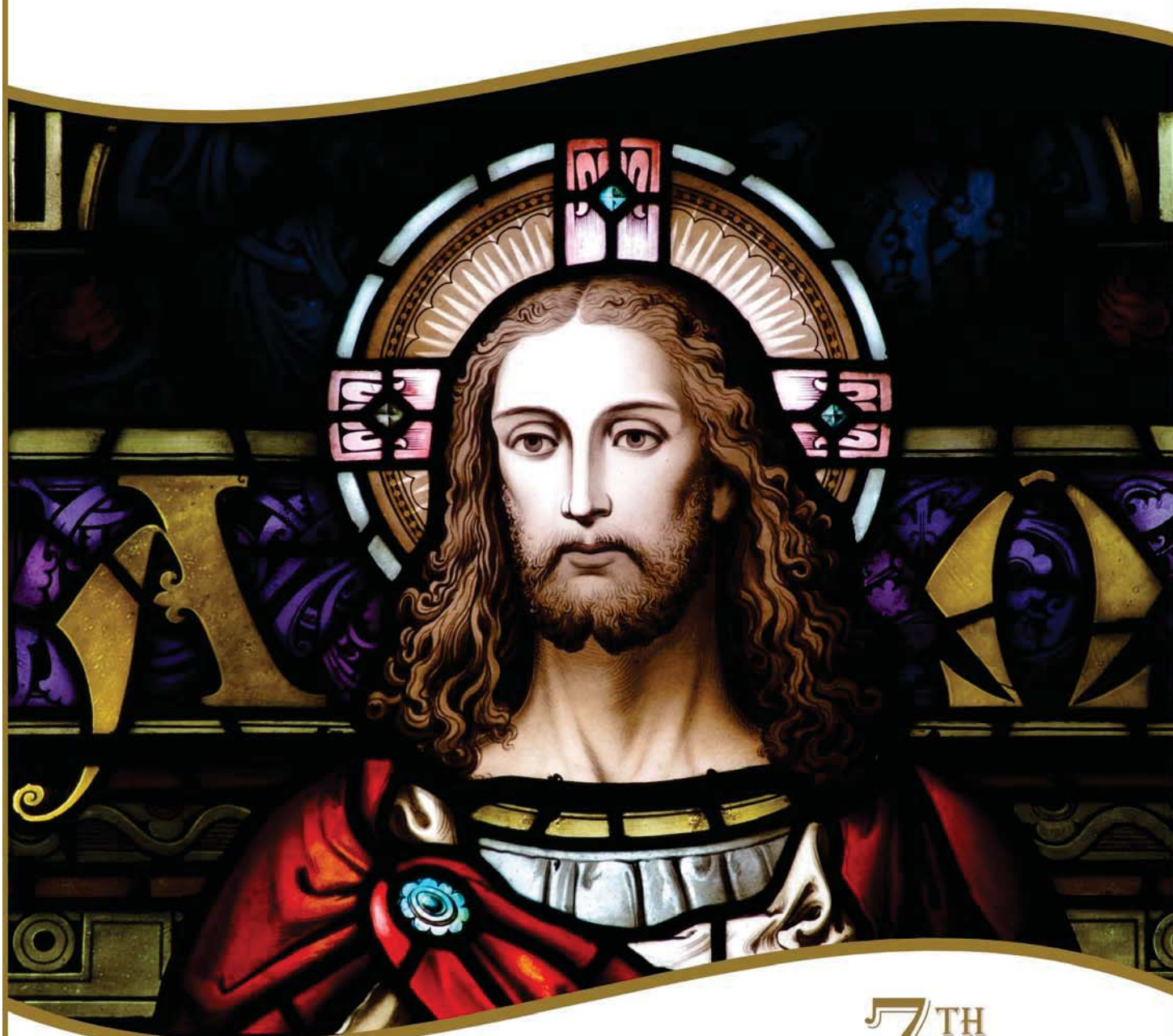


St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish
June 01, 2025



"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first
and the last, the beginning and the end."

Revelation 22:13

7TH
SUNDAY
OF EASTER



Dear Parishioners,

Today we celebrate the 7th Sunday of Easter, while many other parts of the country are celebrating the Ascension. Boston, along with the Dioceses of Hartford, New York, Newark, Philadelphia, and Omaha, Nebraska continue celebrating Ascension Thursday on the original 40th day after Easter, which is always a Thursday. The rest of the country moved the Feast of the Ascension to the following Sunday. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops requested permission from the Vatican in 1999 for the change, and permitted Dioceses to make their own decision about celebrating the Feast on Thursday or Sunday. Our celebrating the Ascension on Thursday is not just proper to the Archdiocese of Boston, but in the Province of Boston, which includes what the Church calls the suffragan Dioceses in the province of Boston, which includes the Dioceses in Massachusetts, Boston, Fall River, Worcester, and Springfield, the Diocese of Burlington in Vermont, the Diocese of Manchester in New Hampshire, and the Diocese of Portland in Maine. So basically, the whole Northeast of the United States and the Archdiocese of Omaha in Nebraska celebrated the Ascension on Thursday.

One of the benefits of celebrating the 7th Sunday of Easter is that we get to hear the final part of Last Supper Discourses of Jesus... the "dinnertime conversation" He has with His Apostles after Judas leaves to betray Him, and before He goes out to pray and suffer His Agony in the Garden. These are beautiful and rich Scriptures... and today we read from Chapter 17. This Chapter concludes the Last Supper Discourses and if you have a "Red-Letter Bible", an edition of the Bible where all the words of Jesus are printed in red, you would see that this entire Chapter is spoken by Jesus. It is known as the "Priestly Prayer of Jesus". The Navarre Commentary writes "It is given that name because Jesus addresses his Father in a very moving dialogue in which, as Priest, he offers him the imminent sacrifice of his passion and death. It shows us the essential elements of his redemptive mission and provides us with teaching and a model for our own prayer. "The Lord, the Only-begotten and co-eternal with the Father, could have prayed in silence, if necessary, but he desired to show himself to the Father in the attitude of a suppliant because he is our Teacher [...] Accordingly this prayer for his disciples was useful not only to those who heard it, but to all who would read it".

It is significant to note what Jesus is praying for in this prayer He makes; again, quoting from the Navarre Commentary on John: "The Priestly Prayer consists of three parts: in the first (vv 1–5) Jesus asks for the glorification of his holy human nature and the acceptance, by the Father of his sacrifice on the cross. In the second part (vv. 6–19) he prays for his disciples, whom he is going to send out into the world to proclaim the redemption which he is now about to accomplish. And then (vv. 20–26) he prays for unity among all those who will believe in him over the course of the centuries, until they achieve full union with him in heaven." We read this section, vv. 20-26, in this weekend's Gospel.

Unity is one of the fruits of the faith. Love of God leads us to love for each other and love for each other brings unity. Differences on Holy Days of Obligation seem to speak to a Church divided, which is contrary to Jesus' desire. St. Augustine is credited with saying "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity." Jesus is concerned with making us all one in Him, not all the same. He concludes His prayer with these words: "*Righteous Father, the world...does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them.*" And when He had said this, He went out into the night to go to the garden, where the events of His Sorrowful Passion would begin.

~Father Chris

Donations Honoring our Loved Ones...



Every month, we will provide the opportunity to donate the Altar Bread (\$80.00), wine (\$50.00), candles (\$75.00), and missals(\$200.00) to be used in our parish that month. Please call the office if you are interested in donating one of these items as a memorial or "In Thanksgiving" for a family member or loved one.

The Month of June

Altar Bread– In Loving Memory of Jimmy Carter

from Frank Simione

Wine– In Loving Memory of Cornelius Fitzpatrick

from The Fitzpatrick Family

Candles– In Loving Memory of the Parents and Family of Stephen and Kay

Missals– In Loving Memory of the Parents and Family of Stephen and Kay



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/sfdxS4yBwxnK7w67>

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!

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!



Welcome into the Church !

Congratulations and God's many blessings to the family of **Rowan Johnson and Logan Matthew** 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.*



Anointing of the Sick

Just a reminder that the sacrament of the **Anointing of the Sick** is available the first **FULL** weekend of every month at **both churches**. Anointings will take place after all the Masses to any parishioner who needs this grace. Other dates are available by calling the Parish Office.



Why Go To Mass This Jubilee Year?

A Jubilee Year is for renewing and strengthening our relationship with God. At Mass, we receive Jesus in the Eucharist: body, blood, soul, and divinity. This communion gives us graces we need to live our Christian life. This Jubilee Year has hope as its theme. At Mass, we hear the Word of God and discover anew who Jesus is and why he is the source of our hope. Try going to Mass a little more often this year and see how your life could change. Pick up a Jubilee Year prayer card at the entrance to the churches. Remember this prayer throughout this Jubilee year.



Adoration Opportunities

All are invited to attend the Novena of the Sacred Heart to be held at **St. Andrew Church on Friday, June 6th at 7pm**. The evening will begin with the rosary and will be followed by the Novena, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities to spend some quiet time with Jesus.



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!

Saint Matthew Parish Christmas Fair Committee

1st Planning Meeting for the 2025 Christmas Fair



We are excited to announce that the Saint Matthew Parish Christmas Fair has been scheduled for **Saturday, December 6, 2025!!** Please mark your calendars to save the date for this important parish-wide event!! Planning for this year's Fair is about to get underway and we would like to cordially invite you to attend our first meeting next **Sunday, June 8, 2025 after the 11am Mass at Saint Andrew Church in Father Wilson Hall.** We are always looking for volunteers with fresh ideas to help with planning and organizing the biggest annual event for our parish. Please consider joining us next Sunday to learn about ways that you can contribute. Thank you in advance for your consideration and we look forward to seeing you there!!

With warmest regards,
Nina Chavez-Collins & Allison Laliberte
Saint Matthew Parish Christmas Fair Committee Co-Chairs

Have you tried Online Giving to Make a Contribution?

An easy, convenient and safe way to make a one-time or recurring donation



Online giving enables parishes to meet parishioners where they are in their lifestyle. Today, we spend a significant amount of time and our resources online. By using online giving, we invite parishioners to share in parish life. As a parish that seeks to serve, we want to provide you the convenience of being able to give the way you want, whenever you want.

Online Giving offers our parishioners the opportunity to make secure, one-time or recurring contributions from your bank account to our parish. Online Giving provides many advantages to you and the parish.



Go to billericacatholic.org/givenow to make your contribution, use the QR code to the right, or make a contribution from our website (choose GIVE) at the right upper corner.

Recurring donors have the opportunity to create an account to manage and view their transactions, make changes to their contributions, and also view contributions made. Currently, St. Matthew the Evangelist receives approximately 40% of contributions received through online giving!

Chris Kilburn is available to assist parishioners with any questions. Contact Chris at chris.kilburn@billericacatholic.org or **978-663-8816** Ext. 243.

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. 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.

Have you seen all that's been happening around the parish?

Check out these before-and-after shots of our newly repaired window at St. Andrew Church! We're thrilled with how it turned out. After completing the window, we turned our focus onto the Fr. Wilson entrance doorway area. Busy days continue as the work progresses. Our contractors – Barry Clifford of Clifford Construction and Dave Graziano of Graziano Masonry have been great coordinating together to make this project flow smoothly.

We also have been preparing for the Sisters arrival this week. WELCOME! Dino and Tom have been busy prepping the house and making sure all is ready for when they move in. From painting, to moving furniture, to going through the house top to bottom. Thank you, Dino and Tom, for all your hard work. Tom is building new stairs for the side porch – take a look, they are looking fabulous!





2025 Catholic Appeal... Forward in Faith

We are pleased to share that we have raised \$63,766 (88%) of our 2025 parish goal of \$75,800.

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

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.



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; and Parish Services (with assistance multiple times from various resources at the Pastoral Center – property management, legal, HR, and more). Saint Matthew has relied on the resources at Central Ministries many times, with their knowledge and assistance being invaluable to our parish.

If you have not had a chance to do so, please consider making your gift to the Appeal today by making 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!

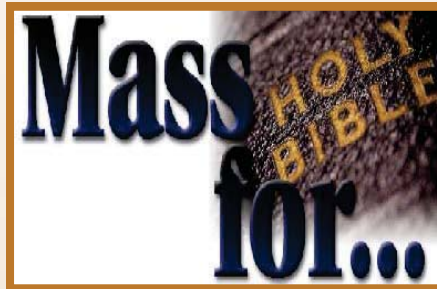
Reflection Question of the Week ~ 7th Sunday of Easter



Today's Gospel should be especially precious to us, for it is Jesus' prayer for us and for unity. He expresses his confidence in his disciples. Even though they didn't fully understand him; he knew that in a very short time they were going to abandon him in his hour of need. Yet to those very disciples he placed his confidence to spread his name throughout the world. The unity that Jesus prays for was not a unity of administration or organization. It was a prayer for a unifying love that binds us to one another in

Christ. This love we have for Christ spills over into all our relationships and unites us as one! To whom might Jesus be inviting us, his disciples to bring share that unifying love?

- Take a moment to reflect on how we can work together to reflect on God's love for us to build a stronger community.
- How does Jesus' call for unity challenge us in our daily lives?
- What are some ways I can share God's grace with others?
- How can I better support our church community?

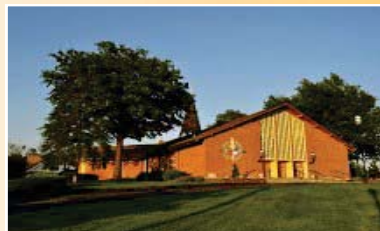


Intentions for the week of May 31st-June 6th

Deceased Members of the Caterino Family-Memorial
 Jeffrey C. Keane-2nd Anniversary
 Louis, Mariam and Paul Angileri-Memorial
 Vitorini Sousa and Family-Memorial
 Kathleen Murphy-Memorial
 Dennis Hill-Memorial
 Rebecca Miller-Memorial
 Kay Borek-Memorial
 Arthur Correa-Memorial
 Frank and Delores Porter-Memorial

Intentions for the week of June 7th-June 13th

Maryellen Margossian-13th Anniversary
 Sandy Silva-Memorial
 Charles and Dorothy Stetson-Memorial
 Vinod Anand-Memorial
 Allen McQueeney-Memorial
 Cynara Ferrao-Memorial
 Claire Fell-1st Anniversary
 Manuel Sousa and Family- Memorial
 Maria Sousa-Memorial
 Michael Mead-Anniversary



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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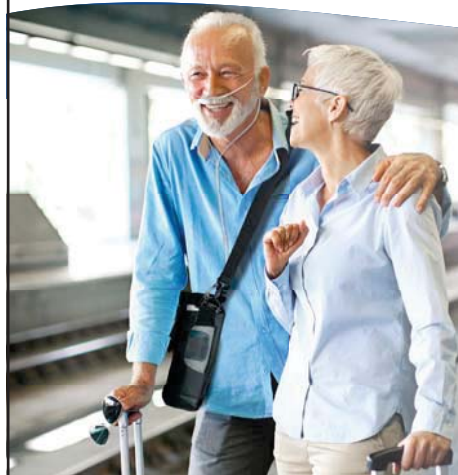
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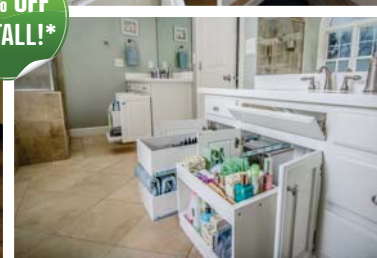
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- Fr. Richard Clancy

Pastor, River of Divine Mercy Parish
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