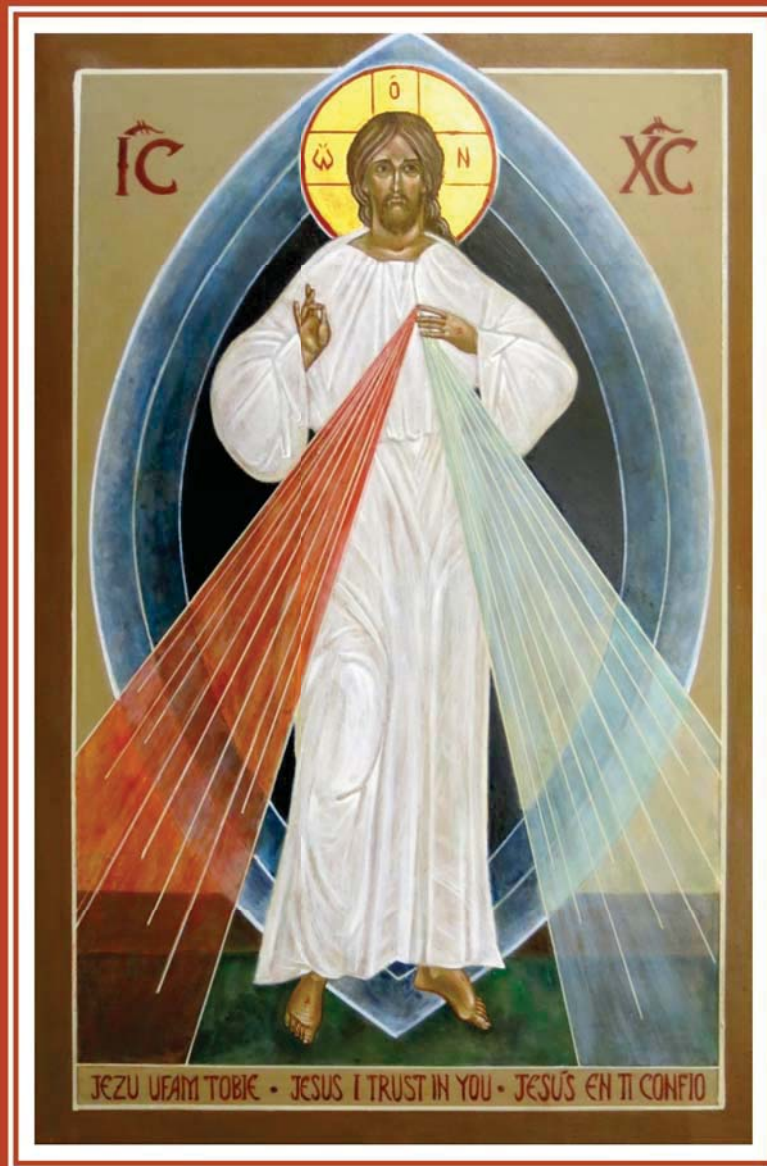


St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish
April 12, 2026



SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER – DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

"This is important: the courage to trust in Jesus' mercy, to trust in His patience, to seek refuge always in the wounds of His love."

- Pope Francis



Dear Parishioners,

He is risen! As we rejoice in the great feast of Easter, we enter into the beautiful Easter Season that lasts until Pentecost—truly Spirit-filled days! I hope that you and your families enjoyed a blessed Easter. Here at St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish, we celebrated the season in a truly special way.

Our children were a joy to witness during the Palm Sunday Procession, and Holy Week brought a flurry of activity as we prepared for the celebrations. Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil were each filled with beauty—from the magnificent decorations to the uplifting music. I was delighted to see our churches filled to capacity on Easter Sunday! This success was only possible because of the countless individuals who worked diligently behind the scenes. Their dedicated efforts embody the power of the Holy Spirit; when we open our hearts to God's Spirit, we are embraced by beauty, joy, and peace. While I hesitate to name everyone for fear of overlooking someone, I want to express my deepest gratitude to all who contributed to making our Easter celebrations so meaningful and heartfelt.

This Easter was particularly joyful as we welcomed one new member into the Catholic faith, Ashleigh. She was baptized, confirmed, and received her first Holy Communion at our Vigil Mass. As she joins our community, she brings

her unique gifts and experiences to serve God and His Church. We are truly enriched by her presence, and I know that you will all join me in welcoming her with open hearts, anticipating the wonderful contributions she will bring to our community.

Today, we also celebrate the Feast of Divine Mercy. The opening prayer beautifully states, "God of everlasting mercy, who in the very recurrence of the paschal feast kindle the faith of the people you have made your own, increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed, that all may grasp and rightly understand in what font they have been washed, by whose Spirit they have been reborn, by whose Blood they have been redeemed." Easter serves as a time for each of us to experience refreshment and renewal in the Spirit we received at Baptism and Confirmation, nourished continually by the Body and Blood of our Savior. Let us pray together for all those who returned to Mass for Easter after a time away, that the Spirit of God may touch their hearts and guide them toward the joy of the faith we cherish, along with the gift of His mercy that overflows for His children.

May God bless you and your families abundantly this Easter Season, as well as our St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish community!

In Christ's love,
Fr. Chris

Palm Sunday Weekend

Our parish was blessed to celebrate a truly beautiful **Palm Sunday** together as we entered into the holiest week of the year. The liturgy was both prayerful and moving, inviting us to walk alongside Jesus—from His triumphant entrance into Jerusalem to the solemn beginning of His Passion. It was a powerful reminder of the depth of God’s love and the journey we shared as a faith community through Holy Week.

Following Mass, the celebration continued with a **delicious Pancake Breakfast**, generously hosted by our wonderful Women’s Club and the Knights of Columbus. Parishioners of all ages gathered in joyful fellowship, enjoying a hearty meal filled with pancakes, eggs, and all the fixings. The warmth of community, laughter, and conversation made it a truly special morning.

We are so grateful to everyone who helped make the day so memorable—from those who assisted with the liturgy to the many volunteers who prepared, served, and cleaned up afterward. Your generosity and spirit of service continue to bring our parish to life.



Thank You from St. Vincent de Paul

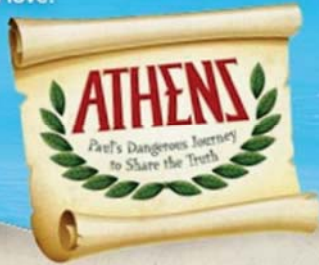
We would like to express our sincere thanks to The Women’s Club and all the parishioners who helped with the Bake Sale on Palm Sunday weekend. The members of SVDP want you all to know that because of your kindness and generosity we are able to answer the calls from the poor and those in need. In these very difficult times we have many requests for help with food, utilities, unexpected expenses, preventing homelessness, and providing resources. We take extra care to tell our neighbors in

need about your financial support to SVDP and always include you all in our prayers.

God Bless You All ~*St. Vincent de Paul Society*

THIS VBS WILL MAKE A SPLASH!

Grab a pair of sandals, your bathrobe, and your sense of adventure, and meet us in ancient Athens! We'll talk to the Apostle Paul to learn all about his dangerous journey to share the truth about God's love.



Father McCormick Hall, behind St. Theresa's

Location: (church name)

August 10 - 14, 2026

The adventure will last: (VBS dates)

8:30 AM

Celebration begins at: (VBS starting time)

12:00 PM

The day's adventure ends at: (VBS ending time)

978.663.8816 x226; www.billericacatholic.org

For more information, call: (church phone number)

BILLERICA CLEAN UP & GREEN UP

Social Justice Ministry Service Project

All are invited to join the St. Matthew Social Justice Ministry on **April 19th after the 11am Mass at St. Andrew**. They will be helping to clean Kohlrausch park along with the "Billerica Clean Up, Green Up" group. If you would like to help please bring boots and gloves. Please call the parish office at **978-663-8816** to RSVP. Food will be provided.



Adult Confirmation
Still not Confirmed?

Adult Confirmation

Are you an adult who has received the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, but has not yet been Confirmed? If you would like to enter more deeply into the Body of Christ, the Church, and complete the grace of Baptism to bear witness to the Catholic faith in word and deed, then Confirmation might be the next step in your spiritual journey. If you are interested, contact Dustin at **978-663-8816** or admin@billericacatholic.org.



St. Matthew Parish Women's Club Spring Raffle

April 19, 2026

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

St. Theresa Church in Fr. McCormick Hall

*Raffles will be drawn at 1:15pm

Our Spring Raffle will offer themed baskets, gift cards, and many more items to be raffled off! There will be craft vendors at this event as well. In addition, we will be offering many children's activities. Come and socialize, have a cup of coffee, a light breakfast, or lunch and check out the raffles.

We would like to continue our donations to the community and parish, but we need your help and support. Proceeds from the raffle will help to fund these donations to our Parish, SVDP, the Senior Center, our local Veterans and our yearly scholarships. If you would like to donate a raffle item for our table, please contact Ann Doherty at **(781)526-7341**, Mary Palumbo at **(978)821-3614** or admin@billericacatholic.org.

Is your child (Grade 4+) curious about our faith?
Was your child baptized, but has not received formal faith formation or
First Eucharist preparation?

This summer, we are offering small group faith formation for children who are older (current Grade 4+), but have not received First Eucharist and want to be fully initiated into the Catholic faith. Weekly sessions include the child and a trusted adult and encourage families to listen to stories from the Bible, talk about what was shared, pray, and finally, act out what you learned through fun and meaningful activities. The materials can be adapted for children of all ages. There is also a sacramental preparation component for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.

Coming Summer 2026

Contact:
admin@billericacatholic.org
for more information.



HELP NEEDED! St. Paul's Soup Kitchen - April 17th



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/FZOX7948>.

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 April 17th 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.



TWO College Scholarship Opportunities

The St. Theresa's Women's Club is honored to introduce the **Mary Keaney Scholarship Trust**, a new \$1,000 annual scholarship for parish students who plan to pursue a degree in education and become teachers.

Applicants must be registered members of St. Matthew Parish and have been accepted into a college or university with plans to study education. Applications are available at the Parish Office. We warmly encourage eligible students to apply and carry forward Mary's passion for teaching.

St. Matthew Women's Club Scholarship Applications are available at the Guidance Departments at BMHS and Shawsheen Tech, as well as at the Parish Office. Applications are due by **Friday, April 27. Two \$1,000 scholarships** will be awarded. All applicants must have been accepted into a college or university, be registered members of St. Matthew Parish, and have completed volunteer service within the Parish.

Join us for A Blessed Morning with the Legion of Mary



All are invited to join members of the Legion of Mary **Sunday, April 19th at 9:00am**, as they lead a reverent recitation of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary at St. Theresa Church.

In addition, you are warmly invited to their **weekly recitation of the rosary held at St. Andrew Church EVERY Friday at 11:30am** or to visit one of their meetings— every Tuesday at 2:30 PM in the Parish Offices at St. Theresa. Come pray the Rosary with them and discover more about the beautiful mission of the Legion of Mary. Our Lady of Hope, pray for us!

PROJECT RISE



Our friends in faith are again hosting a special distribution for our residents in need on **Saturday, May 2nd** at their beautiful Masjid on 246 Rangeway Road in Billerica from 10am-noon. With the way the status of the economy is, we are anticipating 250 families, if not more. This is a special distribution outside of the Community Pantry and is open to ALL in need. There is NO registration required, but an RSVP using email distsvp@gmail.com does help to anticipate how many will be in attendance.

We are working in conjunction with the other faith communities in town and each parish has signed up for specific items. St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish is specifically asking for **bottles of glass/window cleaner**. Donation buckets will be provided at the front entrances of both churches next weekend or you can stop by the Parish Office during business hours where you may drop off your items. **All donations are due by Sunday, April 26th** so that they can be delivered on the distribution date.

In addition, on May 2nd volunteers from each faith community are welcome at 9am to help distribute these donations. In years past we have gathered around the traffic circle at the Masjid and have multiple stations to load cars for recipients. This is a Great Day of community and socialization for all. If you are interested in participating in this Distribution Day, please reach out to the Parish Office at **978-663-8816** or admin@billericacatholic.org to sign up.



2026 Catholic Appeal ~Together We Are One

The Catholic Appeal continues and we are inching closer to our parish goal! A reminder, if we reach our goal, a percentage of those funds will be returned back to the parish. Currently, we are pleased to share that we have raised \$47,170 (60%) of our 2025 parish goal of \$79,000.

The outpouring of support from so many helps sustain the important ministries that make our parish a vibrant place to worship. 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 picking up an envelope in your pew, at the back of the church or make an on-line donation at www.bostoncatholicappeal.org, or by using the QR code. On behalf of Father Chris, Archbishop Henning and all who benefit from your generosity, "Thank You".



Thank you for your prayerful consideration of the 2026 Catholic Appeal.



A note from The parish nurses : Women's Health month

Women's health is often defined by reproductive milestones, yet it truly represents a lifelong journey encompassing physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Too often, women tend to tune out subtle health changes. Between work, caregiving, and other responsibilities, it's easy to want to ignore new symptoms or simply chalk them up to stress or getting older. But paying attention to early signals from your body — and acting on them — is one of the most powerful ways to protect your long-term health.

Here are a few health indicators women often overlook, along with signs it may be time to check in with a doctor:

Heart Disease Symptoms

[Heart disease is a leading cause of death for women](#). Yet signs of a heart attack in women can look different than the intense, sudden chest pain we often see portrayed on television. Pay attention to:

- Unexplained shortness of breath, nausea, or lightheadedness
- Unusual chest, jaw, back, or arm discomfort

Sudden fatigue that feels different from your usual tiredness

If these symptoms come on suddenly or feel more intense than usual — especially if they show up at times when you wouldn't expect to feel out of breath or exhausted — don't wait. Seek medical help right away.

Sleep, Energy, and Recovery Red Flags

Sleep is a powerful window into your overall health. Pay attention to how well you're sleeping at night and how rested you feel the next day. Talk with your care provider if you experience symptoms such as:

- Loud snoring, gasping, or waking up unrefreshed most mornings
- Needing more and more caffeine just to get through the day

Feeling wired at night but exhausted in the morning

These can be signs of breathing disturbances during sleep, persistent stress, or other sleep-related conditions that are treatable once identified.

Mood and Mental Health Shifts

Women are more likely to experience feelings of anxiousness or a low mood, especially during hormonal transitions like premenstrual syndrome (PMS), during and after pregnancy, and perimenopause. Reach out to a professional if you notice:

- Persistent sadness, irritability, or anxiousness
- Trouble enjoying activities you usually like

Changes in sleep, appetite, or concentration tied to mood

Support is not a sign of weakness; it's a core part of whole person health.

Remember, you know your body best. If a symptom feels new, more intense, or simply "not like you," make a point to have a conversation about it with a trusted healthcare professional.

Source : Premiere Research



Project Rachel Post-Abortion Healing Retreat

Are you-or someone you know-seeking peace after an abortion? The *Project Rachel* ministry of the Archdiocese of Boston extends a special invitation to women experiencing regret from a past abortion to attend a *Come to the Waters of Healing* one-day retreat Saturday, May 16. The location is confidential. More information is available at projectrachelboston.com/retreats. To register, contact *Project Rachel* at 508-651-3100 or help@projectrachelboston.com.



COURAGEOUS CATHOLIC WOMEN

The Courageous Catholic Women meeting will be held on **Monday, April 13th @ 7:00pm at St. Andrew Church** in Fr. Wilson Hall. This month's prayers and reflections will focus on "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" CCW is a women's prayer group that meets monthly to explore the Gospel, pray together, and support one another. Light refreshments are provided. Contact Fran Bilotta at admin@billericacatholic.org or (978) 387-3155 for more information.

Reflection Question of the Week ~ Divine Mercy Sunday



This Sunday, our scriptures give us clear instruction about how we are to live as disciples. In the reading from Acts, the author describes the disciples' way of life: "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers." Teaching, prayer and Eucharist, sound familiar? Nourished by prayer and our reception of Holy Communion may we be strengthened to bring the peace and mercy of Christ to others. Today, simply pray, "Jesus, I trust in you" and listen as Jesus replies "I trust YOU!"

- Remember and reflect that Jesus meets us where we are, even when we may have doubts. A strong faith community helps us to grow in our faith.
- What doubts do I struggle with in my faith journey?
- How can I show mercy and forgiveness to others?
- How can I better support my faith community?



Intentions for the week of April 6th-April 12th

John Charles Bertolucci, III-30th Anniversary
Claire Fell-2nd Anniversary
Eda "Edie" Venti Orr-Birthday Memorial
Cynara Ferrao-Memorial
Gertrude Higgins-Birthday Memorial
Lawrence Mazzie-Memorial
Constance Conway-12th Anniversary
Charles B. Long-7th Anniversary
Richard Silveria -1st Anniversary
Richard Conte-9th Anniversary
John Woods-20th Anniversary

Intentions for the week of April 13th-April 19th

Joseph M. Doherty-3rd Anniversary
Kathleen A. Ruggeri- Birthday Memorial
Louis J. & Phyllis Comeau-Wedding Anniversary
The Massaro & Avellani Families-Memorial
Isabella Botte-2nd Anniversary
Anthony J. Chella-Memorial
Anne Fillis-Memorial
Pamela Schell-Memorial
Christopher and Richard Pomerleau-Memorial
Sr. Mary Eugenia Memorial
Harold W. Blake, Jr.-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

Sean Reynolds, 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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"Jesus Wept." John 11:35

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"God is Love" 1 John 4:8

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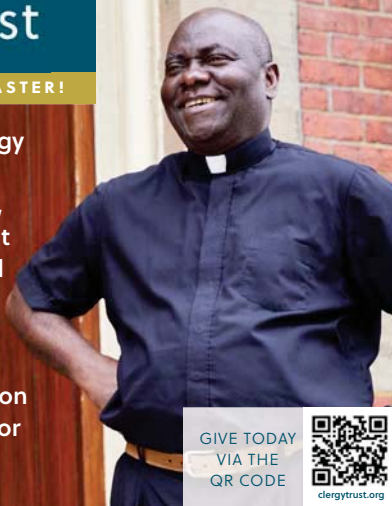
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