

4th Sunday of Easter

"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish." (Jn 10:27-28)



St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish
May 11, 2025

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

WE ARE HIS



PEOPLE,
THE SHEEP
OF HIS FLOCK

PSALM 100:3

Dear Parishioners,

Today's First Reading comes from Acts 13—just last week, we were in Chapter 5! That big leap reminds us how important it is to stay connected with Scripture every day. As Fr. Larry Richards says, “No Bible, no breakfast. No Bible, no bed.” I often repeat that, because it's so true.

Much happens in the early Church as the Gospel begins to spread. Today, we see Paul and Barnabas preaching in the synagogue at Antioch. Though we skip most of Paul's sermon, it's worth reading in full to grasp the moment. What we do hear tells us that many people were moved by their message. So many, in fact, that the next Sabbath the synagogue was overflowing!

While some were joyful to hear the Good News—that Jesus Christ is Lord and has saved us through His death and resurrection—others reacted with jealousy and opposition. Acts tells us: “When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and with violent abuse contradicted what Paul said.”

It's important to understand that “the Jews” here refers specifically to certain leaders of the time—not all Jewish people. We should always be careful to avoid any interpretation that could lead to anti-Semitism. After all, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Peter, Paul, and so many others in our faith story were themselves Jewish. Our faith calls us to love—not to judge or divide.

Religion should never be a source of hatred or exclusion. Jesus prayed that we might all be one, as He and the Father are one. Wherever there is division, there is sin. It is not by seeking Christ that we become divided—it is by ignoring Him.

Today is Good Shepherd Sunday, and our Gospel reading comes from John 10. Each year on this Sunday, we hear about Jesus as the Good Shepherd. In this year's short reading (Year C), Jesus speaks of two

relationships: one with His followers, and one with the Father. He promises us eternal life and assures us that no one can take us from His hand. He says:

“My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life... No one can take them out of my hand.”

The unity Jesus shares with the Father is the unity He invites us into. When we are tempted by division—be it in thought, word, or action—we must ask whether we are truly following the voice of the Good Shepherd. Let us continue to listen for His voice, walk in His path, and live as people united in faith and love.

~Fr. Chris

We are Hiring!



St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish is seeking a Director of Faith Formation. The Director of Faith Formation (DFF) manages program content, staff, and works with the Finance and Operations Director on faith formation budgets.

This is a full-time position with benefits. Responsibilities include planning of the Faith Formation year, review and determine curriculum, sacramental preparation and Vacation Bible School. For more information or to express interest please contact Chris Kilburn, Director of Finance and Operations at **978-663-8816** or at **billericacatholic.org**.

Happy Mothers Day

Dear Parish Family,

We have bittersweet news to share as we announce the retirement of Deb Fergus, who has been a cherished member of our Religious Education Program for eleven years. Deb has touched the lives of countless children and adults, guiding them in their journey of faith with her unwavering passion and dedication.

Additionally, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Karyn Moody, who has faithfully taught in our First Sacrament Program and has made a significant contribution to our children's spiritual growth. While Karyn will be transitioning from her teaching role, we are delighted that she will continue to be an active member of our parish family. We look forward to celebrating First Holy Communion for our children in May—a truly beautiful way to conclude Karyn's time with us in this role.

To honor their remarkable service, we invite you to a **Goodbye Party in their honor on Saturday, May 31st after the 4pm Mass at St. Theresa in Father McCormick Hall.** Let's come together to celebrate Deb and Karyn and their incredible impact on our parish community as they embark on this new chapter of their life. We are blessed to have had their dedication, and we look forward to celebrat-

ing with you! If you would like to show your appreciation to Deb and Karyn by helping out in any way, please reach out the Parish Office at heather.murphy.ccb@gmail.com or **978-663-8816 x200.**



COME AND HAVE FUN AT FAMILY GAME NIGHT FRIDAY, MAY 16

NEW START TIME- 6:00PM-9:00PM

Location: Fr. Wilson Hall at St. Andrew Church
All are invited – Families, Singles, Seniors, Teenagers
We can't wait to see you and have fun!

If you have not been to one of the Game Night's yet – we have so much fun! There are lots of laughs and tons of games to play! Enjoy pizza, soda, and snacks or bring your own! We hope to see you there!



Congratulations to Our First Communicants

This past weekend, several of our older youth received the Holy Eucharist for the first time. We celebrate this joyful milestone in their spiritual journey and pray that it deepens their relationship with God. May they always feel the love of Christ in their heart and the support of their parish family by their side. Many blessings to all!



HELP NEEDED! St. Paul's Soup Kitchen - May 16th



St. Paul's
soup kitchen

Our Parish continues to provide meals to the St. Paul's Soup Kitchen in Lowell. We are currently feeding approximately 120 individuals every third Friday of each month. If you would like to sign up to make a meal, dessert, or donate items, use this link:

<https://www.PerfectPotluck.com/BYZZ1241>. The link address does change each month, so please monitor the bulletin or request to be on our monthly email blast for the most current sign-up. Contributions may be dropped off at Father Wilson Hall at St.

Andrew's on May 16th from 1-3. We appreciate your continued support of this worthy cause. Questions or comments may be directed to our new Soup Kitchen Coordinators Nicole at nicole.smay@gmail.com or Renee at renee.rogers@wbmason.com.

COURAGEOUS CATHOLIC WOMEN

The Courageous Catholic Women meeting will be held on **Monday, May 12th @ 7:00pm** at **St. Andrew Church** in Fr. Wilson Hall. This month's prayers and reflections will focus on "The Women of Prayer." CCW is a women's prayer group that meets monthly to explore the Gospel, pray together, and support one another. Contact Fran Gulia at admin@billericacatholic.org or call the Parish Office at **978-663-8816** for more information.

CORRECTED INFORMATION ~ ST. MATTHEW WOMEN'S CLUB

All are invited to the next Women's Club meeting which will be held on **Wednesday, May 14th at 6:30pm** during which they will be saying the rosary and crowning the Blessed Mother. Pizza and cake will be served (no baked goods are needed). This will be their last meeting of the season before their banquet celebration in June. If you would like more information about becoming a future member, contact Dottie at admin@billericacatholic.org or call the Office at **978-663-8816**.

OFFERTORY REPORT

We are pleased to present to you a report on revenue and expenses. This includes offertory (received weekly at Masses, by mail, and online giving), as well as other revenue received throughout the month.

Thank you for all you do through your time, treasure and talent to support our parish!

| | January 2025 | February 2025 | March 2025 | April 2025 |
|--|-----------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total Offertory (by month) | 63,177 | 44,477 | 66,479 | 46,034 |
| Grand Annual Stewardship Campaign (by month) | 7,128 | 8,943 | 9,310 | 4,636 |
| Other Revenue Received (by month) | 14,401 | 16,891 | 18,375 | 12,837 |
| Total Revenue | 84,706 | 70,311 | 94,164 | 63,507 |
| Expenses | 102,208 | 88,004 | 90,045 | 86,100 |
| NET INCOME (LOSS) | (17,502) | (17,693) | 4,119 | (22,593) |

Please note, on Easter Sunday the collection was for the Clergy Trust whose mission is to ensure that the priests are cared for throughout their lives. The total collected was \$13,653.00

Please note, the NET LOSS in January, February, and April 2025 is being funded through the cash reserves from the prior months.

Bank Operating Account Balance 4.30.2025 \$13,879

Another Successful Project Rise!

Thank you to everyone who made Project Rise a reality and a success. Everyone was so generous and our participants went home with a bountiful gift. Even the weather cooperated and the trees were in spectacular bloom. A special "thank you" to Fatema and Taher from the Dawoodi Bohra Anjuman-e-Ezzi for opening their beautiful facility and hosting this special community event.



2025 Catholic Appeal... Forward in Faith

We are pleased to share that we have raised \$61,536 (81%) of our 2025 parish goal of \$75,800.

WE ARE CLOSE! LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO REACH THE GOAL!

The Catholic Appeal supports many ministries at work here in at St. Matthew Parish. Some examples include the Pro-Life ministry; Faith Formation of Children; Parish Services (with assistance multiple times from various resources at the Pastoral Center – property management, legal, HR, and more); and Divine Worship (the OCIA program). Saint Matthew has relied on the resources at Central Ministries many times, with their knowledge and assistance being invaluable to our parish.

We are blessed to have the support of parishioners such as yourself. We show our love and thanks to God by sharing our gifts. Every gift is important, not so much for how much it is, but because of what we become through the act of giving it. The Church itself is one of God's great gifts.

If you have not had a chance to do so, please consider making your gift to the Appeal today by picking up an envelope in your pew, at the back of the church or make an on-line donation at www.bostoncatholicappeal.org , or using the QR code to the right.



Remember-if we reach our goal, a % of the funds are returned to the parish!



St. Matthew Parish - Vacation Bible School 2025

Journey with God's servant, Joseph, in this year's VBS adventure!

Join us **June 23 - 27** as we discover how Joseph's faith saved God's People!

Each morning, enjoy exciting music, games, crafts, and bible stories.

Listen for God's voice, and learn to follow his Son, Jesus.

Open to **current** grade K-5 children

REGISTER WITH QR CODE BELOW:



Current grade 6 - high school youth invited to be Counselors

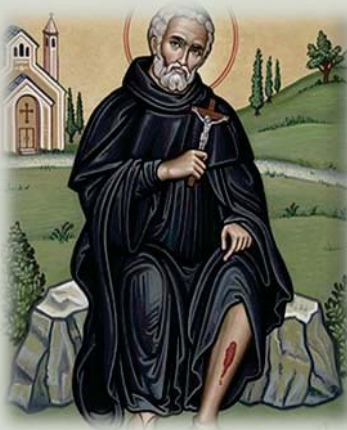
APPLY WITH LINK BELOW:

<https://forms.gle/sfdxS4yBwxnkN7w67>

Details & Registration forms on our website at <https://billericacatholic.org/vbs-online-registration>

Questions? Contact **Deb Fergus** at deb.fergus@billericacatholic.org

Hope to see YOU at VBS 2025!



Healing Mass in Honor of St. Peregrine

Patron Saint of Cancer Patients

On **Wednesday, May 25th**, a liturgy will be celebrated at **6:30PM** in honor of St. Peregrine at the Immaculate Conception Church on East Merrimack Street in Lowell. St. Peregrine is the patron saint of cancer patients, and is the saint many cancer patients, family members, and friends pray to for comfort and strength. During this Mass, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be offered to cancer patients and to any who wish to partake of this sacrament of God's healing. All are invited to come and pray with and for those afflicted with cancer. **Fr. Chris** will concelebrate this Mass.

Welcome into the Church !



Congratulations and God's many blessings to the family of **Emma Jacqueline and Beau Cameron, Justin Singh, Emma Rose and Thomas Joseph** whom we welcomed into our Faith Community through the waters of Baptism. We wish for them a lifetime of learning about God's great and merciful love. **For more information about scheduling the sacrament of Baptism for your child, please contact the Parish Office at 978-663-8816.*



Reflection Question of the Week ~ 4th Sunday of Easter

Again this week we hear of Paul and his companion Barnabas, speaking out boldly and with conviction about the word of God. When they met opposition among their ancestors, they took their message to the Gentile communities. The key to evangelization is in the last line in that first reading: "The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." Their commitment grew stronger! When people turn a deaf ear to us about following Jesus' example or about the joy that our relationship with Christ gives us, we are reminded to recall the words Jesus says to us in the gospel – "My sheep hear my voice . . . and follow me." This week share the good news with one other person and notice the joy it gives you, and them.

- To help other come to know Jesus, we must speak about Him in our daily lives.
- How can I better listen to Jesus' voice in my daily life?
- What steps can we take to deepen our friendship with Jesus?
- How can I help others recognize the voice of the Good Shepherd?



Intentions for the week of May 10th-May 16th

Rita Kelly, Steven Kane and Henry Murphy-Memorial
 Richard L. Dubbs-10th Anniversary
 William T. Giles-41st Anniversary
 Cynara Ferrao-Memorial
 Maria LaRocca-Memorial
 Jerry and Betty Cohen-Anniversary
 Michael Spinale-3rd Anniversary
 Robert Donadio-Memorial
 Timothy Garvey-Memorial
 Barbara Connolly-3rd Anniversary
 Joseph Santolucito-7th Anniversary
 Maria Sousa-Memorial

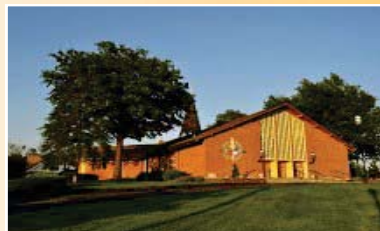
Intentions for the week of May 17th-May 23rd

Deceased Members of the Harrington Family
 MaryEllen O'Leary-2nd Anniversary
 Francis X. O'Leary-25th Anniversary
 Rosaleen Flaherty-6 Month's Anniversary
 John and Catherine O'Leary-Memorial
 Michael J. Sweeney-4th Anniversary
 Thomas and Florence Nunes-1st and 17th Anniversary
 Richard J. Silveria-Memorial
 Marcella Manslow-Memorial
 Mary Whitehouse-5th Anniversary
 Adele Cenci-2nd Anniversary



Online Giving QR Code

Use the QR code to the left, to make a secure, one-time or recurring contribution from your bank account to our parish. Online Giving provides many advantages to you and the parish. Thank you for your continued support. **St. Matthew the Evangelist receives approximately 40% of contributions through online giving!**



St. Andrew Church

45 Talbot Avenue

N. Billerica, MA 01862

Sun. Mass 8:00am & 11:00am

Daily Mass Tues. & Fri. at 12:05pm

Rosary led by Legion of Mary: Friday at 11:30am

St. Theresa Church

466 Boston Road

Billerica, MA 01821

Sat. Mass 4:00pm

Sun. Mass 9:30am & 5:00pm

Daily Mass M, W, & Th at 9:00am

Confession Sat @ 2:00 pm

Pastoral Team

Rev. Christopher Casey, Pastor

Ext. 224

Fr. Jean Sassou, Parochial Vicar

Ext. 223

Deacon Al Shanahan, Deacon

Resident Clergy:

Fr. Romain Rurangirwa

Fr. Theophilus Okpara

St. Vincent de Paul Society: 978-408-8278

Office Team

Christine Kilburn, Director of Finance & Operations

Ext. 243

Karen Dubbs, Office Manager

Ext. 300

Heather Murphy, Pastoral Ministry & Project Coordinator

Ext. 200

Dino Bastianelli, Facilities Manager

Ext. 332

Youth Faith Formation Staff

Karyn Moody, Coordinator for Grades 1-4

Ext. 444

**Deb Fergus, Senior Coordinator for Faith Formation
and Coordinator for Grades 5-8**

Ext. 442

Alanna Fava, Confirmation & Teen Ministries

Ext. 445

Dustin Batista, Pastoral Minister & Teen Ministries

Ext. 448

Knights of Columbus

Dan Quattrocchi, Membership Director

kofc3963@yahoo.com

St. Matthew Parish Office

One Grace Avenue

Billerica, MA 01821

978.663.8816

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 10am-3pm

Music Ministry

Mrs. Laura Rosa, Director and Organist

Maria Coughlan, Cantor

Rebecca Murphy, Cantor

Michelle Roy, Cantor



For questions about St. Matthew Parish or information on any of the following topics, please contact the person listed below:

New to the Parish, Mass Intentions, Baptisms, Adult Confirmation, RCIA or the CORI process?

Please Call the Parish Office at 978-663-8816, Mon-Wed. from 10am-1pm or email admin@billericacatholic.org

Funerals

If you have recently experienced the loss of a loved one, please contact the office at **978-663-8816** so that we can walk with you through this difficult journey.

Weddings

Congratulations on your engagement! Please call 978-663-8816 or email admin@billericacatholic.org to schedule an appointment at least 6 months before your wedding.

Homebound and Sick

Do you know of someone who is homebound and would appreciate a visit from a priest? If you know someone in the parish who would like a visit to receive the Eucharist, please call the office at **978-663-8816** to arrange a visit.

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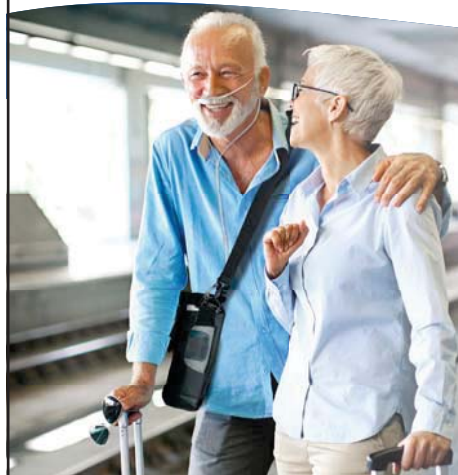
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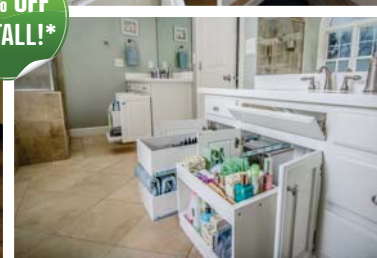
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- Fr. Richard Clancy

Pastor, River of Divine Mercy Parish
Dracut/Lowell/Tyngsboro



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