

Braintree Catholic Collaborative



St. Francis of Assisi Church

856 Washington Street
Braintree, Massachusetts

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5:30PM
Sunday: 9:00, 11:30AM and
6:00PM

Monday –Friday: 7:00AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: 12:30-1:30PM

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, 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
Rev. Wellington Oliveira, 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

St. Clare of Assisi Church

1244 Liberty Street
Braintree, Massachusetts

Mass Schedule

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

Saturday: 8:00AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: Following the 8AM Mass

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday: 9:00AM-4:00PM
Friday: 9:00-1:00

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 27, 2025

5:30PM

Sunday, December 28, 2025

9:00AM Leslie DeThomaso 17th anniv.

11:30AM John "Sean, Bart, Robert, Joseph and Michael Sullivan Memorial

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Monday, December 29, 2025

7:00AM Patricia Carullo Memorial

Tuesday, December 30, 2025

7:00AM

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

7:00AM Helen York Memorial

Thursday, January 1, 2026

9:30AM

Friday, January 2, 2026

7:00AM Rev. James Larner Memorial

Saturday, January 3, 2026

5:30PM Lawrence Perfetti Memorial

Sunday, January 4, 2026

9:00AM Martin Joseph Kent Month's Mind

11:30AM Daniel Crimmins and Kathleen Crimmins Memorial Healing

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative



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



We are now booking Mass Intentions for **January 1 through June 30, 2026**. To schedule a Mass or for further information please call the Collaborative Office at 781-843-1332.

Mass Intentions

St. Clare

Saturday, December 27, 2025

8:00AM Robert Kolson Memorial

4:00PM Edward O'Leary 10th Anniv.

Sunday, December 28, 2025

7:45AM Doran & Kelley Families Memorial

10:15AM Maureen Nashawaty and Thomas McDonough 14th Anniv. Memorial

Thursday, January 1, 2025

9:00AM John B. Passalacqua Anniversary

Saturday, January 3, 2026

8:00AM Ruth Barkowski, Ed Barkowski and John Avery 10th Anniv. 18th Anniv. Memorial

4:00PM Anna Tempesta and Deceased Family Members Memorial

Sunday, January 4, 2026

7:45AM Kha Ho Memorial

10:15AM John T. Cassidy 2nd Anniv.

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...** Second Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM in St. Francis Church Hall.
- **Community Meal...** 1st Wednesday of the month at 5:30PM in St. Francis church hall.

Please call the collaborative office for more information.





Christmas is a season

Christmas is a season of solemnities and feasts. It begins, of course, with the Solemnity of the Lord's nativity on December 25. It continues with the feast of St. Stephen the Deacon, the first martyr in the Church on December 26, the feast of St. John the Evangelist on December 27 and the feast of the Holy Innocents (the children massacred by King Herod) on December 28. The season also includes the Feast of the Holy Family, which is today, and the solemnities of Mary, Mother of God on January 1 and Epiphany on the second Sunday after December 25, which this year is next Sunday, January 4.

Today's feast of the Holy Family came out of a devotion in Canada during the 19th century in which the faithful held up the image of the infant Jesus, Mary and Joseph as the model of the Christian family. This devotion was adopted for the universal Church in 1920 and falls on the Sunday following Christmas (a piece of liturgical trivia: if Christmas falls on a Sunday, the feast of the Holy Family is celebrated on December 30)

It's worth noting that the most common image of the Holy Family comes from today's Gospel passage which has Mary and Joseph taking the Infant Jesus to Egypt to escape King Herod's massacre. The image has been depicted in so many beautiful works of art. So beautiful, in fact, that we forget the horror of this journey. You recall that the Magi from the east inquired of Herod where the new born King was to be born. Herod didn't know, of course, but asked the magi to let him know where they found him so that he also could go to pay homage. His intention all along was to destroy the child out of fear of rivalry. Mary and Joseph took the Child to Egypt at the prompting of an angel so as to avoid Herod. They were in search of a better life where they could raise Jesus. They did not know if or when they would be able to return to their home in Nazareth.

This feast can't help but bring to mind the millions of people throughout the world who have left their home in search of a safer place to live. For many, their living conditions are well below our own standards. This is the issue that has shaped the political scene throughout much of the world. Given the numbers of people displaced, how could it not? The Catholic Bishops of the US have spoken extensively on immigration and migration. If you are interested in reading or watching their video, I encourage

you to look at their website: uscbb.org.

Thursday is the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. It happens to fall on the first day of the calendar year. Remember, that the first day of the Church's year was on the first Sunday of Advent. This particular feast came out of the teaching of the Council of Ephesus in the year 431 in which the Church declared solemnly that Mary who gave birth to Jesus Christ gave birth to God. In many ways, this feast is more about Jesus than it is about Mary. (I suppose you could say the same about every Church feast!) Early in the fifth century there was great confusion in the Church about the nature of Jesus. Was He human? Divine? Half and half? Of course, the answer to the question has implications in the effectiveness of salvation. If Jesus were only human, then death and resurrection would not have saved the world. Same is said if Jesus is fully God only acting as a human. Our salvation depends on the Incarnation, that God took a human nature. Thus, is fully God and fully human. One way to declare this dogmatically is to say that Mary, who gave birth to Jesus, in fact gave birth to God. Given the depth of this mystery in the life of Christian faith, the Church obliges us to participate in Mass on this day. Please look elsewhere in this bulletin for the Mass schedule. And, what a great way to begin 2026: going to Mass and honoring Christ's Mother!

My profound thanks to all who worked so hard to provide the parishes with a beautiful celebration for Christmas! Deacon Joe and the choir spent many weeks rehearsing; Karen Lane and many of our children put together a terrific pageant and youth choir; Chantel Doran, Lisa Berardinelli and Cecil O'Brien so beautifully decorated our Churches; plus ushers, lectors, servers and extraordinary ministers were most generous with their time. And let's not forget the volunteers who count the collections (that's many hours of work!) And a big word of thanks to the one who pulls it all together, our collaborative office manager, Patty Kinnally.

I pray that Lord looks with kindness upon all of us as we begin a new year!

SCRIPTURE READINGS 2025-2026 YEAR A

SUNDAY Dec 28	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
MONDAY Dec 29	1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/Lk 2:22-35
TUESDAY Dec 30	1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10/Lk 2:36-40
WEDNESDAY Dec 31	1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18
THURSDAY Jan 1, 2026	Num 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6+8/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21
FRIDAY Jan 2	1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Jn 1:19-28
SATURDAY Jan 3	1 Jn 2:29-3:6/Ps 98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6/Jn 1:29-34
SUNDAY Jan 4	Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13/Eph 3:2-3, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12



From
Deacon Joe MacDonald

Whenever we think of the Feast of the Holy Family, most of us recall scenes of shepherds and kings visiting the manger. Or we might think of scenes of Joseph teaching Jesus to be a carpenter as a little boy with Mary watching over them. Whatever we picture in our minds it's something idyllic. And yes, those are pretty legitimate images of the Holy Family.

What we don't remember or what we don't like to think about is what we read in Today's Gospel (Matthew 2:13-15,19-23) when Mary and Joseph urged on by an angel in a dream took Jesus and fled to Egypt to escape from Herod's grasp (this is not the same Herod that we read about at the end of Jesus' life).

The Backstory: Three Magi from the east came to Jerusalem looking for the "newborn king." So that they could pay him homage. Well, King Herod didn't like the idea of some new king being born and was very troubled by this news. All of Jerusalem was also troubled – nobody wants to be around when the king isn't happy, especially one that is known to be cruel. Herod tells the Magi to come back and let him know where this whipper snapper is so that he can also pay him homage, although that wasn't his real motive. But God let the Magi know that Herod did not have the child's best interests at heart and so they went home by a different route. Herod was enraged and told his henchmen to kill any baby boy two years old and under anywhere in the vicinity of Bethlehem. He wasn't taking any chances. Matthew, who was writing to a Jewish audience, would often insert into the narrative prophetic quotes that were fulfilled in the life of Christ to help convince the Jewish people that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. This is the quote used regarding the slaughter of these children:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,
sobbing and loud lamentation;
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she would not be consoled,
since they were no more." (Jeremiah 31:15)

The Holy Family lived as alien refugees in a land that was not their home. They found it a better option to run to Egypt, a country that had enslaved their people for four hundred years, rather than stay in their own homeland. We know from our own experience that people from around the world are also fleeing violence and oppression by looking for shelter in a place that was never their home and by means that were often difficult and dangerous. Regardless of our political views on the subject of immigration we might have - and good people can disagree on the topic - we do have to

remember what Christ has taught. That we love each other as He has loved us. That is a self-sacrificing love. We just can't turn our backs on hungry people because they come from someplace else; look different, speak differently, have a different religion. We have to act to help them get back on their feet. We can't let people starve or freeze in the winter! It is our calling as followers of Christ Jesus to help them. Here is what Jesus said in a parable:

Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?'

And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

41 Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.'

Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.' (Matthew 25:37-45)

I guess its up for debate whether or not we care for refugees and migrants as a nation. However, it is not up for debate for any of us who call ourselves Christian. The Church has no choice but to act, not politically but charitably, seeing in the faces of every person the face of Christ himself. Whether society decides to help the poor and displaced or not, acting as ambassadors for Christ we must feed the hungry; give drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked; welcome the stranger and visit the sick and imprisoned. If they are the suffering Christ, then we have to be the healing Christ.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS

The children have been practicing a special song for the Christmas Pageant and are very excited to tell the story of Jesus' family tree.



Another fun-filled half day event! The kids had a picnic lunch while watching The Charlie Brown Christmas movie, and then colored some pictures to make Christmas cards to be delivered to local nursing home residents. Father Kevin led us in a special prayer for those who will receive the cards.



Santa made a surprise visit! He answered lots of questions like what is his favorite Christmas song? Silent Night! What is his favorite kind of cookie? Chocolate Chip! He gave the kids candy.



Finally the kids played some "reindeer games" like Snowball Swoosh, Christmas Cup Craze, Dasher Dunk, and Festive Freeze Dance!





Thursday, January 1, 2026 is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph—a Holy Day of Obligation

The Mass schedule for the Collaborative is

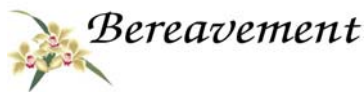
Wednesday, December 31, 2025—400PM at St. Clare

Thursday, January 1, 2026—7AM at St. Francis and
9AM at St. Clare



The collaborative Office will close at 12:00 on December 31st and will reopen at 9:00AM on Monday, January 5th.

We wish you a very Happy and Healthy New Year!



Support Group

Are you grieving the loss of someone close to you? If you are interested in talking about your grief and need support in your grief healing, we are again beginning our bereavement classes. They will be every Saturday at 10:30AM at St. Francis of Assisi church hall. The hour-long meeting will help you bring your suffering to the Lord and also allow you to know others who are going through something similar.

Meetings will meet weekly from 10:30—11:30AM. No sign-up or commitment, just a place to come and find comfort.

“What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we loved deeply becomes part of us.”

Helen Keller

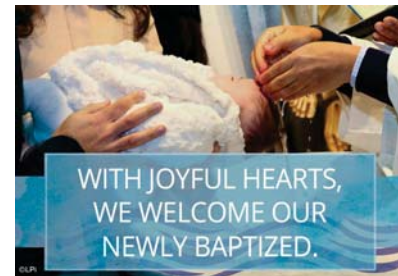


December 28: Feast of the Holy Family

Today is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We hear the words: “The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.” During this New Year may we also grow in wisdom and have the favor of God upon us by remembering to take care of our suffering brothers and sisters.

In the month of December, through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul brought the spirit of Christmas to those who are suffering, by assisting families, providing food, gifts, and assistance with utility and rent bills.

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 SFA on the memo line), or gift card—and place them into the collection basket or through the rectory mail slot.**



St. Francis

Charlotte Ann Cody

Elias Albert Melson

Owen Benjamin Wolford, Jr.

**REST IN
PEACE**

St. Francis of Assisi

Dorothea Corcoran

William Salisbury

St. Clare

Carole Moriarty

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.



**The next Community Meal is scheduled for
Wednesday, January 7, 2026**

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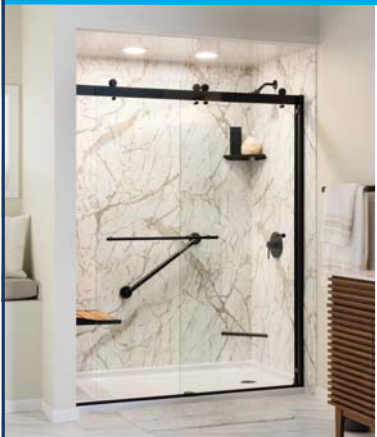
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"Jesus Wept." John 11:35


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