

*St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish*  
*May 18, 2025*



His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

Robert Francis Prevost

Elected Supreme Pontiff on May 8, 2025



Dear Parishioners,

In today's Gospel, Jesus gives us a command that lies at the heart of our Christian identity:

"I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

We've heard this many times, but the familiarity should not dull its power. Jesus is not offering a suggestion; He is giving us a commandment. This love—modeled on His own—is meant to be the unmistakable sign that we belong to Him.

And yet, this is perhaps the most difficult thing Jesus asks of us. Loving as He loves means offering mercy when it is not deserved, showing kindness when it is inconvenient, and persevering in love even when we are wounded by others. Critics outside—and even inside—the Church sometimes dismiss this call as weak or watered down. But the truth is, it is anything but. To love in this way is the hardest, most courageous thing a disciple can do.

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles gives us a powerful example. Paul and Barnabas, on their missionary journey, have just preached in Derbe and are returning to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch—cities that lie in modern-day Turkey. These places were not

always welcoming. In Lystra, Paul had recently healed a crippled man, only to be met with hostility. He was dragged out of the city, stoned, and left for dead.

Astonishingly, Paul did not give up. He got up, traveled to Derbe to continue preaching, and then returned to Lystra—the very city where he had nearly been killed. Why would anyone go back to a place of such danger and rejection?

Because Paul had been transformed by Christ's love. He was no longer living for himself. He was living for the mission of Jesus. And Jesus had made it clear: "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."

Paul could say with conviction: "It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God." These words were not about earning heaven through suffering. Rather, Paul was testifying that the Kingdom becomes visible on earth when we build a communion of love—when we create a community that reflects God's mercy, truth, and justice.

This is our call, too. We are not asked to be soft or sentimental. We are asked to be strong in the kind of love that picks itself up after being knocked down, that returns to hard places, that makes visible in the world the Kingdom Jesus died to establish.

This is not the work of wimps. This is the mission of saints.

Let us pray for the courage to love one another as He has loved us. Only then will the world know that we are truly His disciples.

In Christ,  
*Fr. Chris*

## "Habemus Papam" - Pope Leo XIV



With great joy we received the news from Rome: *habemus papam!* We have a pope! I join with Catholics in the Archdiocese of Boston and throughout the world, along with people of good will, in celebrating the election of Pope Leo XIV as the new Holy Father. We pray for him as he begins this ministry as the Vicar of Christ and the Bishop of Rome. May he be for us a visible source and foundation of communion in faith.

In his first words to us, Pope Leo spoke of the peace that is the gift of the Lord Jesus:

*Peace be with you all, this is the first greeting of the resurrected Christ, the good shepherd who has given up his life for God. And I should also like this greeting of peace to enter our hearts and our families.* (Pope Leo XIV from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica)

May that peace give him strength and consolation, and may it fill our hearts as we live our own calling.

~Archbishop Richard G. Henning



### 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!  
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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](mailto:deb.fergus@billericacatholic.org)

**Hope to see YOU at VBS 2025!**





## Ascension Thursday Mass Schedule

**Thursday, May 29**

9:00 am St. Theresa

12:05pm St. Andrew

6pm St. Theresa

Ascension Thursday, celebrated 40 days after Easter, commemorates the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven in the presence of His apostles. It marks the end of His earthly ministry and the fulfillment of His promise to send the Holy Spirit. This solemn holy day reminds us of Christ's glory and His continued presence with us as our risen Lord. Let us reflect on His command to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth, as we await His return in glory.

## 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 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](http://billericacatholic.org).



## Goodbye in Honor of Deb Fergus and Karyn Moody



You are invited to a Goodbye Party in honor of Deb Fergus and Karyn Moody **on Saturday, May 31st after the 4pm Mass at St. Theresa in Father McCormick Hall**. Let's come together to celebrate their incredible impact on our parish community as they embark on this next chapter of their life. We are blessed to have had their dedication, and we look forward to celebrating with you all! If you would like to show your appreciation to Deb and Karyn by helping out in any way, please reach out to Heather in the Parish Office at [heather.murphy.ccb@gmail.com](mailto:heather.murphy.ccb@gmail.com) or **978-663-8816**.



## 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.**

## St. Matthew Prayer Chain



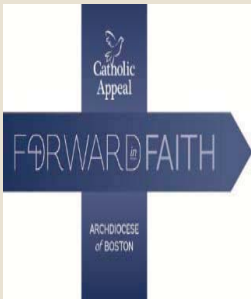
Would you like to have prayers said for a special intention? Please contact the St. Matthew Prayer Chain by calling **Pat** at **978-667-0869** or send an email to **Charline** at [admin@billericacatholic.org](mailto:admin@billericacatholic.org). If you would like to become a member of the St. Matthew Prayer Chain Group, please leave your information with either Pat or Charline. Thank you for your prayers.

## St. Matthew's Choir – Summer Break Announcement

St. Matthew's Choir will be taking a much-needed and well-deserved break for the summer. Their final Mass before the break will be on **Sunday, June 8th at the 11:00 AM Mass**. The choir will return in **mid-September**. We are always looking for new members to join us—no prior experience necessary, just a love for music and community! Call the Parish Office at 978-663-8816 for more information. Happy Summer from all of us at St. Matthew's Choir!

## 2025 Catholic Appeal... Forward in Faith

*We are pleased to share that we have raised \$63,011 (83%) 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](http://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!***

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

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

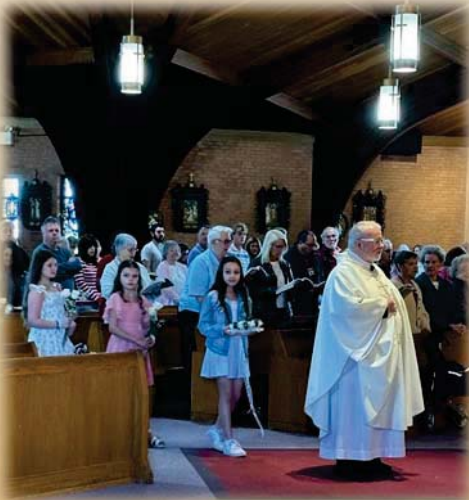


## Crowning of the Blessed Mother

The month of May is traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. One of the well-known ways of honoring Mary is with a May Crowning. In addition to the May Crowning there are other ways to honor our mother, Mary, throughout the month of May. One way is by praying the rosary each day. Another old tradition is planting a Mary garden. Mary gardens go back to the Middle Ages when certain flowers and herbs began to be symbolically associated with Mary.

The reason why we crown Mary is best summed up by Pope Paul VI who wrote in 1965 that May is an occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world pray to the Queen of Heaven." Last Sunday at the 9:30am Mass at St. Theresa and the 11:00am Mass at St. Andrew, a crown of flowers was placed on the head of a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary to signify her honor as Queen of heaven and earth. The children who participated also

processed up to the statue of Our Mother Mary and placed a beautiful bouquet of roses at her feet. Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, pray for us!







## Welcome into the Church !



Congratulations and God's many blessings to the family of **Avery Keenan Franklin** who we welcomed into our Faith Community through the waters of Baptism. We wish for her 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.*



## Legion of Mary- Our Lady of Hope

Our members meet every Tuesday at 2:30pm in the Parish Offices at St. Theresa for prayer, planning and discussion in a group setting. In addition, our members go out to perform Spiritual Works of Mercy within our Parish and local community under the guidance of Father Chris.

Our Lady of Hope, pray for us!

## Pray the Rosary with the Legion of Mary at St. Andrew

All are invited to join members of the Legion of Mary Prayer Group as they lead us in the recitation of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary **every Friday at 11:30am at St. Andrew Church**. Join us for the rosary, and if you are able, stay for the Daily Mass. "Parishioners who pray the rosary and receive the Eucharist together will unite and strengthen our Parish."

~Father Arthur from Our Lady of Wayside Church



## Reflection Question of the Week ~ 5th Sunday of Easter

In today's Gospel Jesus gives a simple command but one that we often find difficult to live by: "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." Notice Jesus' words. We can't be content with being nice to others, simply saying that we love others. Our love must move from words to actions. We are to love others in the same way Jesus loves - with mercy, forgiveness and compassion! That is what is so needed in the world today. Imagine what life at home, in this parish and in the world would be like if each person were to take this command to heart. That is the mark of a disciple. That is what we are called to – to be loving as Jesus loves! To help others come to know Jesus, we must speak about Him in our daily lives.

- Reflect on how we can better support each other in our faith. When we love and support one another, we live out our faith and strengthen the bond within our community.
- What does Jesus' command to love one another mean to you personally?
- Why is community support important in our faith journeys?
- What steps can you take to offer more support to those around you?



### 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

### Intentions for the week of May 24th-May 30th

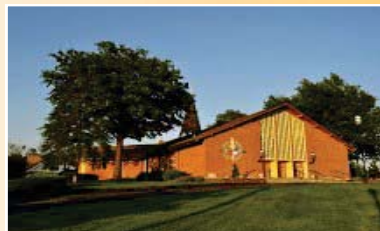
Deceased Members of the Sullivan Family-Memorial  
 Thomas H. McQueeney, Jr.-Memorial  
 Vincenza and Ignatius Angileri-Memorial  
 Lois Spencer-Memorial  
 Richard Berglund and Dina Honesty-Memorial  
 Manuel Maura and Family-Memorial  
 Maria Sousa-Memorial  
 Isabelle Botte-1st Anniversary  
 Mary Dyer-Birthday Memorial  
 MaryBeth Walls-3rd Anniversary  
 Tamie Abrahamson-Memorial



### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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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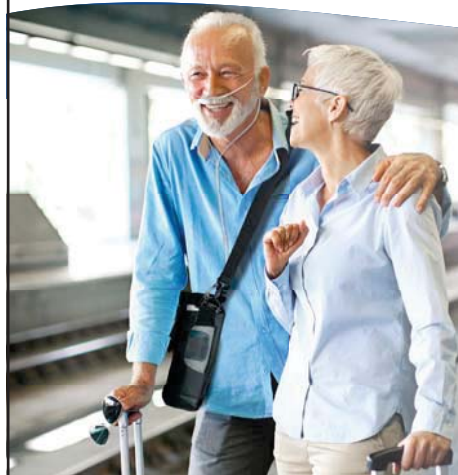
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- Fr. Richard Clancy

Pastor, River of Divine Mercy Parish  
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