

Braintree Catholic Collaborative



St. Francis Church

856 Washington Street
Braintree, Massachusetts

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5:30PM
Sunday: 9:00, 11:30AM

Monday –Friday: 7:00am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: 12:30-2:00PM

St. Clare Church

1244 Liberty Street
Braintree, Massachusetts

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:00PM
Sunday: 7:45, 10:15AM AND 6:00pm

Saturday: 8:00am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: 8:30-9:00am

Collaborative Staff

Rev. Robert M. Blaney, Pastor
Rev. Kevin P. Leaver, Parochial Vicar
Deacon Joseph MacDonald, Collaborative Deacon/
Music Director
Deacon James Waldron, Collaborative Deacon
Mrs. Karen Lane, Religious Education Coordinator
Ms. Patty Kinnally, Office Manager
Mr. Kevin Mercier, Business Manager
Mr. Robert Muldoon, Facilities Manager
Msgr. Robert W. Oliver, In Residence
Rev. Gerald Nebo, In Residence
Deacon Michael Cavanaugh, Senior Deacon

Contact Information

www.braintreecatholic.org
781-843-1332 | Fax: 781-848-0976

Collaborative Office and Mailing Address

856 Washington Street
Braintree, MA 02184

Office Hours

Monday-Friday: 9:00-4:00

Sacrament of Marriage

A minimum of six months notice is required. Please call the Collaborative Office to schedule an appointment prior to booking a venue.

Sacrament of Baptism

2nd Sunday of the month at St. Clare at 1:30PM
3rd Sunday of the month at St. Francis at 1:30PM
Please call the Collaborative to register

Sacrament of the Sick & Communion Calls

Please notify the Collaborative Office if anyone is hospitalized or unable to attend Mass because of illness.

Bulletin Deadline

All requests must be submitted to the Collaborative Office by Monday at 1PM. Email to parish@sfab.org.

Mass Intentions

St. Francis of Assisi

Saturday, December 9, 2023

5:30PM Patricia Dailey Memorial

Sunday, December 10, 2023

9:00AM Elizabeth "Pat" McGrath Anniversary

11:30AM Leslie DeThomaso 15th Anniv.

Monday, December 11, 2023

7:00AM Kenneth Tocci 2nd Anniv

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

7:00AM Lucien & Marie Richardi Memorial

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

7:00AM Paul Collins, Jr. Memorial

Thursday, December 14, 2023

7:00AM Antonino Parlavecchio Memorial

Friday, December 15, 2023

7:00AM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Saturday, December 16, 2023

5:30PM Christine DiMartinis 2nd Anniv.

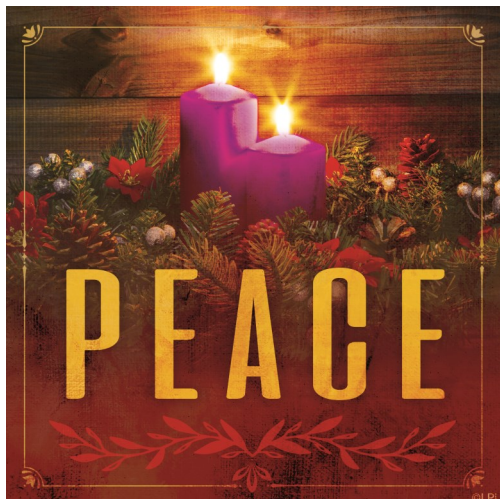
Sunday, December 17, 2023

9:00AM Hester Family Memorial

11:30AM Elizabeth "Betty" Turner Memorial

If you are interested in the Online Giving option for either parish to simplify your weekly contributions, please contact the collaborative office.

Please remember our parishes when planning your estate. Thank you!



Mass Intentions

St. Clare

Saturday, December 9, 2023

8:00AM

4:00PM Patrick Fleming 5th Anniv.

Sunday, December 10, 2023

7:45AM Ellsworth Rice 12th Anniv.

10:15AM Edward Chisholm Anniversary

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Saturday, December 16, 2023

8:00AM

4:00PM Richard & Margaret Keane Anniversary

Sunday, December 17, 2023

7:45AM Parishioners of the Collaborative

10:15AM Arthur Gillis Memorial

6:00PM Deceased Members of the Moore Family Memorial

Info and events of note

- St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry Open Thursdays at St. Francis from 10AM-12NN.** If you need groceries, please call on Wednesday so that we can be prepared for your visit. Referrals and limited financial assistance are available for parishioners in need.
- Collaborative Prayer Line...** To be placed (or to pray) on the parish prayer line, please call the Collaborative office.
- Military Service...** If someone you know is deployed and you would like their info to appear on the blue board in the church, please call or email the parish office.
- Al-Anon ...** Tuesdays at 10:30 in St. Clare Church Hall
- Boy Scout Troop #138 ...** Wednesdays at 7:00PM in St. Clare Church Hall.—Contact John Collier at 781-843-3330
- Braintree Knights of Columbus Council 1462...** Second Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM in St. Francis Church Hall.

Please call the collaborative office for more information.



The Year of St. Mark's Gospel

With the beginning of a new liturgical year in the Church, the Sunday Gospel readings shift from year "A" to year "B". The Scripture readings for Sunday Mass follow a three year cycle. (Weekday Masses follow a two year cycle). Year "A" draws from Matthew's Gospel; year "B" from Mark; and year "C" from Luke. John's Gospel is used during Lent and Easter and in the middle of Mark's cycle because his Gospel is relatively short. During Ordinary Time the Gospel passages run subsequently. You may have noticed, however, that last Sunday the passage was from the end of his Gospel because it captures one of the themes of Advent which is that we are to stay alert because we do not know when Christ will return. Today the Gospel passage is from the opening lines of Mark's Gospel, which, interestingly, does not tell about the birth of Jesus, as does Matthew and Luke, but rather introduces us to John the Baptist whose vocation was to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah.

I thought it would be helpful to write a bit about the background of Mark's Gospel. First of all, from what we can tell, Mark never knew the historical Jesus personally. He was not a disciple. Instead, Mark was a disciple of Saint Peter. When Peter traveled around to bring the Good News of Christ to people of other nations, he, like the other Apostles, developed a following of disciples. Mark was a disciple of Peter, and was, as we can tell, his secretary. At that time very few people were able to read or write. As Peter's ministry developed he would have needed a scribe, someone to do the reading and writing of various correspondences. What Mark wrote about Jesus is based on what he was told by Peter. In a sense, it's really Peter's Gospel.

The Gospel was written from Rome around the year 60. As such it was the first of the Gospels written: ten years or so before Matthew, perhaps twenty for Luke, and more than thirty years before John. In fact, it is likely that Matthew and Luke drew material from Mark's Gospel. Though his was the first Gospel to be written, Mark's Gospel was not the first of the New Testament writings. That distinction belongs to St. Paul whose letters date more than ten years before Mark's Gospel.

What scholars have told us is that the style of writing, as well as what is included and not included in

Mark's version indicate that it was written for a largely Gentile (non-Jewish) audience. This is evident in that there is little reference to the Hebrew Scriptures. Also noticeable is that Mark does not include much in the way of historical detail about Jesus. He certainly didn't have you and me in mind when writing! His purpose in writing was to document the basic theology of Peter which was that Jesus is the Anointed One of God (Messiah) who was sent to usher in the Kingdom of God through overcoming suffering and death. The original audience was being prepared for the return of Jesus in their own life time. No one was thinking that there would be a world-wide Church that would still be around in 2000 years!

You will notice that Mark emphasizes the humanity of Jesus by referencing emotion: Jesus is sad, Jesus is angry, etc. He also emphasizes the suffering of Jesus to show how significant is the Resurrection.

One of the characteristics of Mark's Gospel is a literary device called the Messianic Secret. Jesus does not allow anyone to reveal His identity as God's Son. It's not until He dies on the cross that his true identity is revealed. It was the Roman centurion who, upon seeing that Jesus had died, is quoted as saying "Surely, He was the Son of God". Mark wants us to understand that we can only know Jesus as God's Son through his suffering and death on the cross.

As of tomorrow (December 11) I **resume my duties as pastor** of St. Clare and St. Francis Parishes. It's been eight weeks since surgery and I am feeling well enough to resume ministry. I am so grateful to Fr. Kevin for his willingness to assume the administrative responsibilities of the parishes while I was recuperating. I could relax with great confidence knowing that he was taking care of the place. I am also grateful to the staff for all they did during this time. They made many adjustments and were most accommodating.

On Tuesday morning after the 7:00 Mass I will give a **brief presentation on the history, meaning and spirituality of Advent**. All are welcome in St. Francis Parish Hall for this informal gathering. Coffee and such will be served.

Fr. Bob



Please see the enclosed Holiday Mass Schedule. Please note that since Christmas Eve falls on Sunday this year we have made changes to our Mass schedule for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 23rd and 24th). Saturday Masses will remain the same. On Sunday morning we will offer Masses at 7:45 at St. Clare and 9:00 at St. Francis. There will be no 10:15 or 11:30 that day.



From
Deacon Joe MacDonald

Ask Deacon Joe

This being the week during Advent that we hear of John the Baptist I thought it would be a good week to answer a question about Baptism.

The question is: Why can't my best friend who is Jewish be my child's godfather? There is a similar question that comes up from time to time as well: Why can't I have two godmothers or two godfathers.

Let's tackle the first question. To answer it we need to understand what a godparent is and what it is not. It is not a reward for past deeds; It is not bestowed upon someone because of a close friendship or close blood relation; it has nothing to do with civil guardianship or future care of a child. That being said of course you're not going to choose a stranger for this important role, you're going to look at your family and friends.

The role of a godparent is very simple. It is the role of a sponsor. When a person wants to join a club or fraternal organization, they typically have to get someone who is already in the organization to sponsor them. For example, if you wanted to join the Elks you wouldn't ask someone from the Knights of Columbus to sponsor you – you'd ask an Elk. The sponsor will help you understand what the organization is all about, and what its mission is. They'd also help you understand what your role might be and how you can live out your membership in a way that benefits the organization.

So, it follows that to join the Catholic Church through baptism you need to have a sponsor who is a fully initiated Catholic themselves. There are three Sacraments of Initiation for Catholics: Baptism, Confirmation, and reception of the Eucharist (Communion). You also need to be Confirmed in order to be a godparent. It is not that we think that people of the Jewish faith (or any other faith for that matter) or that unconfirmed Catholics are inferior or not worthy people. The fact is to be a sponsor or a godparent one must be a fully initiated member of the Church and living as a faithful Catholic in their daily lives. One sign of this lived commitment to the Church would be their participation at Sunday Mass.

To answer the second question regarding having two godparents of the same gender it should first be said that two godparents are not required. Canon 873 specifically states "one sponsor, male or female, is sufficient; but **there may be two, one of each sex.**" Why does the Church prohibit two people of the same sex to be godparents if in every other way

they would be perfectly acceptable. The reason comes from the "parent" part of the word. In the natural order a mother and a father are needed to produce children. This sponsorship at infant Baptism that we call godparent reflects that natural order of things. Hence the Church's teaching that if there are two godparents one must be male and the other female.

I hope this helps clear up any confusion surrounding who can licitly be godparents at a Catholic Baptism.

If you have any questions regarding Church teaching, Sacraments, Scripture, or if you're confused or perplexed about anything Catholic please send me your questions at askdeaconjoe@gmail.com I'll do my best to answer them in a future column.

EVENTS SCHEDULE

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION—Led by Deacon Joe and Deacon Jay—Wednesdays from 7-8PM in St. Francis of Assisi Church. Church doors will open at 6:30PM.

CONFESSIONS will be heard from 6:30—8:00PM during Adoration on Wednesday, December 13th and 20th. Additional confession times will be announced in a future bulletin

CHOIR:

The choir is preparing for Christmas if anyone would like to join the Choir just for Christmas let Deacon Joe know. Rehearsals will be at 6:30 PM at Saint Clare. Why not give Jesus the Christmas present of your voice.



Come join Fr. Bob on Tuesday morning after the 7:00 Mass for a **brief presentation on the history, meaning and spirituality of Advent.** (This is a repeat of his presentation last Monday evening.) All are welcome in St. Francis Parish Hall for this informal gathering . Coffee and such will be served.



Grades 1-8

Classes meet Sunday, December 10th, Tuesday December 12th and Thursday, December 14th.
All classes meet at St. Clare.

Grades 9—10+

Confirmation Classes for **Grades 9 AND 10** meet this Sunday, December 10th 4:45PM at St. Clare. Classes are followed by the 6PM Mass. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend the Mass.



December 10 Second Sunday of Advent:

In today's Gospel John the Baptist urges us to "Prepare the way of the Lord.". We are called to help prepare the way of the Lord by making the real meaning of Christmas come alive in our own hearts, in our family and to reach out to those in need. **Is there a family you know who needs assistance? Please call the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that together we can help the suffering and poor to celebrate Christmas.**

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society of our collaborative is looking for additional volunteers to aid the poor in the area. The Food pantry is also looking for more help. If this is something you think you can help with please leave your name and contact information at the collaborative office.



FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY is next weekend, December 16-17. Thank you to everyone who so faithfully supports our pantry Some of the needed items are: soups; paper towels; toilet paper; kleenex; personal care items (deodorant, toothpaste; toothbrushes) **paper shopping bags with or without handles**. However, we are grateful for anything you wish to donate. If you forgot or prefer not to shop, please read the St. Vincent DePaul paragraph to learn how you can help.

Pantry donations can also be dropped off at the Collaborative office during normal business hours (M-F 9-4). **Blue envelopes** are in holders on the back inside wall of the church. Please use them for your cash, check (written to St. Vincent DePaul with SFA on the memo line), or gift card—and place them into the collection basket or through the rectory mail slot. Thank you.



We are now booking Mass Intentions **through June 30, 2024**. To schedule a Mass or for further information please call the Collaborative Office at 781-843-1332.



Come share in the birth of our Savior! Experience the magic of that most special night with the Religious Education students as they perform a short Nativity play after the 10:15 Mass on December 17 at St. Clare Church.

After the pageant, please join us in the church hall!

- Enjoy some Christmas music, cookies and juice
- Make Christmas cards for local Nursing Home residents
- Play some games

Please bring a nonperishable food item for the Food Pantry!





John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. John was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey. And this is what he proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me." - Mk 1:4, 6-7a

Readings Week ©LPI

Readings for the week of December 10, 2023

Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 (8)/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8
 Monday: Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14/Lk 5:17-26
 Tuesday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47
 Wednesday: Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/Mt 11:28-30
 Thursday: Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab/Mt 11:11-15
 Friday: Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19
 Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13
 Next Sunday: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 (Is 61:10b)/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28



Our Advent Giving Tree concludes this Weekend at St. Francis of Assisi. **Gifts should be returned no later than December 10th** for distribution. When considering your gift please keep in mind the following:

- * Please check to see if the organization sponsoring the card has requested that you wrap the gift(s). If the tag says **do not wrap**, you can still help everyone involved in sorting and organizing by placing your purchase in a gift bag so that our volunteers can easily check the contents.
- * Please **securely attach the tag** you take from the tree to the outside of the bag or package. The tags are coded by color and number and we need them back so that your gift reaches the correct organization and recipient.

If you choose not to shop, **[do not take a tag]** gift cards (Target, WalMart, Amazon, Gas Stations, Game Stop, Movie Passes, Fast Food Restaurants, etc.) and monetary donations are always a good option. These can be used for any last minute requests for assistance that we receive (even after Christmas Day). Thank you for your thoughtfulness.



St. Francis of Assisi
Shay Juliet McLaughlin



St. Francis of Assisi
 John "Jake" Logan
 Dominic F. Diauto

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



From the Archdiocese of Boston

December 10 ~ Second Sunday of Advent

The prophet Isaiah instructs us: "Prepare the way of the Lord." What does it mean to "prepare the way for the Lord," and what can you do differently to prepare for the Lord's coming? St. Peter give us a suggestion in our second reading, "conduct yourselves in holiness and devotion" as we await Christ's coming. Living by these words is more difficult than it sounds! Begin each day this week by making this simple prayer your own, "Come Lord Jesus, come! Come Lord Jesus, come." Grant me the grace to conduct myself in holiness and devotion.

The Spiritual Exercises

The Nineteenth Annotation Retreat of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, An Invitation to Meet Christ in Prayer, arranged by Fr John Sassani & Mary Ann McLaughlin is being offered in a group setting for Catholic adults. The number of participants will be limited. These Spiritual Exercises extend over the course of twenty-three weeks and are loosely aligned with the liturgical year. Meetings begin on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 and conclude April 17, 2024. The group will use the Zoom format to meet on line weekly from 10am to 12:00pm. Mary Ann McLaughlin and Deacon Dan Burns will direct the Spiritual Exercises. For further information please call 617-686-2287 or email: maryannmclaughlin2@aol.com

Mental Health Matters: A Workshop to Empower Parents

On Wednesday Jan. 24th at 7 PM join Dr. Mookie Manalili, a Catholic psychologist from Boston College; retired psychologist and pastor, Father Jim Ronan, and mental health clinician, author, and parent Suzanne Muldoon for a Zoom panel discussion on how parents can best support and care for their children and themselves in the midst of mental health concerns. The panelists will address diagnoses, recommendations, and how faith impacts healing. The complimentary workshop is sponsored by Family Life. For questions, call Emily Elliott at 617-746-5756. To register: <https://bit.ly/MHMtoParents>

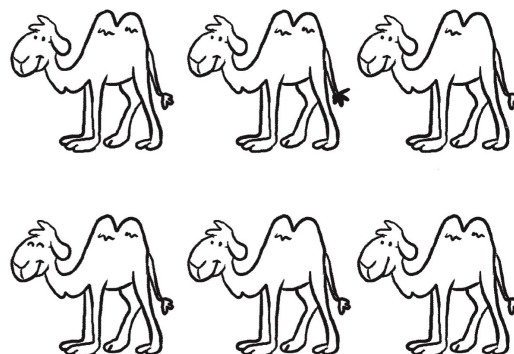
A Celebration of Con-validation

Married couples desiring holy matrimony in the Catholic Church are invited to con-validate their marriage on World Marriage Sunday, February 11, 2024 at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston at 3:00 PM with Bishop Mark O'Connell as the celebrant. A con-validation ceremony is an opportunity for couples married outside of the Church to enter into a marriage covenant in the Catholic tradition. For more information, email Emily_Elliott@rcab.org or visit our registration page at <https://bit.ly/Convalidation>



PUZZLE

Find the 2 identical camels.



MISSION

Ask your family if you have hurt their feelings.
Ask them to forgive you.



Sharing the Gospel

John the Baptist had an important message. When you make sinful mistakes, and when you turn away from God, stop. Learn from your mistakes, and do things God's way. Were you bossy or rude? Be thoughtful and kind. Did you tell a lie? Be honest instead. God wants you to share his love with other people.

Prayer

Jesus, help me to learn from my mistakes. Thank you for forgiving me.

Something to Draw

Draw a picture of yourself being kind to a friend.

Mission for the Week

Ask your family if you have hurt their feelings. Ask them to forgive you.