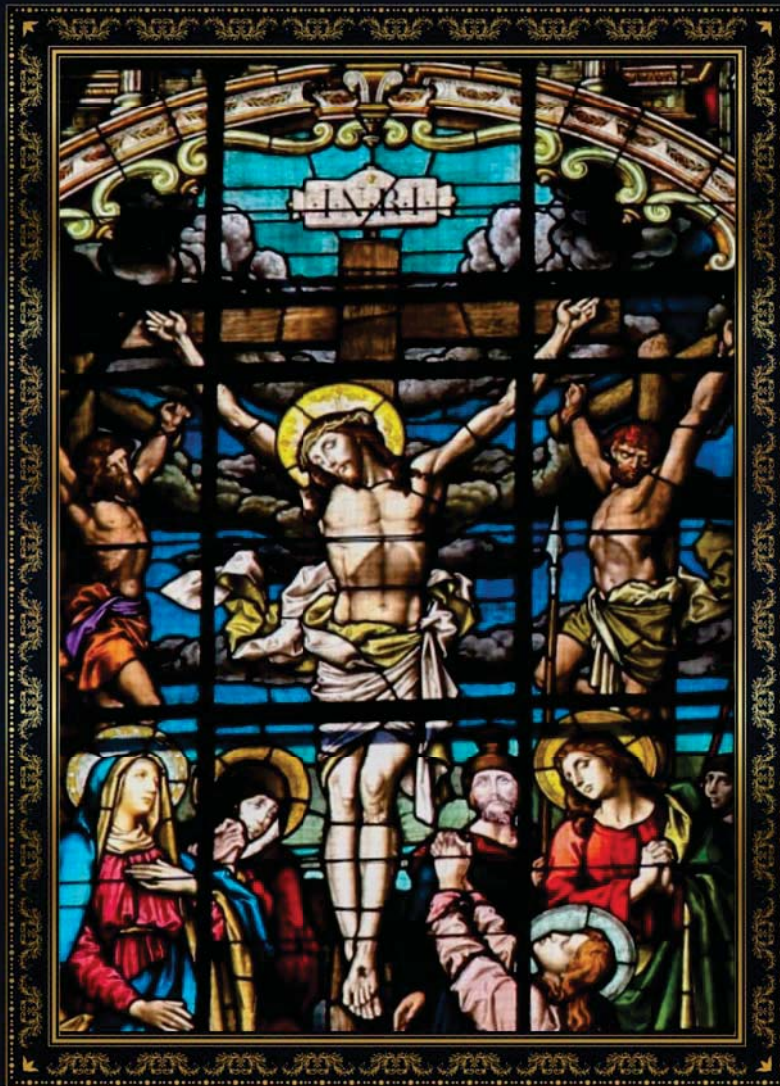


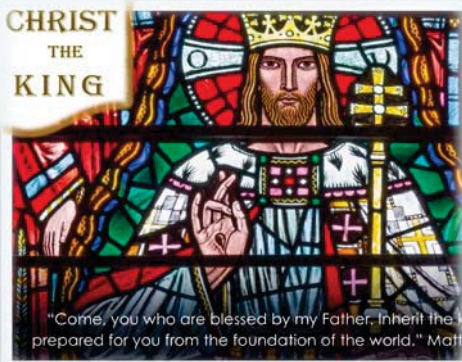
St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish
November 23, 2025

Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
King of the Universe



Amen, I say to you,
today you will be with me in Paradise.

Luke 23:43



Dear Parishioners,

This weekend the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe—the glorious crown of the liturgical year. Pope Pius XI established this feast in 1925 as a remedy for the rising tide of secularism, that subtle way of living “as if God did not exist.” The feast stands as a bold reminder that Christ alone is our true center, and that every part of our lives—our families, our communities, our nation, and even the Church—finds its meaning only when it is rooted in Him.

Pope Francis once preached beautifully on this feast, reminding us that at the end of all things, “in the twilight of life, we will be judged on our love, on our closeness to and tenderness toward our brothers and sisters.” If we truly love others, the Holy Father said, we will naturally want to share with them what is most precious to us: Jesus Himself and His Gospel. Christ’s kingship is unlike any earthly power; He reigns not by domination but by obedience to the Father, by pouring out His life for the salvation of the world.

True devotion to Christ the King, then, is not merely acknowledging His authority with our lips—it begins with imitating His works of mercy, opening our hearts to God’s charity, and letting His love shape the choices we make every day.

As we stand on the threshold of Advent and the joyful preparations for Christmas, this feast invites us to examine our priorities. In a culture that often measures the season by busyness, buying, and noise, we are called instead to choose the things that deepen faith, strengthen family, and reveal Christ’s love. Resist the temptation to let commercialism overshadow the spiritual beauty of these weeks. Cherish time with loved ones. Look for opportunities to serve your neighbor. Seek moments of quiet prayer. Allow the Lord to be the King of your choices, not only in church but in your home and your heart.

When God is first, everything else is ordered differently. If Christ is truly our King, then love becomes our way of life—love for God, love for family, love for the people He places in our path.

As we celebrate this feast, I also want to invite you to an important moment in our parish life. This year’s Parish Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday, December 6, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM in Fr. McCormack Hall. Many dedicated parishioners have been working for months to make this a joyful and successful event. I am deeply grateful for their generosity and enthusiasm. I hope you will join us—come for the fun, the fellowship, and the sense of community that makes our parish such a blessing.

May Christ, our King, reign in our homes, our parish, and most especially in our hearts.

~Father Chris

Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner and Service



Tuesday Night, November 25th, The Billerica Interfaith Association is hosting its **Traditional Townwide Thanksgiving Dinner beginning @ 6pm** followed by a **7pm Service**. **This will take place at First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church.** First Parish Church is located at 7 Concord Rd next to the community pantry and library. On this special night, religious leaders and members of choirs from more than seven different nearby religious organizations will gather together to celebrate the national

holiday our region made famous. Anyone who wishes to participate in our communal choir is invited to gather from 6 to 7 to practice. No RSVP is required. This is a rare opportunity for people from different faith communities to come together in the town’s oldest religious community. The collection on this day will fund our town’s Community Pantry.



ST. MATTHEW PARISH
CHRISTMAS FAIR

Baking Spirits Bright With This Christmas Delight!!

The Saint Matthew Christmas Fair is **Saturday, December 6, 2025** and is fast approaching!!! The Fair Committee is calling all bakers to donate delicious creations to be sold at the Bake Sale Table. Please make sure these items **DO NOT** require refrigeration, are wrapped in clear plastic wrap, and are labeled with what it is, if it contains nuts, and if it is gluten free. Donations can be dropped off on **Friday, December 5, 2025 from 1pm-6pm** or **before 9am on Saturday, December 6, 2025** at Father McCormick Hall behind Saint Theresa Church. Thank you in advance for sharing your culinary talents and let's bake together to make our parish Christmas Fair even sweeter!!



HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

We're thankful for all of our wonderful parishioners and hope you all enjoy time with family and friends.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED THURSDAY & FRIDAY

Fr. Chris, Fr. Jean, Fr. Romain, Fr. Theo, Deacon Al and our staff would like to wish all a Happy Thanksgiving. We are grateful and blessed for our parish community and pray that your blessings may continue to flourish. The PARISH OFFICE will close at NOON on Wednesday, November 26th and reopen on Monday, December 1st.



Thanksgiving Day Mass and the Blessing of Bread

St. Matthew Parish's Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated at **St. Theresa Church on Thursday, November 27th at 9:00am**. All are encouraged to bring any bread or rolls you are planning to serve at your Thanksgiving meal to be blessed at this Mass. As we "break bread" with family and friends on Thanksgiving, what a perfect time to recall the blessings that God has bestowed on us!



Giving Tree Gift Tags

The Catholic Community of Billerica has always opened their hearts and shared generously the blessings they have received with their support of the annual Giving Tree program. Parishioners are asked to please take a tag from the Giving Trees found at the entrances of the Church. We try to give each child, 16 or younger, a complete outfit along with a few of their wants and needs. All the families that benefit from this drive live in Billerica. Currently we have 84 children within 32 families signed up for aid, with additional families likely. The financial need of each family is confirmed. **Please return your gifts, unwrapped by the December 6-7 weekend**. Any gift cards are greatly appreciated and should include the dollar amount written on the gift card or tag. At this time, we do ask that Apple Gift Cards are NOT purchased. In addition, if you are unable to attend Mass and would still like to contribute to the Giving Tree, we would appreciate any monetary donation you feel you are able to make. Monetary donations should be made out to St. Vincent de Paul with Giving Tree on the memo line. **All monetary donations need to be received at the Parish Office by December 6th**. Thank you for your continued support and prayers for this important ministry.

Community Holiday Concert

Please join us in supporting the St. Matthew Choir, along with the choirs from our neighboring faith communities, as they lead us in beautiful renditions of traditional Christmas choral music and scripture readings of the Christmas Story. This special Ecumenical Christmas Concert will take place on **Sunday, December 7th at 6:00pm** at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, located at 70 Concord Road, Billerica. All are welcome. Light refreshments will be served.

Advent Evening of Reflection with Sister Jacqueline Jean-Marie Gitonga, FSP

Thursday, December 11 | 7:00 PM | St. Theresa Church



As we journey through this holy season of Advent, all are invited to an evening of reflection and prayer led by Sister Jacqueline Jean-Marie Gitonga of the Daughters of St. Paul.

Born and raised in Kenya, Sister Jacqueline discovered her vocation during her graduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urban-Champaign. She holds a doctorate in Human Resource Development and has dedicated her religious life to evangelizing through modern media and spiritual formation. As a member of the Daughters of St. Paul for about 12 years now—a congregation founded to proclaim Christ through the means of communication—

she has been missioned in St Louis, Chicago, New Orleans and is currently stationed at the Provincial House of the Daughters of St. Paul in Jamaica Plain, serving on the Provincial leadership team as well as the National Director of the Pauline Cooperators, a lay Association of the Pauline Family.

Sr Jacqueline enjoys meeting people from diverse cultural and faith backgrounds, writing prayer poetry, cartooning and music, baking, traveling, watching movies, hiking and the outdoors. Sr Jacqueline's joyful witness bridges cultures and generations. She has contributed to the book *Millennial Nuns: Reflections on Living a Spiritual Life in a World of Social Media* and has spoken widely on faith, vocation, and bringing Christ to others through everyday life and technology.

Come and be renewed in hope as Sister Jacqueline helps us to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord with her Advent reflection: "*Seeking Holiness: Incarnating Christ in our Media World Today.*" All are welcome. Bring a friend and join us for prayer, reflection, and light refreshments.



NATIVITY DISPLAY- Come Let Us Adore Him

Saint Vincent de Paul would like to celebrate the Advent Season by inviting you to reflect on that very first Christmas by visiting their display of nativity sets in the front entryway of St. Theresa Church. This collection of **Nativity Sets will be available for viewing on Saturday, November 29th from 2-6pm and Sunday, November 30th from 8am-6:30pm.**

2025-2026 GRAND ANNUAL COLLECTION



The Grand Annual Collection, *Rooted in Faith...Growing in Community* is an integral part of the financial structure of St. Matthew Parish. The success of our parish is a tribute to each of the people who celebrate their faith with us.

We pray that with a generous sharing of time, talent, and treasure on the part of all our parishioners, we can continue to make progress growing our parish. Please know how important your continued support is in the collection each week. Our Grand Annual Campaign is essential to sustaining our home. This campaign is vital for balancing our operating budget and ensuring our financial stability, particularly after a decrease in contributions to this campaign last year.

Registered parishioners should receive the 2025-2026 Grand Annual letter and donation envelope in the mail this week. **If you did not receive this mailing then you are not registered in the St. Matthew Parish database.** You may contact the Parish Office by calling **978-663-8816** or by e-mail at admin@billericacatholic.org to register. Grand Annual packets are available at the entrances to the church.

Parishioners can place their 2025-2026 Grand Annual donation envelope in the offertory at Mass or mail it to the Parish Office. You may also make a donation online at www.billericacatholic.org and select GIVE in the top tool bar (<https://billericacatholic.org/givenow>) or use the QR code to the right. We thank you for your support and pray God continues to bless you and your family!

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study 2025 Advent

All are invited as Deacon Al leads a study of Advent through the eyes of Scripture and Church Tradition, as reflected in the Sunday readings. The sessions will present the themes of each week's readings and do a deep dive into their meaning for the Christians of the past and for us today. The sessions will be held **every Monday evening from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in Father Wilson Hall at St. Andrew's Church, beginning on December 1st through December 22nd.** Reach out to the Parish Office with any questions or to sign-up at [978-663-8816](tel:978-663-8816) or admin@billericacatholic.org. Please note that you don't have to sign up to come; we just would like a rough head count.

Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Financial Report to Parishioners



We are pleased to present the 2025 Annual Financial Report to the parishioners of St. Matthew Parish. This report reflects the fiscal year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025. It tells the story of a vibrant, growing faith community strengthened by worship and fellowship and committed to our love of God and our neighbor. The Annual Financial Report (AFR) typically presents numbers – and there are plenty of those! But there is more to the story. In FY2025 we celebrated a 15% increase in Mass attendance, giving thanks and welcoming those to worship and find a spiritual home at St. Matthew.

Some highlights from the report :

We are very grateful for our parishioners who continue to contribute to the parish with dedication and commitment despite continuing challenges in today's world. Although our offertory increased in FY 2025, we continue to fall short meeting our monthly expenses. FY2025 saw higher than normal increases in the cost of gas and electricity resulting in increased utility costs for the parish. Every effort is being made to monitor these costs and other expenses.

The FY2026 Budget shows a deficit. While we continue to be good stewards of our resources, we need to grow parish revenue in an effort to balance our budget. St. Matthew is pleased to offer online giving to easily provide the means for one-time as well as recurring gifts!

<https://billericacatholic.org/givenow>

The following Capital Expenditures are noted:

- St. Theresa parking Lot Crack fill, Sealcoat, and Line Striping
- Completion of the Saint Mary Prayer Patio at St. Theresa Church
- Removal and pruning of trees at the Convent at St. Andrew Rectory
- Completion of AC installation at both churches
- Replacement of Saint Andrew rectory porch stairs
- Sound system repairs at both churches
- Repair and replace crash bars on doors at St. Theresa church

The major phase of work is now completed and we do not anticipate large capital expenses in the near future. Through careful stewardship and the use of reserves, the parish remains well-positioned to continue its mission. Funds for these capital expenditures came from savings the parish had from the sale of St. Mary Church and the bequest from the Arsenault Trust.

We are deeply grateful to all who continue to give so faithfully, supporting the mission and maintenance of our parish. **Copies of the 2025 Annual Financial report are available for parishioners at the entrances of the church, by using the QR code provided, or viewing the Annual Financial Report on our website – billericacatholic.org. Contact Chris Kilburn, Director of Finance and Operations with any questions at 978-663-8816.**



Cheverus Award Recipients 2025

In the bicentennial year of the Archdiocese of Boston (2008), Cardinal Seán O'Malley established the **Cheverus Award Medal** to honor those whose quiet, faithful service has strengthened the life of the Church. The medal, bearing the image of Bishop Jean-Louis Anne Magdelaine Lefebvre de Cheverus—the founding Bishop of Boston—and his motto "*Diligamus nos invicem*" ("Let us love one another"), is presented annually at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross on or around the Solemnity of Christ the King.

This year's ceremony will take place on **Sunday, November 23, 2025, at 3 p.m.**, and we are delighted to share that **three members of St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish** have been selected to receive this distinguished honor.



Deacon Allan Shanahan

Ordained a Permanent Deacon in 1986, Deacon Al has served the Catholic community of Billerica for nearly forty years. He ministered for 28 years at St. Mary Parish and has continued his diaconal service at St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish since its unification. Over the decades, he has presided at more than 1,000 baptisms and shared deeply in the sacramental and pastoral life of our parish—through baptismal catechesis, marriage preparation, adult faith formation, RCIA, Bible study, and preaching. Known for his pastoral heart and faithful witness alongside his wife Judy, Deacon Al embodies a lifetime of humble service to God's people.

Kevin and Jessica Roy

Kevin and Jessica have shared their faith and generosity with our parish for more than two decades. Together they are members of the **Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem**, reflecting their deep commitment to the Church's universal mission. Kevin, a Middlesex County Sheriff and President of the Franco-American Day Committee in Lowell, has been honored for his civic leadership and for restoring sacred art and statuary within our parish. Jessica, a dedicated Billerica Public Schools teacher, serves on the Parish Events Committee, helping to foster community and hospitality. Married and raising five children active in parish life, the Roys are a true witness to Catholic family faith and service.

Chad and Allison Laliberte

Since moving to Billerica in 2012, Chad and Allison have given generously of their time, faith, and professional gifts to the Church. Allison, Academic Dean and Spanish teacher at Pelham High School, serves on the Parish Pastoral Council and co-chairs the parish Christmas Fair, our largest annual fundraiser. Chad, Senior Corporate Counsel at Johnson & Johnson, serves on the Parish Finance Council, helping ensure wise stewardship of parish resources. Together they bring a joyful spirit of collaboration and hospitality that continues to enrich the life of our faith community.

We congratulate **Deacon Allan Shanahan, Kevin and Jessica Roy, and Chad and Allison Laliberte** on this well-deserved recognition. Their faith, generosity, and dedication reflect the motto of Bishop Cheverus himself—"*Let us love one another.*" Let us join in praying for them and giving thanks for the many ways they strengthen our parish and the wider Church.

~Father Chris

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Drop Off Event!

Join Us For Advent Fun Day



Participants: Ages 3-12

Leaders: Ages 13-18

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- Games and Activities
- Christmas Caroling
- Story Telling
- and more!

12/7/2025

12:00 pm - 4:45 pm

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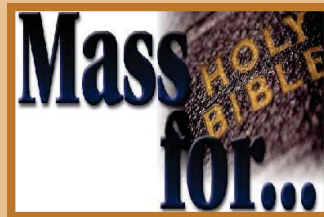
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Mass of Remembrance

What a beautiful and grace-filled evening we shared as our parish community gathered to remember and honor all of our loved ones who passed and were laid to rest within our parish family from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025. Each was remembered as their names were spoken aloud, the bells gently chimed, and a candle was lit in their honor—symbolizing the light of Christ that continues to shine in them and through us.

This Mass of Remembrance was a heartfelt reminder that while death separates us physically, we remain united with our loved ones through faith, prayer, and the promise of eternal life. May the Lord grant them eternal rest and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their families be filled with peace, consolation, and the comforting presence of God, who heals every sorrow and renews every hope. With continued prayers and blessings for all our faithful departed, may we one day be joyfully reunited in Christ.



Intentions for the week of November 22nd-November 28th

Joseph E. Higgins, Sr.-9th Anniversary
Maria Sousa-Memorial
Joe Capen-12th Anniversary
Mary St. George-Anniversary
Raymond DeRosa-67th Anniversary
Freddy Sam-Memorial
Ralph Militello-Memorial
Joanne Hall-2nd Anniversary
Steven Arsenio-Month's Mind
Patrick J. McKinley-Memorial
Lisa and Lena Tamaro-Memorial

Intentions for the week of November 29th-December 5th

Eleanor Zawisza-35th Anniversary
Thomas R. Fitzgerald-10th Anniversary
William Tamulynas-Memorial
Josephine Tassone-Memorial
Zofia and Edward Wolnicki-5th Anniversary and Memorial
Rafaela (Rae) and Harold Gentner-Memorial
Sally DiRocco-3rd Anniversary
Dianne Rollins-Anniversary
Patrick and Yolanda Ferrera-Memorial
Charles Long and Steve Shunamon-Memorial
John Cataldo-1st 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 978-663-8816

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

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 of Music 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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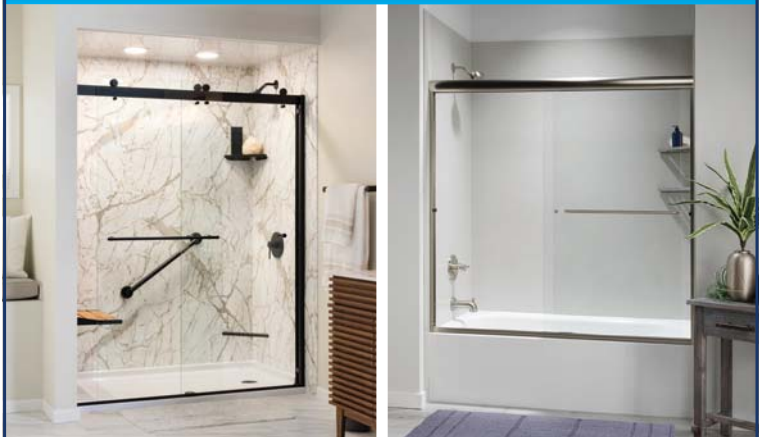
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