/ Overage	\$2,983	-\$29,467	-\$893

ST. JOHN WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of February 18/19	Fiscal Year-To-Date February 19	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$10,300	\$339,900	\$10,300
Actual Received	\$8,074	\$295,441	\$8,953
Shortfall/ Overage	-\$2,226	-\$44,459	-\$1,347

ST. MARGARET WEEKLY OFFERTORY	Weekend of February 18/19	Fiscal Year-To-Date February 19	Fiscal YTD Average/Week
Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses	\$4,800	\$158,400	\$4,800
Actual Received	\$4,832	\$142,961	\$4,332
Shortfall/ Overage	\$32	-\$15,439	-\$468



If you've not yet had a chance to donate, you may do so by visiting www.theholyrood.org/grand-annual. It is here where you will also find the letter sent by Fr. Brian to parishioners of each parish.

FY 2023 GRAND ANNUAL: AS OF FEBRUARY 19

	Goal	Raised	%age of Goal
St. Mary	\$100,000	\$72,165	72.17%
St. John	\$70,000	\$51,711	73.87%
St. Margaret	\$65,000	\$58,327	89.73%



Visit our website and click on the WeShare logo located at the bottom of the homepage, or simply scan this QR code with your Android or iPhone.



Visit our website and click on the Online Giving logo located at the bottom of the homepage, or simply scan this QR code with your Android or iPhone.



Visit our website and click on the VANCO logo located at the bottom of the homepage, or simply scan this QR code with your Android or iPhone.

Let us pray together for the victims and all suffering from the earthquakes that devastated **Turkey and Syria.**

2ND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND MARCH 4TH/ 5TH

The images that have come out of Turkey and Syria following the February 6, 7.8 magnitude earthquake, have shown the world the immense suffering, destruction, and death that the people there are experiencing.

Catholic Relief Services has reported that “across affected areas in both countries, apartment buildings and schools have been leveled. For Syrians, the damage took place in areas already devastated by years of war. In Turkey, the airports and the high roads of Anatolia are closed, and most hospitals are unusable. Schools have been closed across the country.”

Recognizing the growing need for assistance, Cardinal Seán has asked that a special collection be taken up in order to do our small part in alleviating some of the suffering. **This collection will be taken in each of our churches NEXT WEEKEND, March 4/5.**

Funds raised will help to provide safe shelter and access to food, clean water, and hygiene supplies. The USCCB has requested that we encourage the faithful to generously support the efforts of Catholic Relief Services and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association who are working to provide emergency humanitarian relief.

You may donate via the weekly offertory basket or online at <https://theholyrood.org/on-line-giving>. If writing a check, please make it payable to the parish in which you are registered, noting ‘Syria/Turkey Earthquake’ in the memo line.

Thank you for your generous support.

Ed Slott, America’s IRA Expert, presents...



Retirement Savings and Distribution Planning

March 2 at 7:30 pm EST

RSVP: <https://tinyurl.com/KofCSlottMarch2>

Ed Slott, CPS, is a nationally recognized speaker, television personality and best-selling author known for his unparalleled ability to turn advanced tax strategies into understandable, actionable and entertaining advice. Ed combines current research, in-depth expertise, and humor to teach viewers about the ins and outs of their retirements and distribution planning information.



When registering for either of these events, please enter ‘Council 9275’ so that our council will receive credit for

your attendance. Thank you!

Jim Effner presents...



Importance of Whole Life as Part of a Retirement Plan

April 26 at 7:30 pm EST

RSVP: <https://tinyurl.com/KofCEffnerApril26>

Jim Effner is founder and president of P2P Group and specializes in training financial services professionals. Previously, Jim was Managing Partner of one of the largest Northwestern Mutual offices in the country. He built the Effner Group to nearly 150 full-time and college advisors, insuring over 65,000 policyholders.

Mail and Bank Fraud Alert

Christian congregations in Wayland, including one of the parishes within our Archdiocese, have fallen victim to mail and bank fraud. Thieves have been breaking into church mailboxes and USPS blue boxes, stealing checks, and fraudulently cashing them at various banks. All parishes/parishioners in the Archdiocese should be on alert. It has been recommended that you do the following:

1. Review your bank statements. If there are any recently cashed checks intended for the parish, you should verify this information by reviewing your giving statement or contacting our Business Manager, Paul Firicano, at (978) 254-0501.
2. If you discover any discrepancy, please notify both your bank and Paul immediately.
3. With this current threat, and as a way to protect your future financial integrity, we encourage you to consider electronic giving in lieu of paper checks. You can sign up for your particular church's program via <https://theholyrood.org/on-line-giving>.

Family Faith Formation

Uniting the Heart of the Church with the Heart of the Home



Heather Hannaway, MA • Director of Faith Formation • hhannaway@theholyrood.org • ext 226
 Courtney Callanan, MA • Assistant Director of Faith Formation • courtney@theholyrood.org • ext 227
 Shaun Bradley • Faith Formation Associate • sbradley@theholyrood.org • ext 232
 Elaine Kindler • Faith Formation Program Administrator • ekindler@theholyrood.org • ext 216
 Lynn Anne LaDuke • Faith Formation Coordinator • lynnanne@theholyrood.org • ext 240

FEBRUARY CLASS SCHEDULE

GRADE 1
SUNDAY, MARCH 5
FAMILIES GATHER TOGETHER
 THE HOLY TRINITY
 9:15 - 10:45 AM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

GRADE 2
SUNDAY, MARCH 5
FAMILIES GATHER TOGETHER
 MEETING JESUS IN
 THE MASS
 9:15 - 10:45 AM
 St. Mary Parish Hall
 [At Home]
 NEW Blessed First Holy
 Communion Syllabus
 [Online]
 Begin watching Blessed
 First Holy Communion
 Videos

GRADES 7-8
SUNDAY, MARCH 5
 11:15 AM - 12:45 PM
 St. Margaret Hall
 Session 6:
 "Exile-Return-
 Maccabean Revolt"

GRADES 3 - 6
SUNDAY, MARCH 12
FAMILIES GATHER TOGETHER
 PLEASE ATTEND **YOUR** SESSION

St. Mary Session A
 9:15 - 10:45 AM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

St. Mary Session B
 12:15 - 1:45 PM
 St. Mary Parish Hall

St. John Session A
 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM
 St. John Parish Hall

Children and parents will
 remain in the hall to learn
 about The Kingdom
 (Samuel and Kings).

CONFIRMATION II
 4:15 - 5:45 PM
 St. John Parish Hall

SUNDAY, MARCH 5
 Chosen Lesson 21
 "Do I Have What it Takes?"
 Chosen Lesson 23
 "How do I Build the
 Kingdom?"
SUNDAY, MARCH 12
 Challenges in Prayer

CONFIRMATION I • SUNDAY, MARCH 12

4:15 - 5:45 PM • St. John Parish Hall
 "Why be Catholic?"

UPCOMING DEEP DIVES

Each student is required to participate in 4 Deep Dive events throughout the year. To download the calendar, visit... www.theholyrood.org/calendar-schedules

For descriptions, please visit ...

www.theholyrood.org/deep-dives

To complete the reflection sheet, visit...

www.theholyrood.org/dd-reflection.

Faith & Family Gathering
 Every Saturday at 5 pm (unless noted)
 St. John Parish Hall



Capuchin Mobile Ministry [RSVP Required]
 Thursday, March 9 • 6–8 pm • St. Margaret
RSVP at <http://bit.ly/3IoizJx>

Soup & Stations - Fridays of Lent: 6-8 pm
 St. John • March 3, March 24
 St. Mary • March 10, March 31
 St. Margaret • March 17

Teaching Mass
 Sunday, March 19 • 1–2:30 pm
 St. Margaret Church

Spring Training w/Blessing of the Athletes
 Saturday, March 25 • 5-7 pm • St. John Hall
RSVP at <http://bit.ly/3xEkIMe>

CATECHIST CHECK-IN

2–3 pm via zoom

Sunday, February 26 • Monday, February 27 7 - 8:30 pm • St. John Church

Each evening is independent of the other, so come to one or both



Prayer and activities that will DIRECTLY affect our community! Great for those who want to attend alone or with their families; men, women, boys and girls; young, old and everyone in-between! See you there? Hope so!

General Outline of both Evenings

evening-specific theme and hands-on activity detailed below

Begin in church with Exposition and Opening Reflection

Then... option of choosing one of the following 'tracks'

1. remain in the church for prayerful reflection
2. go to the hall for the theme-based hands-on activity
3. do some combination of both

Re-group in church for small group discussion questions

Benediction and Farewell

Sunday, February 26

THEME: Corporal Work of Mercy: Feed the Hungry

MUSIC: Contemporary Music by Matthew Hussey

Matt will also be playing at our 6 pm Mass! For any of you who have attended our First Friday Family Adoration Evenings, you will recognize him, as he plays for us on those evenings

CELEBRANT: Deacon John

ACTIVITY: Sandwich Making for Lowell Transitional Living Center

They will be serving these sandwiches the following day to their clients. This is the same organization for whom we take up our annual Thanksgiving Collection.

Monday, February 27

THEME: Spiritual Work of Mercy: Comfort the Sorrowful

MUSIC: Traditional Music by our very own Music Ministries!

CELEBRANT: Deacon Frank

ACTIVITY: Make handmade cards for some in our community... sending smiles
ALL materials for card-making will be provided!



A few weeks ago, while visiting the faith formation classes, I spend some time in a session that involved the parents. Like the students, the parents had an opportunity to ask me any questions they would

like answered. The presentation that day was about sacrifice, and the parents were asked what sacrifices they have had to make as parents. Then they asked me what sacrifices I had to make as a priest. Of course, there are the obvious ones—concerning marriage, family, and sex. I was honest when I answered that I struggled, because of these considerations, in making my decision to enter the seminary. But, ultimately, the truth is that we must make sacrifices if we want to live our life as we ought. Whenever we make a choice there is an element of sacrifice involved. But, to truly understand sacrifice we need to understand what the word means.

The root of the word sacrifice comes from two Latin words, *sacrum* and *facere*, which mean ‘to make holy. As Catholics—as Christians—we believe there is only one who is truly holy and that is God. Therefore, in order to make holy we need to make God present to others through our words and actions. So, the choices we make really do matter. We are intended to live our lives in such a way that our choices will make God present, and others will experience God through us.

Lent is intended to help us do just that. We are called to live a life of sacrifice. The problem is that too often people misconstrue the true nature of both sacrifice and fasting, both of which are important in helping us learn to grow in a life of sacrifice. Where fasting is concerned, people tell me “I am not giving up anything for Lent; instead, I am going to do something good.” They then mention the good thing they will try to do. The problem with this thinking is that they treat fasting as a negative rather than a positive. And, in addition, the good thing they intend to do is something they should be doing anyway.

Except for the Christmas and Easter Seasons, I generally fast on Wednesdays and Saturdays. I do not eat anything until dinner. I have found that fasting has helped me grow closer to God. I feel that I am not giving up eating; rather, I am offering this time to God. Fasting is *not* about giving something up, but about offering something good back to God. This helps us to appreciate all the good things that He has given us. During the day, when I feel the hunger, it makes me more grateful to God, and I praise and thank Him for the many ways He is good to me. I pray each time this happens that I may come to hunger only for God.

Bodily fasting (there are other ways to fast) also helps us to appreciate some fundamental truths about ourselves. Our body is a gift from the Lord, and we must use it as God intends. When we fast it is an important reminder that our bodies are not our own. We live in a society that believes that the person is autonomous and has the right to self-define. The person’s body is one’s own and no one has a right to tell them what to do with it. This is a false narrative. We are made in the image and likeness of God. Our bodies, as part of the whole person, have a sacred dignity to them. And how we make use of our body must be seen through a sacrificial lens. It must lead to praise, glorification, and gratitude to God and must make God present to others. It can never be about oneself.

Fasting in Lent therefore is about helping us grow in this sacrificial life. The simple truth is that we are not truly living life as God intends if we are not living a life of sacrifice. The simple reason is that our God is a God of sacrifice. True sacrifice leads to total and complete self-giving. When we look to the life of the Trinity, sacrifice is the very nature of God. The Father gives himself completely to the Son and the Son does the same to the Father. And each gives himself to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit gives himself completely to the other two. The Trinity lives an eternal sacrificial life. Furthermore, creation, the incarnation (in the person of Jesus having the union of divine and human natures), the life of Christ on earth and, of course, the very acts of salvation (his passion, death, resurrection, and ascension) are how God sacrifices himself for us. God humbles himself in order for us to live. God asks nothing more of us than what He does himself.

Moreover, there is no true love without sacrifice: true love must be wholly unconditional. And that means we must be willing to offer ourselves to others with no expectation of a return. It is about our willingness to take up the cross and follow where Christ has gone.

Therefore, fasting during Lent is an essential element of experiencing this wonderful season. When we are truly open to fasting with a proper disposition, it will lead to a life of sacrifice rooted in love, truly embracing life, and seeking to glorify the Lord with a joyful heart. It is not about making us suffer; rather, through our giving of self, making God present to others. Let us make this Lent a true sacrificial Lent in order to open our lives to God and lead others to Him.

Wishing you all a Holy and Fruitful Lent.

If you have any questions about anything, please do not hesitate to ask me directly, send your questions to me at fr.brian@theholyrood.org, or call me at (978) 254-0560.

Please keep me in your prayers.

From our Faith Formation Program Administrator

Elaine Kindler

Stepping Out In Faith

It's here. The blessed six weeks that lead up to our most awesome worship liturgy—the Easter Vigil. Lent. Prayer. Almsgiving. Fasting. Intentional and more regular examination of conscience and celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation.

After Easter itself, Lent has been my favorite season for a long time, even before I became a confirmed Catholic. We're called to a time of honest examination. We have dedicated time to remember God's gift of salvation lived out in the life of his Son, Jesus Christ. We're given the amazing gift to strengthen our faith as we journey through Lent with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Even our overly secular world doesn't think we're too strange for not eating meat on Fridays, or being charitable in ways we haven't been before, or spending extra time in prayer. Well, perhaps a little strange.

"Our faith is strengthened by prayer, which leads us into deeper heart-to-heart knowledge of the Lord and his ways."⁽¹⁾

My faith is strengthened when I approach these six weeks as a time of exploration, examining again exactly how God's plan for me is to be lived out. When I open my mind to see all that God is doing in the world, in my communities, in my life, I can't help but grow in faith.

Praying for the Holy Spirit to guide me; keeping my heart and mind fixed on Jesus. Time spent in Eucharistic Adoration is much sweeter during Lent – here is Jesus keeping his promise still that he will never leave us. Keeping a prayer journal is one way to remember God's goodness to us.

I want to follow him. I want to know his voice without him needing to shout. I want to grow in faith and nearness to Christ each day. Big wants. We worship a big God who has told us nothing is impossible for him.

"no matter how weak our faith, the way to increase it is by stepping out in faith as the Lord leads"⁽¹⁾

I do want to follow his lead, in every aspect of my life.

Let's pray for each other in these six weeks of Lent that: *"As we grow in faith through prayer and fasting, we are able to speak and act in closer and closer alignment with what the Father is already doing."*⁽¹⁾

God bless you.

All quotes from Magnificat, February 2023, Vol. 24, No. 12, pgs. 209-210, Meditation of the Day, "How Our Spiritual Sight Is Restored" by Mary Healy

From our Parochial Vicar

Fr. Antonio de Souza

TEMPTATION

Each year, on the first Sunday of Lent, the Church invites us to meditate on the Gospel of the temptations of Jesus. I thought this might be a good opportunity for us also to consider the danger of temptation in our own lives. We should never underestimate the many ways by which the enemy of our souls tries to deceive and destroy us.

First, though, what is temptation? The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "Temptation is an attraction, either from outside oneself or from within, to act contrary to right reason and the commandments of God. Jesus himself during his life on earth was tempted, put to the test, to manifest the opposition between himself and the devil and the triumph of his saving work over Satan (CCC 538).

However, since human beings are ordered towards what is good, the goal of temptations is to trick and fool us into believing that something contrary to God's will is actually good. For this purpose, the devil and his angels have infinite ways and strategies.

To illustrate this point, I recently came across the outrageous story of George C. Parker. He was the infamous New York con-artist who was able to convince people that he was the actual owner of such landmarks as the Brooklyn Bridge, the Statue of Liberty, Madison Square Garden, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Grant's Tomb. And worse, he was able to "sell" these touristic attractions to unsuspecting victims for huge sums of money.

At first sight, it seems absurd that anyone would believe Mr. Parker's lies and be fooled into "buying" the Brooklyn Bridge (by the way, he "sold" it more than once!). However, we shouldn't discount the ingenious ways by which he accomplished this: he would dress nicely, speak softly and convincingly claim that some past relatives had built those monuments and left them to him in their will. He would invite people to a nicely appointed office he had rented and produce elaborately forged documents and deeds to prove his claims. And, for a long time, he got away with his lies and with people's money!

Now, if a con-man could accomplish such deceit, just imagine what the devil could come up with! That is why we are urged to avoid temptations and never engage the devil, not even to affirm our faith!

Pope Francis reminded us of this in an Angelus message he gave in 2020 when he said: "Never talk to the devil. Jesus does two things with the devil: he chases him away or, as in this case [in the desert], he answers with the Word of God. Be careful: never dialogue with temptation, never dialogue with the devil." (Angelus Message - March 1, 2020)

Still, we should know that temptations will follow us all the days of our lives. As followers of Jesus, we should avoid them when we can and resist them otherwise; pray often and call on the intercession of our guardian angels and the saints.

Finally, during this Lenten Season, let us make use of the powerful spiritual weapons that God gives us through the Church: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Have a blessed Lenten Season!

LENTEN ALMSGIVING

As we begin our Lenten journey with prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, perhaps you would like to know more about our connection to our Sister parish in Sierra Leone, Our Lady Star of the Sea as our. Our Lenten collection is being taken up

to benefit this parish.

In 1961 Sierra Leone, a British colony, became an independent nation. In 1991, after struggling to establish itself as a government, a group called the Revolutionary United Front attacked villages on the eastern Liberian border and started illegal mining for diamonds, driving the villagers out of their homes. Fierce fighting and brutal maiming of men, women and children continued until 2002, when this civil war was declared officially over.

Amidst this struggle, the parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea was established in Juba, a suburb of Freetown, with our own Rosaline and Patrick Willie-Bonglo being founding members of the parish. In 2004, being keenly aware of the extreme sufferings of the people served by this parish, through its schools, medical clinic and vocational training school, the Willie-Bonglos asked if St John's would sponsor the needs of this Catholic parish. With Archdiocesan approval, we were connected.

Since then, we have collected and sent financial aid, as well as material supplies, to help the work of our Sister Parish. Since 2017, we, the parish families of our Collaborative, in the spirit of giving, have offered up our Lenten sacrifices in order that our brothers and sisters of Our Lady Star of the Sea parish family may be lifted—not only by our monetary donations, but also by our gift of prayer.

More next week...

WHY NO MUSIC DURING LENT?

by Mike Stack, Music Director, St. Mary Church

As Catholics, we are called to sacrifice for Lent, engaging in self-control and self-reflection through fasting and abstaining. A lot of us “give up” something we love for Lent. It turns out, this is true of our music as well.

In Lent, we give up the Gloria and the Alleluia. Both expressions of deep joy in praising God, in this more solemn time, we put them aside, the Gloria omitted completely, the Alleluia replaced. It is through this that we create one of my favorite musical moments in the church—the Gloria and the Alleluia triumphant at the Easter Vigil in the midst of the story of Salvation History.

But there's more to it than just those two hymns--- instrumental music is forbidden at Mass during Lent—you'll notice that we do away with long hymn introductions and instrumental verses during Lent. Our instruments only support singing. And likewise, we only sing the songs that are our response during the Mass like the Psalm and Holy or during the entrance, offertory and Communion processions. We do not sing at other times—including before and after Mass, after Communion, and perhaps most starkly, as we leave the church after the Dismissal, we depart in silence.

The Church in its wisdom does grant us a reprieve from this: Laetare Sunday—the fourth Sunday of Lent. A day of joyful anticipation of the coming Resurrection, akin to Gaudete Sunday in Advent with its pink candle, we don't sing Alleluias or Glorias, but we do embrace all our other hymns and traditions. But other than that, it gets a little quieter in our churches until we get to Easter, when we can shout our Alleluias with joy: I expect to hear every one of you singing it with us!

ABSTINENCE AND FASTING

ABSTINENCE: Catholics over 14 years of age are bound to the obligations of abstinence. Abstinence (no meat) is to be observed on Ash Wednesday, Fridays of Lent and Good Friday.

FASTING: Catholics over the age of 18 and up to the beginning of their 60th year are bound to the obligation of fasting. Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent, are defined as the days of fasting. On these days, only 1 full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted; but liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed.

DISPENSATION FOR 2023: This year, the Feast of St. Patrick, the patron saint of our Archdiocese, falls on a Friday during Lent. Given the importance of this feast in the life of the Archdiocese and in the lives of many Catholics, Cardinal Sean is granting dispensation from the Friday Lenten abstinence on March 17, 2023, to those who wish to take advantage of this opportunity. This is a one day only dispensation.

Join us on our annual Lenten pilgrimage, beginning Ash Wednesday, February 22
ending with the Triduum—beginning April 6th—culminating in

Easter Joy on April 9th

OUR LENTEN Journey

THESE FORTY DAYS OF LENT

SOUP AND STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Fridays of Lent at 6 pm

St. Margaret: March 17

Stations at 6 pm followed by soup and fellowship

St. John: March 3 and 24

Soup at 6 pm; Stations at 7 pm

at St. Mary: March 10 and 31

Soup at 6 pm; Stations at 7 pm



The Stations will also be prayed via St. John LIVEVIEW—or in person—on Tuesdays of Lent following Divine Mercy Chaplet

LENTEN CONFESSION SCHEDULE

The Light is on For You: Wednesday Evenings

6:30 - 8:00 pm at all three churches

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29/ April 5

Our regular confession schedule will continue throughout Lent with the exception of Wednesday, St. Mary Confessions being CANCELLED due to The Light Is On For You.



A LENTEN RETREAT AT ST. JOHN'S HOLY HOUR W/MUSIC AND A SERVICE PROJECT

Sunday, February 26 and Monday February 27 • 7 - 8:30

We will begin with Exposition of the Holy Eucharist and an Opening Reflection. You can then choose to continue with Adoration, with live music, or join us downstairs for an activity centered on the evening's theme. We will then regroup for group discussion and end with Benediction.

Sunday Theme: Feed the Hungry

Celebrant: Deacon John

Music: Contemporary; Matt Hussey

Activity: Sandwich Making for Lowell Transitional Living Center

Monday Theme: Comfort the Sorrowful

Celebrant: Deacon John

Music: Traditional; St. John and St. Mary Music Ministries

Activity: Card Making for some in our collaborative community

FR. BRIAN PRESENTS...

THE PASSION NARRATIVES

Monday Evenings • 7:30—8:30

St. Mary Church (in-person or LIVEVIEW)

March 6, 13, 20, 27

Fr. Brian will lead us through the passion narratives, helping us to understand how each teaches us something different about Jesus' death and resurrection, while connecting it to the particular theology of each gospel writer.

FR. ANTONIO PRESENTS...

A LENTEN MORNING RETREAT

Saturday, March 25 • 10 - 11:30 am

St. Margaret Chapel and Sacred Heart Hall

Come away to listen to God within so we may live as Alleluia people

LENTEN BLUES

HYMNS AND PSALMS FOR THE LENTEN JOURNEY

7 pm • Tuesday, March 14 • St. Mary Church

Join us as we listen to the many blues and gospel songs found in our sacred music repertoire and hear how many of them embrace the Lenten themes of redemption, penance and mercy.

SCRIPTURE, SONG AND PRAYER

7 pm • Thursday, March 23 • St. John Church

Come alone or bring the family! This evening of scripture, song and prayer is for ALL ages!

PALM SUNDAY CANTATA

3 pm • Sunday, April 2 • St. John Church

Join us afterwards for fellowship.
Light refreshments will be served.

TENEBRAE A SERVICE OF SHADOWS

7 pm • Wednesday, April 5 • St. Margaret Church

For details on all available ways to remember a loved one, visit us at
www.theholyrood.org/remember-a-loved-one



Mass Intentions

If you would like to request that a Mass be celebrated for a specific intention or person, please call the parish office. A donation of \$10 per intention is requested when you schedule your intention.

St. John the Evangelist

SAT, FEB 25	4:00 pm:	Maurice Pontbriant Sr: Memorial
SUN, FEB 26	9:30 am:	Daniel Conroy: Memorial
	12:00 pm:	LIVING INTENTION: Patricia Ababio Birthday
	6:00 pm:	People of the Parish
MON, FEB 27	9:00 am:	Patrick John Cannon: Memorial
WED, MAR 1	9:00 am:	Lucille Fortier: Memorial
THU, MAR 2	9:00 am:	John Wright: 3rd Anniversary
SAT, MAR 4	4:00 pm:	Mr & Mrs William J Blessington: Memorial Frances Girtatos: 1st Anniversary Fernand and Joseph Sevigny: Memorial
SUN, MAR 5	9:30 am:	Mauricio Valencia: Memorial
	6:00 pm:	People of the Parish

St. Margaret of Scotland

SAT, FEB 25	4:00 pm:	Frank LaPan: Memorial
SUN, FEB 26	7:30 am:	People of the Parish
	10:00 am:	Stephen J Gilbride & Carey E Posey: Memorial
MON, FEB 27	8:00 am:	Maria Boldeica: 2nd Anniversary
TUE, FEB 28	8:00 am:	John Burbank: Memorial
THU, MAR 2	8:00 am:	LIVING INTENTION: Gert Ducharme Healing
FRI, MAR 3	8:00 am:	Dr Michael Adams: Birthday Memorial
SAT, MAR 4	4:00 pm:	Harold Brooks: Memorial Rose M Dowling: Memorial Rose Marie L'Heureux: 13th Anniversary Ann M Langan: Memorial Elizabeth Ann St Peter: 4th Anniversary Patricia Brooks Youngblood: Memorial
SUN, MAR 5	7:30 am:	People of the Parish
	10:00 am:	Peter Karabatsos: 5th Anniversary James D Scanlon: 4th Anniversary

St. Mary Parish

SAT, FEB 25	4:00 pm:	Adam Jacobs: Memorial
SUN, FEB 26	7:00 am:	People of the Parish
	11:00 am:	Deena A McMillian: Memorial
MON, FEB 27	7:00 am:	For an End to Abortion
SAT, MAR 4	4:00 pm:	Angelo Conti: 42nd Anniversary Anna DeForte: 1st Anniversary Louise LaChance: Memorial Alice Martin: 1st Anniversary
SUN, MAR 5	7:00 am:	People of the Parish
	11:00 am:	Kathleen Taylor: 3rd Anniversary

St. Mary Altar Flowers

Parishioners are invited to donate a floral arrangement to be displayed on the altar in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one. The requested donation for an arrangement is \$40 and the dedication will be published in the weekly bulletin. If you would like to donate altar flowers, call the parish office. A 2-week notice is required.



Lamps

Each of our churches offers the opportunity to have the sanctuary lamps burn in memory of a loved one. St. Margaret also has two additional lamps—the Blessed Mother Lamp (found to the left of the altar) and the Sacred Heart Lamp (found to the right of the altar). The stipend for any of these lamps is \$25, and your dedication will be published in the bulletin.

St. Margaret Bells

The steeple bells at St. Margaret toll daily at 12 and 6pm, followed by the ringing of the Angelus bell and 2 hymns. At 3pm, they play 2 hymns, and 15 minutes prior to each weekend Mass, the bells toll a 'call to worship.' If you would like to dedicate the Ringing of the Bells in Memory/In Honor of someone, please contact the parish offices. The \$25 stipend includes your dedication published in the bulletin.



St. Margaret Blessed Mother Lamp
In Memory of Rose Marie L'Heurux

Recent Funerals

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



William Zusin

Saturday, February 18 • St. John

Doris Vaillancourt

Tuesday, February 21 • St. Mary

Teresa Geoffroy

Wednesday, February 22 • St. John

Katie Harmon

Saturday, February 25 • St. Mary

Janice Kelly

Saturday, February 25 • St. Mary



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-Mother Teresa

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