

Braintree Catholic Collaborative



St. Francis Church

856 Washington Street
Braintree, Massachusetts

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5:30PM
Sunday: 9:00 and 11:30AM
Monday –Friday: 7:00AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: **12:30-1:30PM**

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
Deacon Patrick Bruen, Seminarian Intern
Mrs. Karen Lane, Director of Religious Education
Ms. Patty Kinnally, Office Manager
Mr. Kevin Mercier, Business Manager
Mr. Cecil O'Brien, Facilities
Mrs. Karen Whitney, Receptionist
Msgr. Robert W. Oliver, 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 **1:00PM**
3rd Sunday of the month at St. Francis at **1:00PM**
Please call the Collaborative Office 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 14, 2024

5:30PM Marilyn McGourty 2nd Anniv.

Sunday, December 15, 2024

9:00AM Christine DiMartinis 3rd Anniv.

11:30AM James Quinlan 1st Anniv.

Monday, December 16, 2024

7:00AM Mother Anna Grace Neenan and Sr. Mary Angelina Neenan, OP Special Intention

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

7:00AM John & Joseph Odenweller Memorial

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

7:00AM Robert Kane Memorial

Thursday, December 19, 2024

8:00AM Richard Kelly & Doris Nelson 5th Anniv.

Friday, December 20, 2024

7:00AM

Saturday, December 21, 2024

5:30PM Patrick Fleming 6th Anniv.

Sunday, December 22, 2024

9:00AM Leslie DeThomaso 16th Anniv.

11:30AM Philipina Canale 1st Anniv.

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!



We are now scheduling Mass Intentions **through June 30, 2025**. To schedule a Mass or for further information please call the Collaborative Office at 781-843-1332.

Mass Intentions

St. Clare

Saturday, December 14, 2024

8:00AM Robert Blaney Anniversary

4:00PM Patricia Roche Anniversary

Sunday, December 15, 2024

7:45AM Ellsworth Rice Anniversary

10:15AM Sean O'Donnell Memorial

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Saturday, December 21, 2024

8:00AM Jake Parker Memorial

4:00PM Patrik Liam Flaherty Memorial

Sunday, December 22, 2024

7:45AM Parishioners of the Collaborative

10:15AM William R. Therese M. & Mark J. Moore Memorial

6:00PM Martha Byron 15th Anniv.

The Bread & Wine for the week of December 14th through 20th were been donated in loving memory of Arthur Gillis.

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.
- **AI-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.



It's a time of preparation. Some people get excited with preparations. Others dread the thought. All the running around we do in preparation for Christmas is meant to instill within us a sense of preparation for the coming of Christ in the fullness of the Kingdom. Unlike like Christmas, though, we know not the hour nor the day of when the fullness of the Kingdom shall come. The preparation is ongoing. You could say that the entirety of the Christian life is a preparation for encountering Christ.

One of the ways in which we prepare for Christmas is the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** (confession). Being absolved of sin and doing penance are essential to our faith and an excellent way in which to ready ourselves to celebrate Christ's birth. **I want to encourage all parishioners to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas.** The bulletin this weekend lists the times. In doing so, I would like to invite you to participate in the **Collaborative Penance Service** which will take place at St. Clare Church on Wednesday night this week (December 18) at 7:00. Father Paul Soper will lead our service. There will be other priests from outside the parish here as well.

It is easy for any of us to slip into a mentality of thinking that we don't need confession in order to be forgiven by God. There is no question that God's mercy cannot be confined to a particular moment or ritual. However (and this is a big however) God's mercy is mediated. For this reason, Christ gave us the Sacraments so that we can have access to God's mercy. Jesus Himself is the Sacrament of the Father. The Church is the Sacrament of Jesus Christ. It is part of God's plan that grace should build on nature. That is to say that God's grace is found and works within the constructs of nature. Christ instituted the seven Sacraments of the Church so that we could have complete access to God. The Old Testament is filled with testimonies of people who longed to have some kind of access to God that was personal. That couldn't happen, though, until God took on our human nature in the person of Jesus Christ. Hence, the big deal we make out of Christmas each year.

It is a good practice to examine our conscience each day and ask the Lord to forgive us of our sins. This does not replace the Sacrament of Reconciliation, though. As the priest is in the person of Christ when he pronounces the words of institution over bread and wine at Mass, so is he in

the person of Christ when he pronounces the words of absolution in Confession.

Many avoid confession because they simply don't know what to say. I encourage you to relax. The priest is there to help you make a good confession. He will guide you through the ritual. Some people like a confession that is formal, others informal. Some speak from a template, others extemporaneously. Some like to sit with the priest in a conversational setting, while others prefer remaining anonymous.

When going to confession, it's important to let the priest know approximately the last time you went. This will help him in guiding you to a good confession. Having done that, simply name your sins. You don't need to go into detail or explain why you did what you did. If the priest needs clarification he will ask. The priest may offer some works of spiritual counsel or encouragement. He will then give you a penance: something you do to express to God your desire for conversion. Then you say the Act of Contrition. You can use one you memorized or say one spontaneously. What is important is that you say aloud that you are sorry for your sins. The priest will then give you absolution.

A good confession a few times a year goes a long way in preparing for the coming of Christ!

Fr. Bob



Saturday, December 14, 8:30-9:00, St. Clare Church
Saturday, December 14, 12:30-1:30, St. Francis Church

Wednesday, December 18, 7:00 Collaborative

Penance Service, 7:00pm, St. Clare Church

Saturday, December 21, 8:30-9:00, St. Clare Church
Saturday, December 21, 12:30-1:30, St. Francis Church
Monday, December 23, 7:30am-8:00am, St. Francis Church
Monday, December 23, 6:00-7:30, St. Francis Church

Please see the bulletin insert for the Mass Times for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.



The Collaborative Office will close at 12:00 on Wednesday, December 18th. We will reopen at 9:00 Thursday morning.

DECEMBER 15, 2024



From
Deacon Joe MacDonald

Let's talk about Luke. As you know, or maybe you don't, the Church uses a three-year cycle of biblical readings for Sunday Mass. Year A the Gospel readings are mostly taken from Matthew. Year B the Gospel is typically taken from Mark. The first Sunday of Advent which we celebrated on December 1 this year began a new liturgical year – year C in which the Gospel of Luke is prominent. Luke is unique among the Gospels for a number of reasons. Luke is the only gentile to author a book of the New Testament. His is the only Gospel that has a sequel – the Acts of the Apostles. Only Luke's Gospel contains the parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. Only Luke includes Gabriel's Annunciation to Mary, Jesus' Childhood encounter in the temple, and details about the ascension. It is in Luke and only Luke's Gospel where we find three important canticles: "The Magnificat", which she proclaimed when she visited her cousin Elizabeth; "The Benedictus" which John the Baptist's father Zechariah spoke at John's birth after being struck mute for nine months because of his unbelief; and finally the "Canticle of Simeon." Simeon was an old man. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. When Mary and Joseph presented Jesus in the Temple as prescribed by the Law, Simeon held the child and praised God saying, "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my own eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."

So, what do we actually know about Luke? Well first of all he was a physician and therefore was an educated person. We also know that he was a gentile, he was not a Jew. We learn in 2 Timothy 4:11 that he was a beloved companion of Saint Paul. Paul describes him as "Luke the beloved physician" among his uncircumcised [*non-Jewish*] companions. (Col 4:14)

Dating these ancient texts is always important and there is some debate regarding Luke-Acts. The earliest date is in the 60's A.D. and the later date is in the 80's A.D. There is good reason to hang our hats on the earlier timeline. First, the Acts of the Apostles ends with Peter and Paul being imprisoned in Rome around 62 A.D. but there is no mention of their martyrdom. A significant event to leave out had it been written later. There is no mention of the Roman persecution that also started in the mid 60's A.D. Finally, there is nothing in the Luke's Gospel or the Acts of the Apostles that mention

the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 A.D. At that time the destruction of the temple would have been like our Pearl Harbor or 911, the whole Roman world would have known about it. This was not an event that would have slipped through the cracks. And so, we can have confidence in the earlier dating of this work.

It should be noted that Luke's Gospel and its sequel were addressed to one particular person – his name was Theophilus. This is also unique to Luke. Theophilus was likely a wealthy Roman or Roman Official who financed the work for himself and so that the Gospel might be distributed more broadly. Luke also had another audience in mind. He wrote it for Gentile Christians leaving out semitic words in favor of their Greek equivalents. It was also written for Jews and Samaritans who lived in the diaspora (outside Israel, their place of origin). Although he doesn't strictly quote Old Testament texts, he does reference them in ways that would be familiar to Jews and Samaritans.

Because Luke is a Gentile his Gospel emphasizes salvation, although comes from the Jews, is not limited to them and is available to all nations. Luke also has an affinity in his Gospel toward the poor and the weak.

Thousands of books and commentaries have been written about the Gospel of Luke and a short column in the parish bulletin does not give it the justice it deserves. If you want a deeper dive into Luke's Gospel, you can join us on Saturday mornings at 9:00 in St. Francis Church Hall as we delve deeper into this work and then begin a study of the Acts of the Apostles.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Advent Rosary

Please join us on the Mondays of December 16 and 23 as we pray the Rosary at 6:45 in St. Francis of Assisi Church.

Collaborative Penance Service

Wednesday, December 18th—7PM at St. Clare



Braintree Collaborative Bereavement Group meets every Saturday at 10:30 at St. Francis. This hour-long meeting will help you bring your suffering to the Lord and get to know others who are going through something similar. No sign-up, no commitment, just come and find comfort.

Religious Education News

Our Movie Night was so much fun! When the kids arrived, they played Christmas Bingo and made a star craft to bring home. Then we had pizza, popcorn, and cookies, oh my! We watched "The Star," which tells the story of the Nativity through the eyes of the animals. A donkey named Bo befriends a sheep and a dove, and together they follow the Star and become heroes in the first Christmas! It was a terrific way to kick off the Advent season together!!

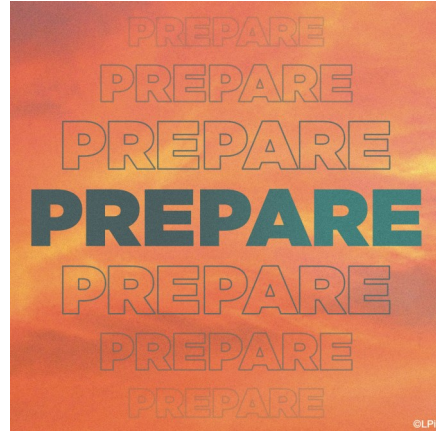


The Religious Education students, along with some very special helpers, participated in Braintree's very first Festival of Trees! Our tree's theme was "The 12 Days of Christmas." The students colored ornaments that pictured the gifts for each of the 12 days. Our special helpers donated 12 Christmas books, 12 gift cards, a Nativity set, and their creative magic to put it all together! Our tree not only looked absolutely beautiful, but it also won the Viewer's Choice award, for collecting the most raffle tickets!!



Class Schedule for the Week of December 15th

Grades K-6 Sunday, December 15th at 11:15AM
Christmas Pageant Practice
Tuesday, December 17 and
Thursday, December 19th at 4:00PM
Grade 9 Sunday at 4:45PM
followed by the 6:00 Mass.
Grades 7 & 8 Tuesday, December 17 and Thursday,
December 19 at 5:15PM



December 15, 2024-3rd Sunday of Advent

On a bright Spring morning, a passerby once saw St. Francis of Assisi hoeing a row of beans and asked him, "What would you be doing right now if you knew this was the last day of your earthly life?" The Saint responded, "I'd keep hoeing this row of beans." Preparing for this world to end — whether by our death or by Jesus' glorious coming — invites us to live not in the past or the present, but deeply in the present moment.

This same point is on display in the simple advice given by the wild and eccentric John the Baptist. He speaks of the one who is to come who will baptize **"with the Holy Spirit and fire"** (Luke 3:16). Despite the bizarre awesomeness of this announcement, he tells his listeners to engage in the present moment with simple acts of justice and love as their preparation for Jesus' coming, sharing their clothes and food, eliminating greedy and underhanded practices, being content with their wages. It's so undramatic. But how many actually did it? We don't know. How many of us will commit ourselves to these types of humble and demanding practices in our lives? That's what we should be doing now in our present moment, not worrying about the future.

Advent challenge: Name one way you are doing the bare minimum towards others in your daily life. Or name something you are doing because you are not content with your financial situation. Pray: "Jesus, if it is your will, help me to stop doing these things this week. Help me prepare for your coming." Then make the appropriate changes.

Father John Muir ©LPi



John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." - Lk 3:16

Readings of the Week

Readings for the week of December 15, 2024

Sunday: Zep 3:14-18a/Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 (6)/
Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18
Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc,
8-9/Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17/
Mt 1:1-17
Wednesday: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/
Mt 1:18-25
Thursday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab,
16-17/Lk 1:5-25
Friday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38
Saturday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3,
11-12, 20-21/Lk 1:39-45
Next Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 (4)/
Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:39-45



Our Advent Giving Tree concludes this weekend in BOTH parishes. **Gifts should be returned no later than December 15th** for

distribution.

* 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.



December 15-Third Sunday of Advent:

In today's Gospel John the Baptist says, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise..."

Christmas is a time of love and gift giving...please share your abundance by giving a gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that those who do not have clothes and food can share in the blessings of Christmas.



FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY is THIS weekend, December 14—15. Thank you to everyone who so faithfully supports our pantry. Some of the **Seasonal** needed items are: **gravy, canned sweet**

potatoes/yams, canned pumpkin, bread mix (i.e pumpkin, banana, etc.), bottled juices (cranberry, apple). We are also in need of paper products (towels, toilet paper, etc. Toothbrushes/toothpaste and laundry detergent. However, we are grateful for anything you wish to donate. If you 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.



REMEMBER
in your prayers

St. Francis of Assisi

George Jackson
Joan Fahey
Miroslaw Stryjewski

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

Diaconate Inquirer Program—The Archdiocese of Boston is beginning its Inquirer Program for men interested in becoming deacons with over a dozen meetings across the Archdiocese. For more information, please go to BostonDiaconate.org and click on the “News” tab.

CURSILLO - An Opportunity to Deepen Your Faith Men's and Women's Weekends. Cursillo is a short course in Christianity. It is an encounter with Christ in a small community of the Church, in order to deepen your own faith and strengthen your ability to be witnesses of Christ in the world.

Women's Weekend: February 27 - March 2, 2025

Men's Weekend: April 3 - 6, 2025

The weekends run from Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon and are held at the Notre Dame Spirituality Center in Ipswich, MA. For information and registration, please check the Boston Cursillo website: www.bostoncursillo.org or email at bostoncursillo@gmail.com.

Witness to Life Trip (1/23-1/25)

Join Boston pilgrims at the National March for Life in Washington, D.C. in January. We will depart the archdiocese at approximately 10 PM on Thurs., Jan. 23 and arrive at Life Fest at 7:30 AM on Fri., Jan. 24 and then head to the March. We will return to the archdiocese at 12:15 AM on Jan. 25. The cost is \$80 and includes bus, Life Fest ticket, driver gratuity, and boxed lunch. Visit bit.ly/WitnesstoLife2025 to register.

A Celebration of Convalidation—If you and your spouse desire holy matrimony in the Catholic Church, you are invited to convalidate your marriage through your parish or at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston during World Marriage Week on Sat. February 8, 2025 at 6PM with Bishop Mark O'Connell and Bishop Cristiano Barbosa. A celebration of convalidation is an opportunity for couples married outside of the Church to enter a marriage covenant in the Catholic tradition. The Cathedral ceremony will be available in the various languages of the couples present. Visit bit.ly/CatholicConvalidation for more information or call Emily Elliott in Family Life at 617-746-5756.

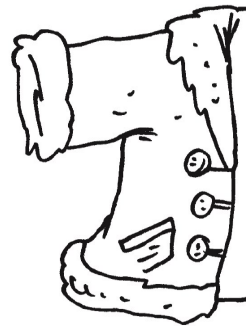


PRAY FOR VOCATIONS



PUZZLE

Complete the picture.



MISSION

The next time you go grocery shopping with your parents, ask if you can pick out some foods to share with the poor. As a family, talk about how thankful you are for the many ways God takes care of you.



Sharing the Gospel

How can you show you love God? Instead of keeping all of your clothes and food, share some with people who don't have any. Be happy and thankful for all God has given you. When you love God more than money, you'll be happy to share.

Prayer

Dear God, help me to share happily with others.

Something to Draw

Draw a picture of yourself sharing a snack with a classmate who has none.

Mission for the Week

The next time you go grocery shopping with your parents, ask if you can pick out some foods to share with the poor. As a family, talk about how thankful you are for the many ways God takes care of you.