

*St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish*  
*July 20, 2025*

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time



“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.” Luke 10:41-42



Dear Parishioners,

The dictionary defines *hospitality* as “the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers.” Most of us practice hospitality when we welcome people into our homes. In the ancient world, however—especially in the time of Jesus—hospitality was more than a social nicety. It was a moral obligation, and in harsh desert conditions, often a matter of life or death.

The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* notes:

“In ancient Israel, hospitality was not merely a question of good manners, but a moral institution which grew out of the harsh desert and nomadic existence led by the people of Israel. The biblical customs of welcoming the weary traveler and of receiving the stranger in one’s midst was the matrix out of which hospitality and all its

tributary aspects developed into a highly esteemed virtue in Jewish tradition. Biblical law specifically sanctified hospitality toward the *ger* (‘stranger’) who was to be made particularly welcome: ‘For you were strangers in a strange land’” (cf. Leviticus 19:34; Exodus 12:49).

This Sunday’s readings highlight the spiritual dimension of hospitality. In Genesis, Abraham is visited by three mysterious guests. His eagerness to serve them—offering water, ordering food, and personally seeing to their comfort—is striking. The Church Fathers often saw in this scene a foreshadowing of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit visiting Abraham. It is also a sign of Abraham’s unique relationship with God. Through the Covenant, he becomes not just a servant, but a friend—one with whom God speaks face to face.

In Jewish tradition, the two companions of the Lord in this passage are understood to be angels. After their visit, the three go on to Sodom, where the city’s grave sin—among them a shocking failure of hospitality—leads to its destruction.

The Gospel offers a contrasting example. While Abraham runs to meet his guests with joy, Martha becomes flustered and frustrated. She welcomes Jesus into her home, but quickly becomes overwhelmed and resentful—focused more on the tasks of service than on the presence of her Guest. I always sympathize with Martha—I, too, often find myself in the kitchen at family gatherings. But Jesus gently redirects her attention:

“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, and it will not be taken from her.”

This moment challenges all of us. We are called to place our love for God above all else—not by neglecting others, but by allowing our love for God to shape and perfect the way we love one another. True Christian hospitality begins in the heart, with attentiveness to the presence of Christ in each person we encounter.

Hebrews 13:1–2 reminds us:

“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.”

And St. Paul, in his famous “Ode to Love,” writes:

“So, faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13).

May we grow in this greatest of virtues, and may our homes—and our parish—be places where Christ is always welcomed, and where strangers become friends.

In Christ,

*Fr. Chris*



## Jubilee Year 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

*Does the Jubilee Year stop because we have a new pope?*



**Not at all!** There is a long-standing tradition of popes supporting the initiatives of their predecessor. In fact, Pope Francis finished an encyclical on faith (*Lumen Fidei*) begun by Pope Benedict XVI when he retired! This Jubilee Year on hope will continue and we can expect to hear from the new pontif on his thoughts around the virtue of hope.

**You can learn more about the Jubilee and being signs of hope here: [bit.ly/JubileeOfHope](http://bit.ly/JubileeOfHope).**

## Welcome into the Church !



Congratulations and God's many blessings to the family of **Lyla Jean and Avery Hope** who 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.*

## Protecting Our Parish from Phishing Attacks



We continue to face challenges with phishing attacks. Email addresses are often scraped and used for account hacking or fraudulent emails. To help protect our community, our parish has removed email addresses from our website and bulletin, following the best practices recommended by the Archdiocese.

Once a single account is successfully hacked, it can be used to further compromise computer networks, applications, and even personal accounts. To help prevent this, the **St. Matthew** website now replaces email addresses with "**CLICK HERE**" links that take you to a secure contact form.

On **billericacatholic.org**, please go to the **ABOUT** tab at the top right, then select **CONTACT US** under **OUR PARISH**. You will find a **Contact Us** box that you can complete. Your message will be forwarded to the appropriate person or ministry. We ask that you include the name of the person or ministry you wish to reach in the comment box to help us direct your message promptly.

**Important:** If you ever receive an email from Father Chris or any other staff member asking for "help" or anything unusual, **please call the parish office first** to verify before responding.

Thank you for helping keep our parish community safe and secure.



## 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!**



## Registration for Faith Formation 2025-2026 is now OPEN!

We are ready for your family to register for our 2025-2026 Faith Formation ministry. We ask that you sign up now in order for us to better serve your family. **Once again, we are offering an incentive for those that register early!** At this time no commitment is required to a specific day and time. See all the information below for when classes will meet.



### What's the Next Step?

**REGISTER!** To take advantage of the EARLY REGISTRATION INCENTIVE, please **SIGN UP AND PAY IN FULL** by July 31st! Use the link or the QR code. <https://billericacatholic.org/2024-2025-faith-formation-registration>

### Registration Offerings

#### PRIOR to July 31st **\$50 SAVINGS**

1 child	\$110
2 children	\$210
3 + children	\$260 (CAP)
CONFIRMATION	\$160

#### AFTER August 1st

1 child	\$160
2 children	\$260
3 + children	\$310 (CAP)
CONFIRMATION	\$210

### As a reminder to help make your faith formation experience smoother:

The online registration form is intuitive, asking you only the questions that provide us the information we need. No additional on-line forms! All questions are on the registration form. Sign Ups for Gatherings can be changed in "real time" as your family schedule changes. There are multiple options for making your offering - pay now, partial payments, mail offering, and asking for financial assistance.



### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES for Faith Formation

Whether you are a student seeking service hours, a seasoned catechist, retiree, busy parent, first-time volunteer, or someone who is still on the fence about volunteering...EVERYONE IS WELCOME! Essential to the success of our Faith Formation ministry is having a dedicated group of adult and young adult volunteers willing to help and nurture our faith with our youth.

If you would like to learn more about volunteering opportunities in Faith Formation or other Parish Ministries, please reach out to the Parish Office at **978-663-8816** to discover how YOU can CHANGE the lives of children, young adults and families.

## Families of Faith: Learning and Living God's Love

We're excited to introduce some meaningful updates to our Faith Formation Program for the upcoming year—shaped by your helpful feedback!

Here's a preview of what's coming:

- **Grade 1: "Play and Pray"** Offered once per month on Sunday mornings, centered around the 9:30am Mass at St. Theresa. A joyful introduction to faith for our youngest learners!
- **Grade 2: "Mass and Class – First Sacraments Prep"** Meets once per month either Sunday morning or Sunday afternoon, with options centered around the 9:30am or 5:00pm Masses at St. Theresa. Families may choose the time that works best for them.
- **Grades 3–7: "Come and See Gatherings"** Monthly gatherings on either Monday or Tuesday at **4:00–5:15pm** or **5:45–7:00pm** in Fr. McCormick Hall at St. Theresa. *Weekend Mass attendance is strongly encouraged for all participants.*
- **Grades 8–9: "Teen Ministries – Confirmation Prep"** Meets once per month on Sunday evenings, centered around the 5:00pm Mass at St. Theresa.

This is just a brief overview—more details, including specific start dates and session times, will be shared soon as we finalize our plans. If you have any questions in the interim, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Parish Office at [978-663-8816](tel:978-663-8816). We look forward to another faith-filled year together!

*\*As in years past, children in Grades 1-7 must have one adult in attendance with them for class.*

## 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 July

**Altar Bread– In Honor of the Jubilee Year of Hope**

*from Frank Simione*

**Wine– In Loving Memory of Arthur E. Correa**

*from Barry and Jean Lombardo*

**Candles– In Loving Memory of Richard Grant**

*from The Grant Family*

**Missals– Still Available**

### 2025 Catholic Appeal

**THANK YOU SAINT MATTHEW FRIENDS!  
WE HAVE REACHED OUR 2025 GOAL!!**

**Thanks to the incredible generosity of our parish community, we have reached our Annual Appeal goal of \$75,800!** It has been several years (more than 6) since we have reached our goal). Because we met our goal, St.

Matthew will receive a rebate back to support our parish ministries directly. We are deeply grateful to the families who contributed. Your commitment to stewardship has been inspiring, with more parishioners giving (and giving more). Thank you! This success is not just a financial milestone—it's a reflection of your faith, generosity, and shared vision for our church, parish, and archdiocese. Thank you for your faithful support!





## A New Crucifix for Saint Theresa Church



We are excited to share that a new 10-foot crucifix will soon grace the front of Saint Theresa Church, taking the place of the Jubilee Year emblem that has faithfully adorned our church for the past 25 years. With the beginning of a new Jubilee Year in the Church, this is the perfect moment to lift high the Cross of Christ as a visible sign of our faith, hope, and love.

This beautiful crucifix is being custom-crafted from white oak, stained to match our church doors, and will feature a reverent corpus of Jesus. We are grateful to Barry Clifford and Clifford Construction for bringing their expertise and care to this sacred project.

We would like to invite individuals or families to consider making a donation toward the cost of the crucifix (approximately \$10,000). A gift may be made in memory of a loved one, or simply as an offering of devotion. We welcome one sponsor or several, and we will consider a small commemorative plaque.

If you are interested in contributing, please contact the parish office at [978-663-8816](tel:978-663-8816). May the Cross of Christ be our strength and our joy!

~ Fr. Chris

## House Blessing



Whether you have just moved into a new home or live in one that has been in your family for generations, it is always fitting to pray for God's blessing over your household — asking that your home be filled with peace, love, and faith.

When we bless our homes, we entrust them to God's protection, asking Him to watch over all who live there and to guard us from all harm, both bodily and spiritual. As Jesus said to His disciples: *"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.'"* (Luke 10:5)

If you would like to have your home blessed, please contact the parish office at [978-663-8816](tel:978-663-8816). We would be honored to help you invite God's peace and protection into your home.

## Marriage Blessings & Vow Renewals



Are you celebrating a special anniversary in your marriage? Whether it's your 5th, 25th, or 50th, we would love to rejoice with you! If you would like to renew your vows or receive a special blessing to mark this meaningful milestone, please contact the Parish Office at [978-663-8816](tel:978-663-8816). Let us celebrate the gift of

your marriage and pray for many more joyful years together!

## 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](tel: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.

## Anointing of the Sick



Just a reminder that the **Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick** is available on the **first full weekend of every month** at both churches.

The Anointing of the Sick is a beautiful sacrament of healing and strength. It brings the comforting presence of Christ to those who are seriously ill, facing surgery, growing weaker due to age, or suffering in mind, body, or spirit. Through prayer and anointing with holy oil, the Lord offers grace, peace, and courage to face life's trials, and sometimes even physical healing according to His will.

Anointings take place **after all Masses** and are offered to any parishioner in need of this special gift of grace.

If you or a loved one would like to receive the Anointing of the Sick at another time, please call the Parish Office at **978-663-8816** to make arrangements.

## Serve at the Table of the Lord



Have you ever felt called to share your gifts as a **Lector** or an **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion**?

Lectors proclaim the Word of God at Mass, helping our parish community hear and reflect on Scripture. Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist assist in distributing the Body and Blood of Christ, helping to nourish our parish family with Jesus' true presence.

We warmly invite new and returning volunteers to join these beautiful ministries. Training is provided, and all ministers must have a current CORI form on file.

If you are interested or wish to return to ministry, please contact the Parish Office at **978-663-8816** or [admin@billericacatholic.org](mailto:admin@billericacatholic.org) for more details.

## Pray the Rosary with the Legion of Mary



You are warmly invited to join in the **weekly recitation of the Rosary** every **Friday at 11:30 AM** at **St. Andrew Church**, led by members of the **Legion of Mary**. You are also warmly welcome to visit one of their meetings, held **every Tuesday at 2:30 PM** in the **Parish Offices at St. Theresa**.

Come pray the Rosary, deepen your devotion to Our Blessed Mother, and discover the beautiful mission and fellowship of the Legion of Mary. All are welcome!

**Our Lady of Hope, pray for us!**

## Reflection Question of the Week ~ 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time



BE THE REASON  
SOMEONE FEELS  
SEEN, HEARD, AND  
SUPPORTED.

Last week's readings encouraged us to consider our response to the neighbor. Today we invited to consider the ways of extending hospitality. In the first reading, Abraham enthusiastically welcomes and provides for three strangers who come to him. In addition to warmly greeting them, he provided them water to bathe their feet and had Sarah, his wife, prepare a meal for them. In the gospel, Jesus stops on his way to Jerusalem to visit Martha and Mary. Martha is intent on preparing a meal for Jesus while Mary chooses to sit quietly in Jesus' company. Hospitality takes many forms,

whether at home or in our parish. Often it requires that we step out of our comfort zone to make room for a stranger, or someone we know very well. Pay attention today - God may put a stranger in your path who offers you hospitality or someone may be right in front of you who needs hospitality from you. How will you respond?

- Reflect on the importance of being hospitable ~ offering our best to others. By doing this, we show respect, kindness, and a welcoming spirit.
- How can you show hospitality in your daily life?
- How do you handle frustrations when things don't go as planned?
- How can you support others facing hardships?



### Intentions for the week of July 19th– July 25th

Lucy Rupa-11th Anniversary  
Deceased Members of the Sullivan Family  
Guy and Charlotte Caltabiano-Memorial  
Manuel Maura and Family-Memorial  
Carmelin Casey-Memorial  
Kevin Corcoran-Memorial  
Jorge Perez-Memorial  
Robert Harrington-Memorial  
Michael and Jean Sidor-Memorial  
Thomas H. Conway, Sr.-50th Anniversary

### Intentions for the week of July 26th– August 1st

Paul T. Murphy-Birthday Memorial  
Deceased Members of the Sargent Family  
Maria Sousa-Memorial  
Vitorina Sousa and Family-Memorial  
Irene Bright-4th Anniversary  
Agustin Perez-Memorial  
Anne and Clyde MacDonald-Memorial  
Dottie, Kenny and Mary Ellen MacDonald-Memorial  
Carmella Casey-Memorial  
Robert Harrington-Memorial  
Joseph W. Sullivan-17th Anniversary  
James Patrick Leyner and the Danaher and Layne Family-Memorial  
Laure Gaade-4th 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***  
**Tom Mandile, *Maintenance Coordinator***

### **Youth Faith Formation Staff**

**Ann Carroll, *Director of Faith Formation***  
Ext. 226

**Karyn Moody, *Coordinator of Children's Ministries***  
**(*First Sacraments*)**  
Ext. 444

**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, *Music 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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