

Winter 2022-23

belong



Newsletter of the
Concord-Carlisle Catholic Collaborative
CC-Catholic.org



Greetings
Fr. Nicholas Stano

Happy Advent! (or if you're reading this on or after Christmas Day, Merry Christmas!)

Welcome to the Winter edition of *Belong*, the newsletter of the Concord-Carlisle Catholic Collaborative!

One of the beautiful graces that we are given by God and the Church during this time of the year is the grace to enter into the peaceful homestead of the Holy Family. To in our prayer draw near to Our Lady, St Joseph, and the Christ Child in the peaceful moments before the Flight to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath. The peace found in the home of the Holy Family radiates from the love found there. This is the pure love that we seek to replicate in our own homes with our own families. While disorder, fighting, and strife can appear and disrupt the peace of our homes, it is important for us to pursue this heavenly peace in our homes with our families.

It is this peace of the Holy Family that we are being invited into, so that we may once again know that we *Belong* there with them, in the peaceful, loving intimacy of that home, so that we may then bring that to our homes. From our homes we can bring that love and that peace to our places of work, school, and to the world at large. Because the Holy Family reminds us that we are all called to holiness, and beginning to answer that call from God begins in our homes. The families that God has given us are the ones who help us begin our path to sainthood, especially when they're driving us

crazy. Each family is called to holiness. Each family is called to imitate and follow the example of the Holy Family, to let all that they do flow from their love of God to the rest of their family, and from their family to the world. But it all begins at home. This Christmas season, ask for the grace to enter the home of the Holy Family in your prayer, to be present with them, to enjoy the serenity of the exchange of love between them all.

I encourage you all the pray this prayer to the Holy Family together:

"Heavenly Father, we ask You to bless our family. Open our hearts to receive Your love. May our home be another Nazareth, so that our family may be a place where Your peace and love abides. Open our eyes to recognize the gift and beauty of life, so that we may find joy in Your presence among us. Grant us pure hearts seeking holiness, generous hearts full of Your love, merciful hearts ready to forgive and tender hearts full of kindness. May our family be a sanctuary of life and love, a beacon of hope drawing others to your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,
Holy Family of Nazareth,
pray for us."

God bless!
-Fr Nick



A Winter's portrait, so bountiful,

Nature's gift indeed...

Though lurking are the lifeless flowers

Returned to earth as seed.

All sacred gifts sent unto us

Are made by God's own hands

And always, they are precious ones

To love just as He plans!

While lilies in the valley rest,

And clad are crystal trees...

A lifeless day revives the soul

Through snowflakes on a breeze.

These heavenly troves to come our way,

So beautiful, big or small...

Will touch our lives through each new day

God's gifts... they're best of all!

Timeless Treasures

a poem by

Dianna Cogar



Christmas Outreach 2022



Lisa Mariano standing with the Giving Tree at St. Irene Parish

The Apostle James, son of Alphaeus tells us that faith without acts of kindness and love is basically without life. Our faith community of the Concord-Carlisle Catholic Collaborative is alive to great magnitude throughout the year, with its greatest outpouring of love each Advent and Christmas season.

Throughout the years, the parishioners of Holy Family and St. Irene have supported a variety of programs that help others. These outreach programs address the needs of many people who do not have the resources for themselves or their families to enable them to share in the happiness of this special time of year.

With substantial interest and support, we have kept alive the great traditions observed by our faith communities in reaching out to our sisters and brothers in the true Christian spirit. From the Giving Tree at both parishes, to supporting the amazing work of Catholic ministries like the St. Vincent de Paul Society and Lazarus House, to organizations like Open Table and the Pine Street Inn in Boston; we are a community that simply cares about those in need.

We achieve something great together each year for the benefit of others. Thank you to those who organize, coordinate and especially to those who give from their faith and hearts.



Tony Carabello

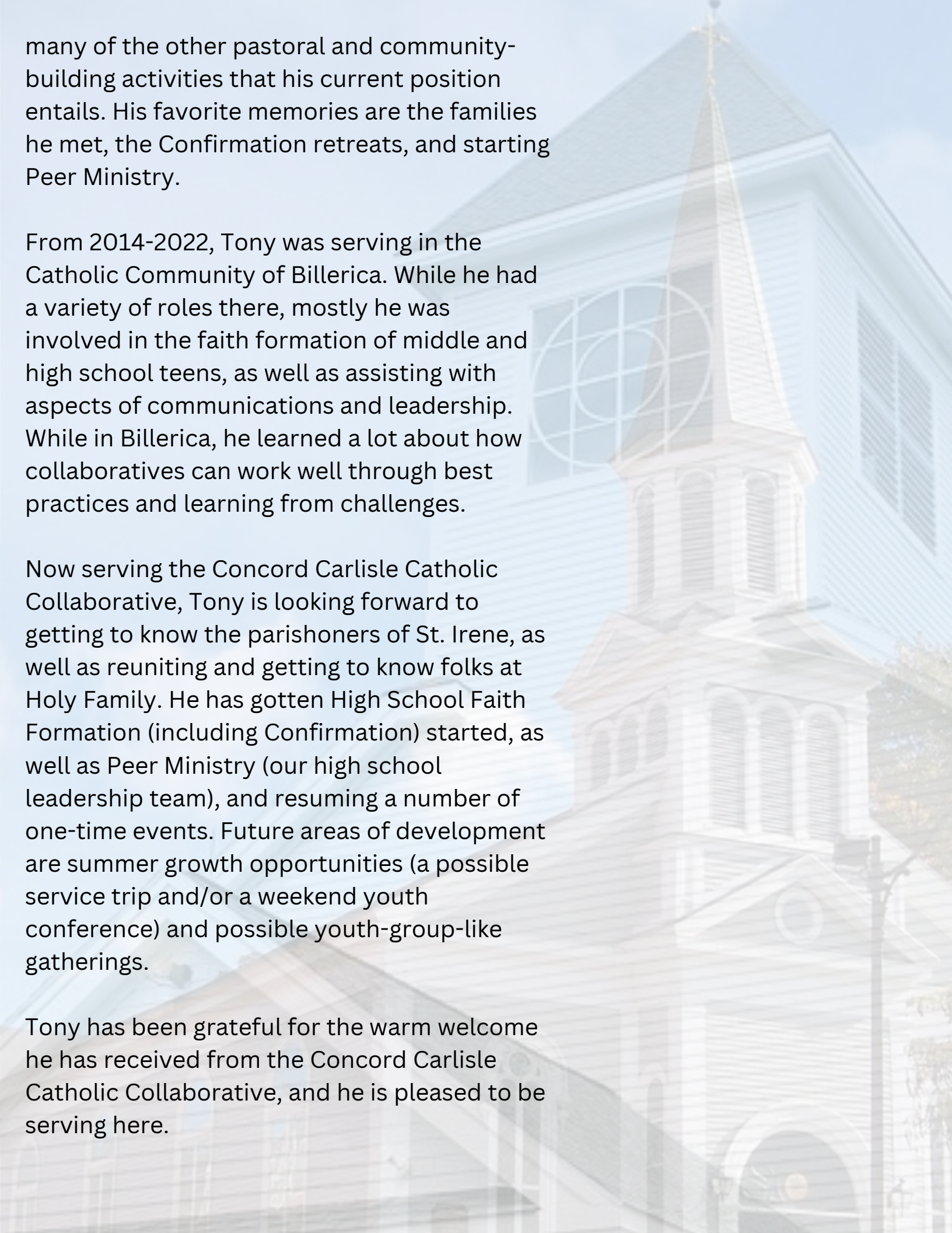
Welcome and welcome back Tony Carabello. Our faith community is excited to have someone with Tony's passion for the Catholic faith leading the Confirmation and Peer Leadership programs. He has served the Church in a variety of occupational positions in different parts of the country. Since 2008 Tony has worked for parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston.

Tony, his wife and their three boys live nearby in Bedford. He attended St. Michael's College in his home state of Vermont, focusing on high school education. In 2006, he earned a Masters of Theological Studies from St. Norbert College in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Tony's professional focus has frequently been concentrated on adolescent catechesis; his passion is to evangelize teenagers so they may enter into a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.

From 2009-2014, Tony served Holy Family Parish in Concord as Coordinator of Religious Education. This role included High School Faith Formation and Confirmation, but not

continued on next page



many of the other pastoral and community-building activities that his current position entails. His favorite memories are the families he met, the Confirmation retreats, and starting Peer Ministry.

From 2014-2022, Tony was serving in the Catholic Community of Billerica. While he had a variety of roles there, mostly he was involved in the faith formation of middle and high school teens, as well as assisting with aspects of communications and leadership. While in Billerica, he learned a lot about how collaboratives can work well through best practices and learning from challenges.

Now serving the Concord Carlisle Catholic Collaborative, Tony is looking forward to getting to know the parishoners of St. Irene, as well as reuniting and getting to know folks at Holy Family. He has gotten High School Faith Formation (including Confirmation) started, as well as Peer Ministry (our high school leadership team), and resuming a number of one-time events. Future areas of development are summer growth opportunities (a possible service trip and/or a weekend youth conference) and possible youth-group-like gatherings.

Tony has been grateful for the warm welcome he has received from the Concord Carlisle Catholic Collaborative, and he is pleased to be serving here.

Christmas Pageant

2022



Thank you to the kids and parents
for a great Pageant!

A Bit About Our New Parish Center



A couple of months ago, the parishes of Holy Family in Concord and St. Irene's in Carlisle, undertook the task of moving their respective offices into one facility known as the "Catholic Parish Center." This move was made possible following the completion of a major renovation to the former St. Bernard's Rectory located in Concord's Monument Square. Combining the parish offices of both communities was anticipated when the Concord-Carlisle Collaborative was established in 2019.

Though the offices for both parishes have only been in the new facility for less than two months, a steadier flow to conducting parish operations and business matters is being realized. With the staff members of both parishes 'under one roof,' it is proving easier and more efficient in addressing requests and questions of interest to either or both parishes.

The new facility provides spacious and private office accommodations, especially for the priests serving both parishes. Before the move to the Catholic Parish Center, offices in Concord were located in a cubical-style on the lower level of St. Bernard's Church (Holy Family Parish), and on the porch area of St. Irene's Rectory in Carlisle. While these arrangements were workable, they did not provide for much privacy, especially when dealing with confidential matters that can sometimes surface in conversations between parishioners and clergy. St. Irene's Rectory remains as the sole residence for the priests serving the Concord-Carlisle Collaborative.

In addition to offices for staff, the Catholic Parish Center has several meeting areas for gatherings. The building was renovated to be energy efficient and provides easy access, including an elevator and restrooms on all three levels.

The Catholic Parish Center is located at 70 Monument Square in Concord Center with limited parking behind the building. Weekday office hours are from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm. Parishioners are welcome to visit the center at any time.



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What Does the Holy Family Teach Us?

Author: Fr. Edward Looney

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York houses a beautiful triptych of the Holy Family called the “Mérode Altarpiece,” painted by Robert Campin. The left of the three-paneled piece of art captures an open door of two bystanders peering into the main panel of the Annunciation, while the far-right panel depicts St. Joseph in his carpentry shop. This artistic masterpiece captures who the Christian is as they examine the life of the Holy Family and the extraordinary events surrounding their life and calling from God. Catching a glimpse of that home in Nazareth, where the Christ Child grew in age and wisdom into his adult years, we experience how the Holy Family informs family life in the third millennium. In the biblical stories of Jesus, Mary and Joseph we see their example of virtuous living.

They Follow God’s Lead

The Scriptures paint the early life of the Holy Family as God calls them to a special mission. With the angel Gabriel, we greet Mary and learn of her calling to become the Mother of God. Our introduction to St. Joseph consists of him deciding to divorce Mary quietly, believing she brought shame and dishonor upon him and his family. But an angel invites Joseph to change his mind and take Mary into his home, to become the guardian of Mary and Jesus, the husband of Mary and foster-father of Jesus.

In that home at Nazareth we meet a couple who shows an openness to allowing God to lead their life together. Mary surely had other plans for her life; as many believe, she took a vow of virginity at an early age, so becoming a physical mother was something she did not anticipate. Yet, she heard God’s invitation, and knew that His plans were better for her life; therefore, she gives her fiat — that is, her “yes” to God.

St. Joseph opens his heart to the messenger sent by God and takes Mary into his home. This would not be the first or last



time that St. Joseph followed God's lead in his life as he protected the Holy Family. After Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, they follow the prompting of an angel to flee into Egypt for safety and wait there until another angelic message leads them back home. The Holy Family is a great example for families everywhere to always be open to whatever God's will might be and to always be listening for God to speak. He might speak his will in prayer or through another person. By our own prayer and discernment, we too can follow God's lead for our life.

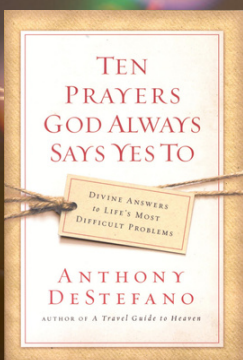
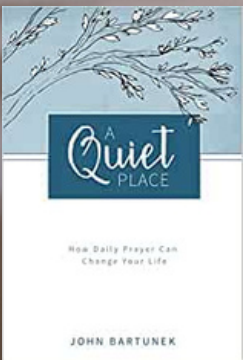
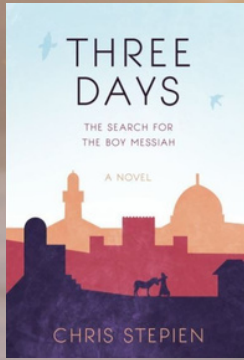
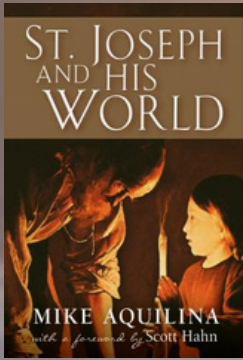
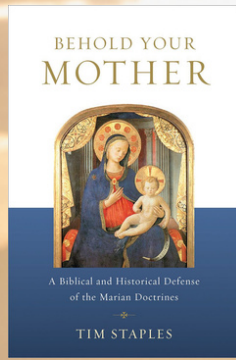
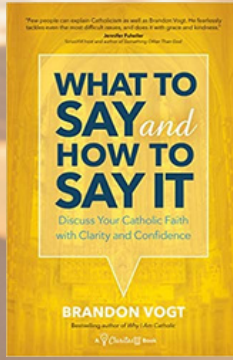
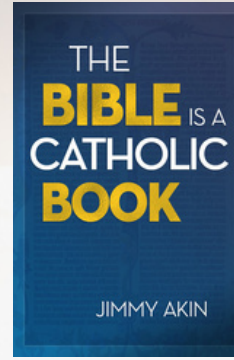
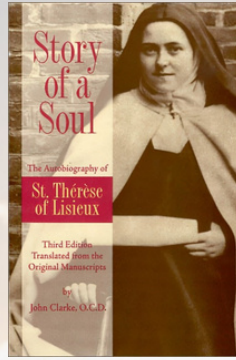
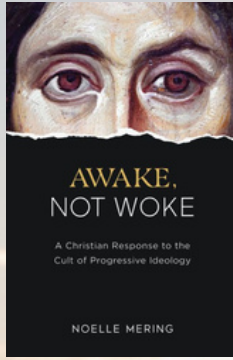
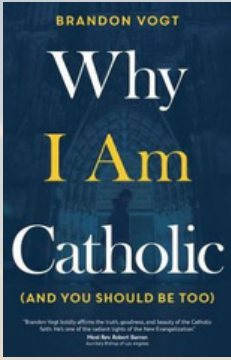
A Teacher of Virtue

The home should be the principal place of catechesis. Unfortunately, many families today allow the Church to fill that role alone. The home of Nazareth, in addition to the local synagogue, would have been the place of instruction for the Christ Child. The Holy Family taught Jesus how to read, and at the start of his public ministry Jesus would read from the scroll and declare the passage to be fulfilled in their hearing (see Lk 4:21). Mary and Joseph would have taught the Christ Child how to pray, especially the Shema, and years later Jesus would teach his disciples how to pray with the Our Father. Joseph would have handed on his trade to his son, who later would die on the wood of a cross. Jesus had a great concern for the poor and the marginalized. In the home of Nazareth he learned generosity and kindness. The home of Nazareth reminds us that families have the responsibility of

[click here to finish reading article](#)



Recommended Reading



Tap book covers
to open

Women's Club

Since 1946 the St. Irene Women's Club has provided the opportunity for members to meet socially and to work on a variety of projects that help the church, and those in need in the local area. This fall was a whirlwind of faith, fundraising and social events.

For faith activities, the club organized an outdoor rosary in honor of Mary's birthday. It was a well attended gathering that took place in the Mary grotto at St. Irene's in October.

Fundraising activities included an apple pie sale this past Thanksgiving and the sale of boxwood trees and candles during Advent. Proceeds from these events have been donated to local food pantries and area families in need during the holiday season.

Fun social activities included a ham & bean supper in October and a Christmas Party and Yankee Swap in December. A pizza & bingo night is planned for January, as well as a food theme meeting for February with a cooking demonstration. In addition, the club will be hosting a Spring Tea & Fashion Show in early May as well as an end of the year banquet for members in June.

Please consider joining our club. All women in the Holy Family-St. Irenes Collaborative are welcome. For more information, please contact us via email.

womenclub@cc-catholic.org





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