

Church of St. Theresa

A Caring Community Reaching Out To One Another in Christ

2855 St. Theresa Avenue, Bronx, New York

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday at 5:00pm,
Sunday at 7:30am, 9:00am(Italian),
10:30am(Family Mass) 12:15pm ,
1:30PM(Spanish) & 5:00pm

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday thru Saturday 8:00am & 9:00am

DEVOTIONS

Miraculous Medal & St. Theresa
Novenas after Monday morning Masses
St. Anthony Novena after Tuesday
morning Masses.

Thursday 12 Noon Mass
& Eucharistic Adoration

Exposition & Benediction of the
Blessed Sacrament First Friday 6:00PM

CONFESSION

Saturdays from 4:00pm to 5:00pm
and by appointment

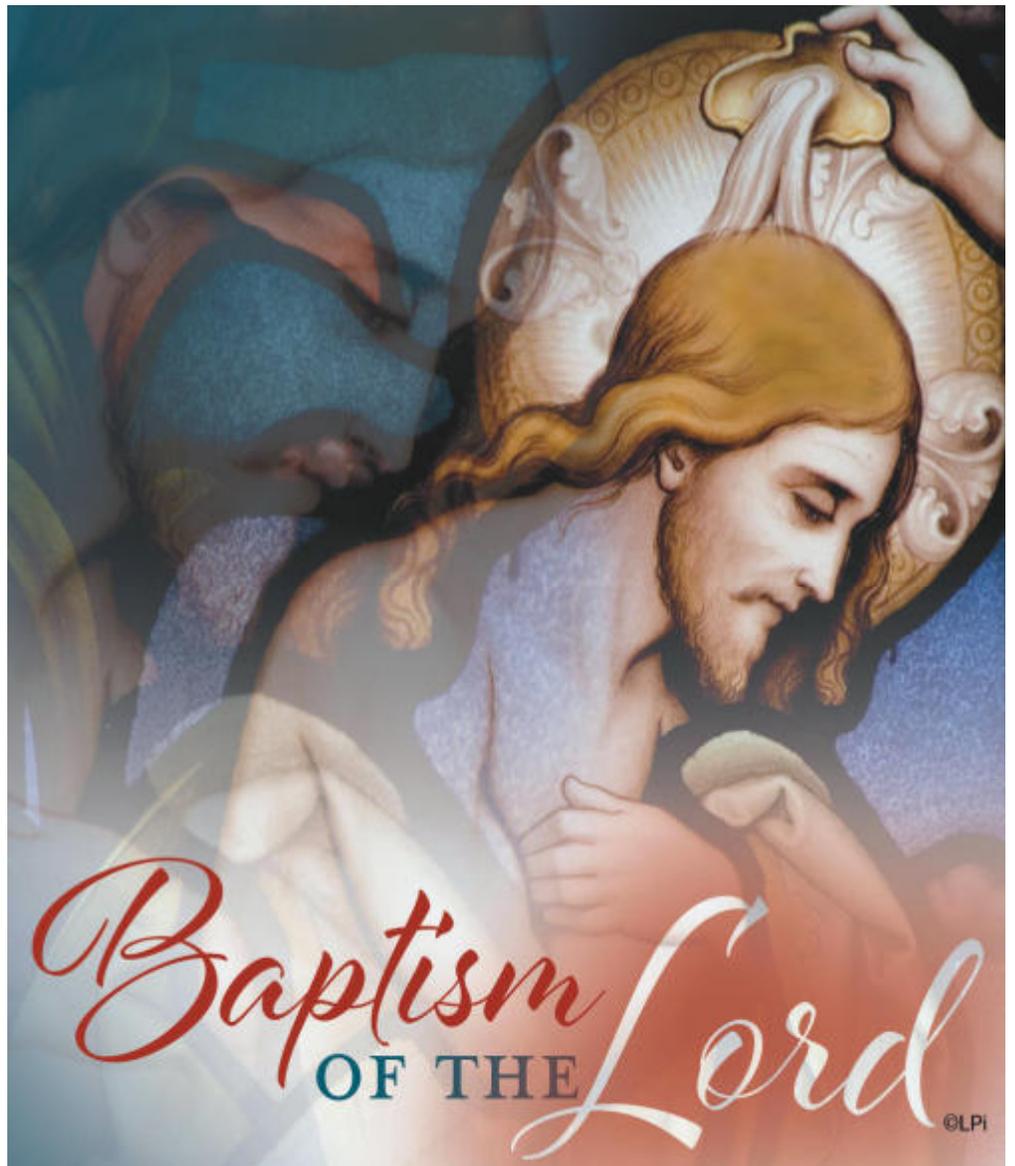
BAPTISMS

Baptisms take place most Sundays
after the 1:30pm Mass.
We ask parents to attend the Baptism
preparation meeting. Register at the
Rectory for the meeting.
The date of the Baptism will be discussed
at the Baptism meeting.

MARRIAGES

Call the Rectory at least six months in
advance of the wedding date to make an
appointment with parish clergy.

ST. THERESA'S FAMILY IS OUR FAMILY
"ST. THERESA STRONG"



Rev. Msgr. Thomas Derivan, Pastor

Rev. Joseph Ligory, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Edmundo Gomez, Retired,
Rev. Robert Imbelli, Weekend Associate

Mrs. Josephine Fanelli, Principal
Mrs. Marie McCarrick, Dir. of Religious Education
Nadia Papayani, Dir. of Music

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WEBSITE: www.sttheresachurchbronx.org
E-MAIL: rectorystc@aol.com

SCHOOL: 718-792-3688
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: 718-792-8434

CHURCH OF ST. THERESA, BRONX

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER DERIVAN

Today is the official ending of the Church's Season of Christmas. It is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Last week when we came to church, as you will recall, we celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany, the coming of the Magi with their gifts to worship the Infant Savior. The Church looks at today's feast as another Epiphany. Of course, the scene is so different. Last week we concentrated on the Infant Jesus; this week thirty years have passed and we look at the adult Jesus. Last week no words were said; this week the Father Himself speaks, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." Last week the scene of the Epiphany lasted only for a few moments as the Magi presented gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and then went back to their own country. This week is different—it is the beginning of Our Lord's public ministry, His preaching and teaching, His curing the sick and even raising the dead, and ultimately His suffering and death and glorious Resurrection for the salvation of the world. Perhaps the Church is telling us by putting these two feasts so close together that Jesus' whole life was an epiphany, a revealing of His Father's love for all of us. Jesus' whole life was an epiphany, which demonstrated the beautiful words of St. John that "God so loved the world that He gave us His only Son so that we may not perish, but have eternal life."

We meet two figures in the gospel today, One the Master, the other the messenger; One the Lord of heaven and earth, the other the man who said he was not worthy to untie the sandal of the Lamb of God; one the Author of Life, the other his humble servant. We meet Jesus and John the Baptist in the gospel today standing by the water of the River Jordan and something shocking happens. John had been baptizing people for the forgiveness of their sins. And now Jesus joins the crowd of people asking for baptism. And John is shocked, dismayed, amazed that the One he knew to be the Lamb of God, the Promised One, would ask him, John the servant, for baptism. Of course Jesus needed no baptism. He did not need the forgiveness of sins for He is the Sinless One who takes all sins away. John is perfectly honest in saying, "I need to be baptized by you and yet you are coming to me?" But Jesus explains, "John, you must do this for it is fitting to us to fulfill all righteousness." Righteousness meant following God's plan and the Lord Jesus is telling His cousin John that He is undergoing this baptism to show people how important baptism is. He walks in the crowd of people to show that He is one of us in all things but sin. Just as Jesus stood in the line of people to be baptized by John, He is telling us that He stands in our line of life, always with us, never abandoning us. And God the Father speaks from heaven, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased. This is my beloved son and I am pleased with His plan to save the world."

Two figures—John and Jesus, One the Son of God, the other a person like us. But one thing is common to them both—both Jesus and John are humble. John has the humility of saying that He is just the servant. But Jesus has the humility of undergoing baptism for us. Today's feast teaches us the importance of being God's humble people, like Jesus and John, both ready to do the Father's will. That must be true of all of us. We must be ready not to think of ourselves, but to think of the Lord and His goodness and His merciful love.

Humility is what John the Baptist was all about. Humility is what Jesus is all about. And humility must be what we are all about too. Some time ago our Holy Father Pope Francis spoke about humility. He emphasized that the way of Jesus is always one of humility. To use the Pope's words, "That is the path of Jesus Christ: lowering yourself, being humble. If a thought, if a desire takes you along the road of humility and service to others, it is from Jesus." May we strive every day to be God's humble people so that he may say of us, as He said of His Son on this day, "This is my beloved son, my beloved daughter with whom I am well pleased."

Father Thomas B. Derivan

SAVE THE DATE!



Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Dedication of the "New" St. Theresa Church

Sunday, May 17, 2020

Mass at 12:15PM

Tour of our school to follow

Dinner in school auditorium

Tickets will soon be available

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER DERIVAN: THIS YEAR, A SPECIAL CELEBRATION

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Theresa Parish:

Over ninety years ago in 1927, St. Theresa Parish was established by Monsignor Felitti. How blessed our parish has been since those humble beginnings! How much has changed in the world and right here in our community since the day when our parish was established! Our parish has celebrated wonderful times, but it has also faced hard times, but the determination of our parishioners continued and grew, even when the tragic fire destroyed the old church in 1965. If anything, the determination of St. Theresa's parishioners grew stronger. Those parishioners—some of you among them—built our beautiful new church which stands forth in our community as a testimony of our faith and our determination, in the words of our parish motto, to keep **“St. Theresa Strong!”**

Our current church (known to our older parishioners as “the new church”) was dedicated on May 17, 1970. This year we celebrate the **50th Anniversary of our current church.** We give thanks to God for the blessings that He has given to our parishioners during those fifty blessed years. When the old church burned down, Monsignor Ponsiglione pledged to rebuild St. Theresa's church and to make it a fitting place for the worship of Almighty God. I am sure that you will agree that Monsignor accomplished that task. Our current church is a tribute to Monsignor Ponsiglione's vision and to his determination to keep **“St. Theresa Strong.”**

We will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the dedication of “the new church” on Sunday, May 17, 2020. We will mark that “50th birthday” of the new church with Mass at 12:15PM, followed by a tour of our school and a display of memorabilia which will be placed in the school lobby. Afterwards, for those who wish to attend, there will be an “Anniversary brunch” in the auditorium. Ticket information will be available shortly, both on our website and in our parish bulletin.

Please save the date—May 17—and pass the word on to former parishioners and friends and family members. We want to make that day a true celebration of the life of St. Theresa's Parish, past, present and future.

The theme of our Anniversary celebration will be:
“Fifty Years of Grace in Christ in Our New Church.”

May the Lord continue to guide our parish. Every time we come to our church, let us remember those who sacrificed so much to make it possible. And may we do our best to carry on their love for this parish and to keep **“St. Theresa Strong!”**

God bless you!
Father Thomas B. Derivan



**JANUARY 17
SAINT ANTHONY OF EGYPT
(251-356)**

The life of Anthony will remind many people of *Saint Francis of Assisi*. At 20, Anthony was so moved by the Gospel message, “Go, sell what you have, and give to [the] poor” (Mark 10:21b), that he actually did just that with his large inheritance. He is different from Francis in that most of Anthony's life was spent in solitude. He saw the world completely covered with snares, and gave the Church and the world the witness of solitary asceticism, great personal mortification and prayer. But no saint is antisocial, and Anthony drew many people to himself for spiritual healing and guidance.

At 54, he responded to many requests and founded a sort of monastery of scattered cells. Again, like Francis, he had great fear of “stately buildings and well-laden tables.”

At 60, he hoped to be a martyr in the renewed Roman persecution of 311, fearlessly exposing himself to danger while giving moral and material support to those in prison. At 88, he was fighting the Arian heresy, that massive trauma from which it took the Church centuries to recover. “The mule kicking over the altar” denied the divinity of Christ.

Anthony is associated in art with a T-shaped cross, a pig and a book. The pig and the cross are symbols of his valiant warfare with the devil—the cross his constant means of power over evil spirits, the pig a symbol of the devil himself. The book recalls his preference for “the book of nature” over the printed word. Anthony died in solitude at age 105.

In an age that smiles at the notion of devils and angels, a person known for having power over evil spirits must at least make us pause. And in a day when people speak of life as a “rat race,” one who devotes a whole life to solitude and prayer points to an essential of the Christian life in all ages. Anthony's hermit life reminds us of the absoluteness of our break with sin and the totality of our commitment to Christ. Even in God's good world, there is another world whose false values constantly tempt us.

HOMEBOUND

If any member of your family or if any of your neighbors are “Homebound” and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please call the Rectory so that a Priest or Eucharistic Minister might visit them.

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INFORMATION ABOUT ARRANGING BAPTISMS IN OUR CHURCH

Each year as we observe the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, as we do today I think it is important to present the following information to explain our procedure for the Baptism of children here in St. Theresa Church. Please share this information with Catholic friends and neighbors who either are expecting babies or have recently had a new-born.

1) Baptism is the beginning of the Christian life. **A child should be baptized as soon as possible after birth.** Some parents, for whatever reason, delay the baptism of their children until the children are one or two years of age or older. This is not the practice of the Church. We believe that we should share our faith with children from infancy. Just as a child exists as a member of his or her family from birth, the child should be part of God's family, the Church, as soon as possible after birth. The child should be baptized within a month after birth.

2) Parents should realize that **the baptism of their child is the beginning of the journey of faith.** Sadly many people look at the baptism ceremony as simply the occasion of a celebration, a family gathering, a party. Those things are fine as long as we see that Baptism is the beginning of the process of training children in the faith. Parents should bring their infants to Mass. Our Lord himself said, "Let the little children come unto me." (If the child has some difficulty, a parent can bring the child into the vestibule to calm the child down.) There is no reason not to bring the child to Church. The child should see the Church as God's house, but also as his or her house, the house of prayer where we come to show our love for God Our Father. When parents bring their children to Sunday Mass, they are teaching them a lesson which they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

3) When parents are selecting **godparents** for their children, they should pick wisely. A godparent should be like a "second parent" to the child in matters of faith. The godparent should not just be there for the baptism ceremony and then no longer be part of the child's spiritual life. The godparents should encourage the child to grow in faith, to come to Mass, to receive the other sacraments. Sometimes a godparent does this so well that when the child comes to the time of selecting a sponsor for Confirmation, he or she picks the godparent from baptism. Unfortunately some godparents do not live up to their responsibility. Sometimes parents ask afterwards, often years later if they can change the godparents for this reason. They cannot do so. Once the godparents are godparents, they remain godparents. Therefore, parents must pick wisely, usually a relative or long time friend. To make it clear, our usual custom is to have two godparents, a man and a woman (although only one is necessary). At least one must be a practicing Catholic. If the other is not a Catholic, that person accepts the role of being a "Christian witness" and accepts the responsibility of encouraging the child to grow in the Catholic faith. Parents should select relatives or long-time friends as godparents for their children.

4) In the baptism ceremony, we remind parents that they are "the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith." **Parents should make their home a "little church."** Pope Francis, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope John Paul II have all called the family "the domestic church, the Church of the home." The child should grow up seeing a crucifix in the home, a statue of Our Lady, a picture of a favorite saint, and other religious articles. When the child gets older, parents should read to him or her from a Children's Bible. Prayer should be the ordinary thing in the family. Before bed, parents can pray briefly with their children. It does not have to be long prayers, just a simple talking with God. And of course the best of family prayers is the Rosary. How wonderful it would be if each family said a decade of the Rosary together each night, parents and children together, remembering that "A family that prays together stays together."

5) When the children are old enough (i.e., First Grade in school), they should begin their **formal religious education**, either in our CCD Program for public school children or in Catholic school (where religion is taught daily). Parents should not put off the religious training of their children. The policy of the Archdiocese is that children must be in their second year of religious instruction in order to prepare for **First Holy Communion**. Since the proper age for First Communion is Second Grade, children should begin religious education in Grade 1. Please bring this to the attention of friends who may have children in public school.

6) **Obviously children should come to Mass every Sunday or Saturday evening.** I mentioned above about bringing little children to Mass. This, of course, is true of older children as well. Since children can generally not come to Mass by themselves, they depend on parents to bring them. Parents should not let anything get in the way of coming to Mass on Sunday with their children. The saddest thing to hear from children is the statement, "I wanted to come to Mass on Sunday, but no one would take me." Of course there are so many things to do, but Mass should be the priority. **There is nothing more important than praising and thanking God each Sunday.**

7) In our parish, parents are asked to attend the **BAPTISM PREPARATION CLASS** when they wish to arrange the baptism of their child. **Parents should register for this class by filling out the proper form at the rectory.** When they attend the class (which is usually on alternate Thursday evenings at 7:00PM in the church), they should be on time and bring the child's birth certificate. Godparents are welcome to come as well. Baptisms are scheduled in our church on most Sundays after the 1:30PM Spanish Mass. Those who wish to have baptism in Spanish are asked to contact Father Gomez for the proper procedure.

I hope this information is helpful to you, particularly to parents and prospective parents. May we all appreciate the Sacrament of Baptism more and more. May we remember how blessed we are to be **BAPTIZED IN CHRIST.**

Father Thomas B. Derivan

MANY THANKS

We are most grateful to all our wonderful parishioners who have sacrificed so generously by increasing their weekly Sunday Contributions. Please know that your weekly increase is for the betterment of St. Theresa Parish, for the building up and improvement of our parish. We are most grateful to all of you who have helped to make a difference in our community. Please continue to help us in order to keep St. Theresa Parish the vital, growing parish that it is.

PETITION BOOK

Have you noticed our Petition Book in the vestibule of the Church? Every Saturday before the 5:00PM Mass, the petitions entered into the book for that week are brought up to the altar of the Blessed Mother, where they remain for all the weekend Masses. Please pray for these intentions.



A MESSAGE FOR THIS SUNDAY FROM POPE FRANCIS

Today, on the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus, the Gospel describes the scene which occurred at the River Jordan: Jesus, too, is in the midst of the penitent crowd which approaches John the Baptist to receive baptism. He stood in line. John would like to prevent him from [being baptized], saying: "I need to be baptized by you." The Baptist, indeed, is aware of the great distance there is between him and Jesus. But Jesus has come precisely to bridge the gap between man and God: if He is completely on God's side, He is also completely on mankind's side, and reunites what had been separated. For this reason he asks John to baptize him, so that all righteousness may be fulfilled, namely, that the plan of God may be fulfilled, the plan which passes by way of obedience and solidarity with fragile and sinful mankind, the way of humility and of God's full closeness to his children. Because God is very close to us, very close!

At the moment in which Jesus, baptized by John, comes out of the waters of the River Jordan, the voice of God the Father is heard from on high: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." At the same time the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, alights upon Jesus, who publicly begins his mission of salvation; a mission characterized by a manner: the way of a humble and gentle servant, armed only with the power of truth, as Isaiah had prophesied: "He will not cry or lift up his voice, ... a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice." A humble and gentle servant.

This is Jesus' way, as well as the manner of Christ's disciples' missionary work: To proclaim the Gospel with gentleness, but also firmness, without shouting, without reprimanding anyone, but gently and firmly, without arrogance or imposition. The true mission is never proselytism, but drawing people to Christ. But how? How is this attraction to Christ achieved? With one's own witness, starting from the unwavering union with him in prayer, in adoration and in concrete works of charity, which is service to Jesus present in the least of his brothers and sisters. In imitation of Jesus, the good and merciful Shepherd, and moved by his grace, we are called to make our life a joyous testimony that illuminates the way, that brings hope and love.

This feast makes us rediscover the gift and the beauty of being a community of baptized, that is, of sinners - we all are sinners - saved by the grace of Christ, truly integrated, by the work of the Holy Spirit, in the filial relationship of Jesus with the Father, welcomed into the bosom of Mother Church, making possible a brotherhood that knows no barriers or borders.

May the Virgin Mary help all of us Christians to maintain an ever keen and grateful awareness of our own Baptism and to faithfully follow the path opened by this Sacrament of our rebirth. Ever with humility, gentleness and firmness.

ATTENTION—ALUMNI AND FORMER PARISHIONERS!

We are in the process of updating our list of alumni of St. Theresa's School and former parishioners of our parish.

We want them to know about the good things that are going on at our parish and our school.

We ask you to contact family members or friends to ask them to help us update our list. They may do so in any of the following ways:

*Filling out the form and sending it to the Rectory

(or asking you to drop it by for them);

*Calling the Rectory to your information.

*E-mailing the information found below.

*Entering this information on our Facebook page: *St. Theresa Parish (Official)*

Thank you for your help with this.

UPDATE OF INFORMATION FOR ALUMNI & FORMER PARISHIONERS

Name _____

If alumnus, year _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

Comments or other Information:



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH AND THEIR FAMILIES ROSE MANCINI, RICHARD J. TULIPANO, MARIE E. DEANGELO, ANTHONY J. RIBUSTELLO, CZESLAW BORYS, MARY CAPUTO & ANNA FILIPPONE AND DECEASED PRIESTS OF OUR ARCHDIOCESE MSGR. GEORGE THOMPSON, MSGR. JAMES WHITE, FATHER CARLOS RODRIGUEZ



THE SANCTUARY LAMP BURNING NEAR THE TABERNACLE THIS WEEK IS IN LOVING MEMORY OF MARYANN DIBATISTA HAPPY BIRTHDAY LOVE, THE DIBATISTA FAMILY

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

From January 18 to January 25, the Church observes a special time of prayer for the unity of Christian churches. One of the sad facts, as we begin the new millennium, is that the Church is divided. The one family of Christ has been split by disagreements over the course of many centuries. Just as the last millennium saw the division of the Church, we should pray that the new millennium will see the reunion of the church. Please keep this special intention in your prayers. The Week of Prayer is an annual observance promoted by the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute in Garrison, New York. The institute is a project of Graymoor, the common name for the Society of the Atonement, a religious order of priests, sisters and brothers founded to promote Christian Unity.

ARE YOU A REGISTERED PARISHIONER

All new or unregistered parishioners are asked to please register by phone or in person at the Rectory or fill out the information below. Many items of importance will be mailed home in the course of the year.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE# _____

CELL# _____

E-MAIL _____

PLEASE RETURN TO THE RECTORY OFFICE.



SATURDAY JANUARY 11, 2020

5:00PM Salvatore Lucania

SUNDAY JANUARY 12, 2020

7:30AM Parishioners of St. Theresa

9:00AM Marie Sansalone

10:30AM Anthony D'Abbraccio

12:15PM Nina & Cleo Rosi

1:30PM Special Intention

5:00PM Jack Sonnenstein

MONDAY JANUARY 13, 2020

8:00AM Patricia Freiler

9:00AM Ralph Bockino

TUESDAY JANUARY 14, 2020

8:00AM Renato Piscina

9:00AM Michael O'Reilly

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 15, 2020

8:00AM Benny Delvalle

9:00AM Antonio DiBartolomeo

THURSDAY JANUARY 16, 2020

8:00AM Huldah Gordon

9:00AM Domenico D'Erasmus

12NOON Nicoletta Ferrara

FRIDAY JANUARY 17, 2020

8:00AM Ana Lydia Rios

9:00AM John Sweeney

SATURDAY JANUARY 18, 2020

8:00AM Mary Cea

9:00AM Albert Bifolco

5:00PM Evelyn DiStefano

SUNDAY JANUARY 19, 2020

7:30AM Parishioners of St. Theresa

9:00AM Fr. Tom D'Angelo

10:30AM Francesco Paterna

12:15PM Dorothy Ferranti

1:30PM Dario Diplan

5:00PM Ella Rossetti

PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH:

Phyllis Amitrano, Maryann Cale Bannan, Kenny Brisco, Nancy Cardone, Elaine Reiss Cina, Joseph Cina, Phyllis Caruso, Pasqua Del Prete, Marie DiPolo, Thomas Egan, Frank Ferrara, Rita Ferrara, Daley Gribbon, Ita Griffin, Sean Howell, William Keenan, Sal Lanza, Frank Maiorana, Maryann Maiorana, Diane Martino, Joe Martino, Theresa Martino, Patrick & Jimmy McCoy, Isabelle O'Brien, Marie Petillo, Joseph Pisano, Marie Russillo, Camille Siciliano, Mario Simeone, Toni Spahr, Florence Valentine, Dean Valentine, Nicholas Vasti, Frank Vertullo, Irene Vesely.

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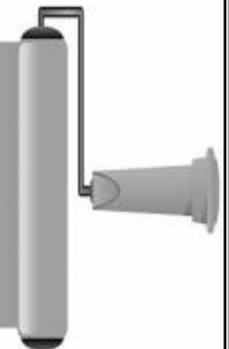
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