

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 28, 2024

5:30PM Philip A. Zingarelli 3rd Anniv.

Sunday, December 29, 2024

9:00AM Patricia Dailey & Donna McSorley Memorial

11:30AM John "Sean" Sullivan and Robert, Michael, & Joseph Sullivan 1st Anniv. Memorial

Monday, December 30, 2024

7:00AM Carrinne & Bill Neenan & Kathy, Colleen & Jane Hennessey Living

Tuesday, December 31, 2024

7:00AM

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

7:00AM

Thursday, January 2, 2025

7:00AM

Friday, January 3, 2025

7:00AM Domenico Giannandrea Memorial

Saturday, January 4, 2025

5:30PM Kenneth Rowan 1st Anniv.

Sunday, January 5, 2025

9:00AM Broughton Family Memorial

11:30AM John T. Cassidy 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 28, 2024

8:00AM Robert Kolson Memorial

4:00PM Edward O'Leary Memorial

Sunday, December 29, 2024

7:45AM Doran & Kelley Families Memorial

10:15AM

6:00PM

Saturday, January 4, 2025

8:00AM John B. Passalacqua Memorial

4:00PM Lawrence Perfetti 2nd Anniv.

Sunday, January 5, 2025

7:45AM Parishioners of the Collaborative

10:15AM Bashir Khnaizer, Mary George and George Nasir Memorial

6:00PM Ann O'Leary 1st Anniv.

The Bread & Wine for the week of December 28th through January 3rd were been donated in loving memory of Marion Petkiewich. The **Sanctuary light** will also burn in Marion's memory.

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.



The Gospel for today on this **Solemnity of the Holy Family** recalls the time when Jesus, Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem for the festival and Jesus got separated. In my mind, being separated from your child has to be the greatest anguish for a parent. I can't imagine the terror! In praying the Rosary, finding the Christ child in the Temple is the fifth Joyful Mystery. What is overlooked, however, is the losing of the Christ Child. If the find is a cause of great joy, then the losing must have been the cause of great duress. Part of the story of our salvation is the tremendous anguish that Mary and Joseph experienced. It manifests their solidarity with parents who have lost a child. With smart phones it's certainly easier these days to keep track of where our kids are. Nevertheless, parents still loose children to alcohol or drug addiction, sexual abuse, human trafficking, illness or a complicated divorce.

The bonds of faith and friendship that are formed in a parish can often be a tremendous support to parents in such circumstances. As the stories of Jesus' miracles teach us, healing comes through relationships. For Mary and Jesus, Jesus was found, not simply in a location like the Temple, but in the context of a faith community. Mary and Joseph most likely returned to the Temple because there they had a sense of belonging.

So many people today are looking for Jesus. They wander the earth with little sense of direction searching for a Savior. Too often they believe their savior to be some created thing: something to take away their loneliness or something they think will make them happy or complete. That's all of us, to some degree. What we are looking for, a savior, will only be found in relationships, especially a relationship with Jesus Christ. That can't be a mental exercise but a tangible reality. Since Christ is most powerfully encountered in the Sacraments, then where the Sacraments are is where we shall find Him: the Church, the community of Baptized. In fact, the Church itself is a Sacrament, for Christ said wherever two or three are gathered I am in their midst.

The **Collaborative Pastoral Council** is undertaking a **survey** to collect data on reasons why people go/don't go to Mass. If you didn't have a chance to take the survey you can access it by the QR code below. The information will help to guide discussions and decisions regarding the kind of spiritual support that will be most helpful to parishioners.



Wednesday this week, **New Year's Day**, is dedicated to the **Blessed Virgin Mary** under her title of **Mother of God**. We take this title for granted. However, the understanding of Mary's role in salvation progressed over the early centuries of the Church. It was at the Council of Ephesus in the year 431 that Mary was declared *theotokos* the carrier of God. Interestingly, the title did not come about because of Mary but because the leadership of the Church was dealing with a heresy at the time called Nestorianism which held that Mary did in fact give birth to Christ, but not to God. In other words, Jesus was not truly God, meaning there was no incarnation, meaning there could not be true salvation. Two hundred and fifty bishops debated for several weeks over this question. At stake was the Church's profession of faith about the nature of Christ. By recognizing that Mary was indeed the Mother of God the Church could boldly profess that God took on human nature and made salvation possible.

We celebrate this mystery on the first day of the calendar to ask Mary's intercession that the new year be filled with her Son's graces. As such it is a holy day of obligation. The Mass schedule is found elsewhere in this bulletin.

My thanks to all who worked so hard to make our celebration of the Lord's Nativity so beautiful: decorators, choir members, cantors, servers, sacristans, lectors, ushers, extraordinary ministers, and of course our great staff!

I pray that all of our parishioners are blessed with health and a deepening faith in 2025!

Fr. Bob



The Mass schedule for the Collaborative is
Tuesday, December 31, 2024—400PM at St. Clare
Wednesday, January 1, 2024—7AM at St. Francis and
9AM at St. Clare

DECEMBER 29, 2024



*From
Deacon Joe MacDonald*

Years ago, I was on retreat at Saint Joseph's Abbey in Spencer. When I got there, I realized that I had no Rosary Beads. How can you go on retreat for a week without Rosaries? So, I pulled into the Abbey gift shop at the bottom of the hill and went looking for a nice set of beads. I found the perfect pair. They were very strong, light brown and a unique crucifix. When I went to pay for them I asked, "Are these made here at the Abbey?" The monk replied, "Oh yes, these are made by Eddie the Hermit." In my head I'm thinking of an old man with a long grey beard, and a pointed hat living in the woods all by himself for decades. I thought, I wish I could meet someone named Eddie the Hermit.

It was a great retreat, and I sat with the retreat master one day toward the end of my stay. I went to Confession, and we had a nice chat. I mentioned that I wanted to have a closer relationship with the Blessed Mother and showed him my new beads. I asked him to bless them. He took the beads in his hands and looked at them. He said, "I remember these." I had spent the whole week with Eddie the Hermit. I never had a clue even though I knew his name was Fr. Edward. By the way he looked nothing like what I expected. He had no beard at all and no pointy hat. He was not Gandalf.

These beads became my favorites. I had them with me constantly and took them everywhere. Then it happened. I couldn't find them. They were lost. Frankly my wife was surprised I had them so long – I lose everything. I was sure I left them on a plane when we were on vacation. The sad part is that I had gotten so used to praying with those beads I found it difficult, almost impossible to pray the Rosary without them. A few months had passed and I was sitting with my Spiritual Director bemoaning my loss and the fact I was having difficulty praying without them. I threw my arms up in the air exasperated. When they came down my left hand slipped between the cushion and the arm. I felt something on my fingers and pulled out my beads. My eyes opened wide and I exclaimed, "**It's a miracle!**"

I had become attached to a thing, an object that was meant to help me pray. It became more of a crutch and a hindrance. I had to learn to use them responsibly. They've been lost again and again. In truth it's been years since I've last seen them.

But losing them was so easy and it caused me much needless anxiety. They were special to me but not as special as the prayer itself.

We've all lost things and found them again. Or lost something and never got it back. Sometimes it causes a lot of stress. It's so easy to forget where we put things.

But can you imagine losing the Son of God? How do you think Mary and Joseph felt? But in fact it was easy for them to lose track of Jesus. For one thing He was an adolescent, we all know what they're like. But also, Jesus was at an age where Mary thought because he was becoming a man that he would be with Joseph and the other men. Joseph might think that because he wasn't quite a man yet that he would be with the women and children. Still how could they leave without Him? Caravans in those days worked like this: The women and the children would leave first because they were slower, meanwhile the men would load up the donkey's and the carts and catch up later. It's Christmas time – think "Home Alone." When they noticed the great gift that they had lost they searched for three days until finally they found him in the Temple, in this Father's House.

It is so easy to lose Jesus. We get busy with work or family obligations. We get too attached to things, even good things, until we lose sight of what's important. Accumulating riches becomes our goal and we forget about the riches of Heaven. Can't go to Mass. I'm too busy. (sleeping in) I don't have time to pray the game is on. The world is full of distractions. We let it define what we should believe. I've heard people say that science proves there is no God. No, it doesn't. Science cannot take the place of God in our lives. A test tube is not a Sacrament. As Saint Augustine said, we are made for God, and we will always be restless until we rest in Him.

Have you lost Jesus? Does He have the place in your life that He deserves? Never give up looking for Him. Seek Him and you shall find Him. Remember where Mary and Joseph found him. In His Father's House – the Temple. We can find him in the same way, in our Churches. He is there in His Word. He is there in Sacrament. He is there in the community gathered to worship and He is there in the person of the priest.

It has become a cliché, but wise men and women still seek Him.



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

Class Schedule for the Week of December 29th

No classes for this week.

Grade 9 Meets next Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 4:45PM.



As we celebrate the Holy Family this week, we remember the true meaning of giving. Our Patron Saint Francis said, "It is in giving that we receive." When we give from the heart, it does not need to cost money, so we brainstormed ideas for gifts that we can all "afford" to give others by giving of ourselves. Some of the gifts we placed under our tree were: making a card or writing a letter, giving a compliment, helping others with chores, spending time with a sad or lonely friend, forgiveness, kindness, smiles, and hugs. One of the greatest lessons for children is realizing how giving to others is as much a gift to the giver as it is to the receiver.



December 29, 2024 - The Holy Family

As a first-time pastor in a parish, I received a phone call one afternoon from a young married couple, "Father, our 2-year-old son drowned in our pool this morning. We are at the hospital. Please help us." I sped over. The little boy was gone, his body cold, slightly blue, laid out on a bed. His parents were distraught and in shock. For the next few years, I walked with the couple along their difficult and painful road. They openly shared with me how they were often tempted to blame and accuse each other for the loss. And yet, by God's grace, their love for each grew stronger and deeper as the years went by.

The Holy Family was not without its pain and loss, either. Luke tells us, after losing their twelve-year-old son, Joseph and Mary **"after three days found him in the temple area, sitting among the teachers..."** (Luke 2:46). We don't know specifically what those three days were like for them except for what Mary says: **"Your father and I have been looking for you anxiously."** The three days of his absence foreshadow his death and burial. His finding in the temple is a kind of resurrection for his family. They had to learn, again and again, that their family was becoming a place where death and resurrection was not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated. But surely they deeply felt the dangerous agony of their loss — just like every couple who has lost a child.

What losses in your experience of family still cause you anxiety? In what ways has God's presence seemingly vanished in your family? Will you keep searching for Jesus? Remember, he will rise and be found. Your family may be suffering, but when he is found, it will be stronger than ever before.

Father John Muir ©LPI

 HOLIDAY 
OFFICE HOURS ©LPI

The Collaborative Office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1, 2025.



He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man. - Lk 2:51-52

Readings of the Week

Readings for the week of December 29, 2024

Sunday: 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10 (see a)/1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/
Lk 2:41-52

Monday: 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10/
Lk 2:36-40

Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/
Jn 1:1-18

Wednesday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 (2a)/
Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

Thursday: 1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/
Jn 1:19-28

Friday: 1 Jn 2:29—3:6/Ps 98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6/
Jn 1:29-34

Saturday: 1 Jn 3:7-10/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Jn 1:35-42

Next Sunday: Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13
(see 11)/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12



St. Francis of Assisi
Benedict Eugene Polio
Lucy Jean Cirafice
Julian Cade Sheils
Emma Sullivan
Bailey Grace Vonnak



December 29-Holy Family:

Today is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and so we can celebrate that we all belong to the holy family of God which makes us brothers and sisters to each other.

At Christmas this year, through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was able to bring the joy and hope to our “brothers and sisters” who are poor by assisting families, providing food, gifts, and assistance with utility and rent bills. Thank you!

Pantry donations can 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 Braintree Catholic on the memo line), or gift card—and place them into the collection basket or through the rectory mail slot. Thank you.



St. Francis of Assisi

James Turley

Yvonne Colligan

Archdiocese of Boston

Msgr. Cornelius M. McRae

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.



Whether you worship with us regularly, are here for the first time or are a returnee, we are so happy that you are here. If you would like to learn more about our collaborative family, please do not hesitate to call the office at 781-843-1332 or visit our website www.braintreecatholic.org.





From the Archdiocese of Boston

December 29 ~ Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph—Imagine the terror of Mary and Joseph as they search for their lost son and their surprise when they find him still in the Temple. It was there in the Temple that he heard the teachers and was drawn to what they were teaching. In that experience, he became aware of God as “father,” an awareness that would only grow deeper and deeper with time as he lived with Mary and Joseph in Nazareth. This feast reminds us that it is within the family that we grow in our faith and knowledge of God and learn to respect the dignity of each member. Let us take time today to ask God to strengthen all our families especially those in this community of faith.

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)

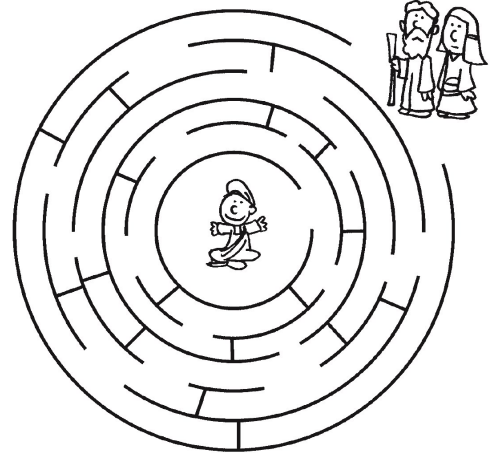
Join Boston pilgrims at the National March for Life in Washington, D.C. in January. We will depart the archdiocese at approximately 10 PM on Thurs., Jan. 23 and arrive at Life Fest at 7:30 AM on Fri., Jan. 24 and then head to the March. We will return to the archdiocese at 12:15 AM on Jan. 25. The cost 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.



PUZZLE

Help Mary and Joseph find Jesus.



MISSION

Help visitors to your church feel welcomed. As a family or as a class, make cards for visitors, asking them to come back.



Sharing the Gospel

When Jesus traveled to Jerusalem as a 12-year-old young man, he felt completely at home in the Temple. He enjoyed talking to the teachers about his Father in heaven. His questions and his answers showed how much he loved God.

Prayer

Dear God, help me to feel at home in my church like Jesus did.

Something to Draw

Draw a picture of yourself learning about God with your teacher.

Mission for the Week

Help visitors to your church feel welcomed. As a family or as a class, make cards for visitors, asking them to come back.