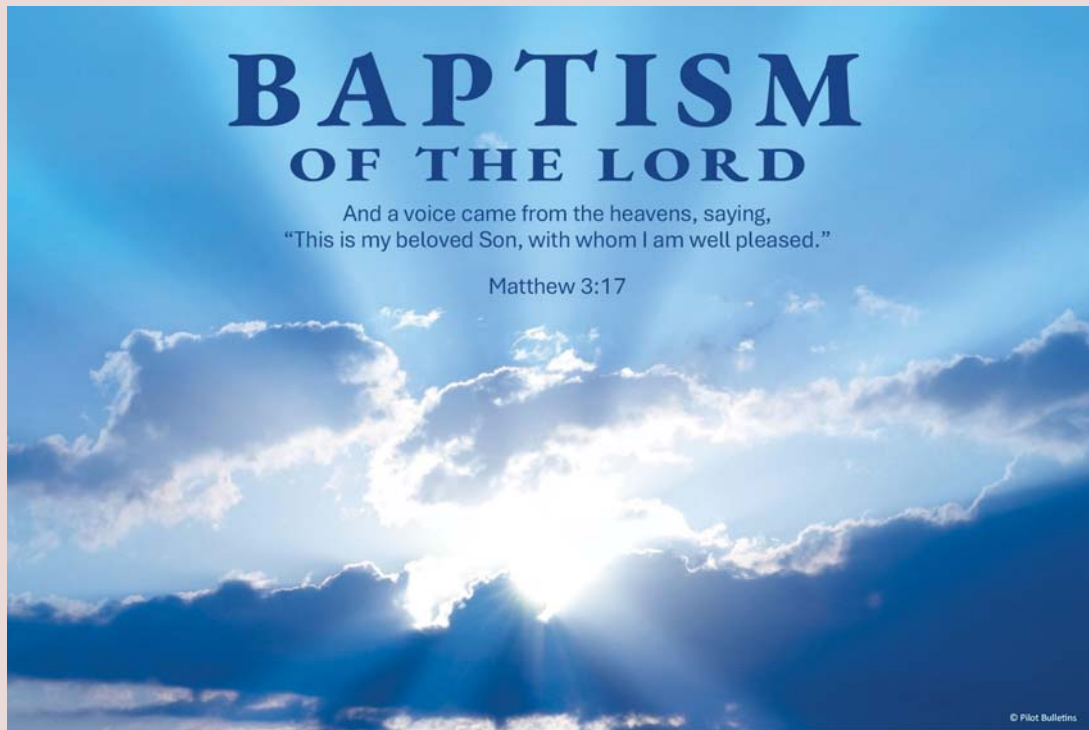


Braintree Catholic Collaborative



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, January 10, 2026

5:30PM Stephen "Obie" O'Brien 3rd Anniv.

Sunday, January 11, 2026

9:00AM Nicholas T. Nashawaty III Anniversary

11:30AM Grace & Paul Kelly 1st Anniv.

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Monday, January 12, 2026

7:00AM Lucy Ngugi Spec. Intent.

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

7:00AM Thomas Ngugi Spec. Intent.

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

7:00AM Dennis Murphy Memorial

Thursday, January 15, 2026

9:30AM

Friday, January 16, 2026

7:00AM

Saturday, January 17, 2026

5:30PM Gordon Morrissey 3rd Anniv.

Sunday, January 18, 2026

9:00AM Michael Corcoran 6th Anniv.

11:30AM Ronald & Frances O'Brien and
Mary Ferrazzi Memorial

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, January 10, 2026

8:00AM Robert Finn Memorial

4:00PM Patrick "Paddy Preston and
Margaret "Maggie" Preston 1st Anniv.

Sunday, January 11, 2026

7:45AM Rebecca Sharkey McDonough Spec. Intent.

10:15AM William "Bill" Andrews and
Deceased Members of Burns and
Andrews Family 1st Anniv. Memorial

Saturday, January 17, 2026

8:00AM

4:00PM Anna DiCenso 1st Anniv.

Sunday, January 18, 2026

7:45AM

10:15AM Bashir Abraham Khnaizir, Mary
Limea Bashir and George Nisser Memorial

The Bread & Wine for the week of January 10 through 16 were donated in loving memory of William "Bill" Andrews and Deceased Members of the Burns and Andrews Family.

The Bread and Wine for the Week of December 27 through January 2 were donated in loving memory of Anthony Catto.

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.



The Christmas season comes to a close with today's feast of the *Baptism of the Lord*. Early on in Church history, the Baptism of the Lord was commemorated on Epiphany; Epiphany meaning manifestation. At His baptism in the Jordan River, Jesus was *manifested* to be God's Beloved Son. Over the centuries Epiphany became more associated with the visit of the magi and the Lord's Baptism was quietly pushed aside. Given the importance of the Lord's Baptism for our own salvation, the Church gave it a feast of its own and put it at the end of the Christmas season. (The Christmas season used to last until February 2, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Many still hold onto the custom of leaving the Creche up until that feast.)

Today's feast is an opportunity to recall our own Baptism. In our Catholic tradition we have the practice of blessing ourselves with holy water upon entering a Church. This gesture serves as a small reminder of our Baptism when God claimed us as His own.

With Baptism comes a designation and a destination. The designation is that we, like Jesus, are God's beloved son/daughter. As such we become an heir to everything God has. Specifically, this means life in abundance, or life without end. Connected to that is a destination. We are destined for salvation. As far as God is concerned, everything about our lives is aimed toward salvation, that is, to be saved from death and have eternal life. However, that is as far as God is concerned. We have a say in the destination as well. We can receive our "inheritance" if you will. Or we can leave it. God does not force a destiny on us. It's ours for the choosing.

When I was working in the clergy personnel office, we would visit parishes that were in need of a pastor. Often, we would meet with the parish council for a discussion about the needs of the parish. One of the questions that we would ask: "is there is a group of people in the parish that is underserved?" The question generated some great discussions. I ask myself that question of our two parishes. The answer that comes to me are parents of children in our religious education program. It's only a relatively small percentage of families in our program that regularly come to Sunday Mass. I often see them dropping/picking up their children for class. Some wait in their cars scrolling on their phones (I can appreciate the need to "zone out" when you have a few quiet moments). Is there something that we as a parish can be doing to help them in their own faith?

I mention all this in light of today's feast of the Lord's Baptism. When these same parents brought their children to Church to have them baptized, they made a solemn oath to hand on their Christian faith. At the beginning of the Baptism liturgy, the priest/deacon asks the parents *You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?*

This is a serious promise! As a faith community, I feel strongly that we have a responsibility to help parents to do this. Many will tell you that they feel ill-equipped to "train him/her in the practice of the faith." Given the demands on parents today the old methods of support no longer are effective. It just doesn't work to ask them to come to meetings/programs. There simply isn't the time.

The **Collaborative Pastoral Council** will be meeting on Wednesday evening. The question of supporting parents in the faith will be part of our meeting. If anyone has any thoughts on the matter, I sure would like to hear from you. Many of you have raised children or are helping to raise your grandchildren and may have an insight I don't have. I would be grateful to hear from you.

The children of our RE program are making "*Blessing Bags*" that contain toiletries, socks, gloves, hats, snacks, etc. These will be made available to those who come to the Community Meal on the first Wednesday of the month. We are in need of gloves, hats and toiletries. If you would like to donate any of these, there will designated places in each of the Churches. *Fr. Bob*

Love Your Marriage Retreat - This one-day retreat for married couples will be held on January 31st at the Pastoral Center, Braintree. It will be led by Family Life and Our Outpost, a Catholic ministry designed to help couples intentionally develop vibrant marriages through healthier communication, conflict resolution, and decision making. The cost is \$40 per couple and includes meals, materials, Mass, and more. For more information and registration, visit bit.ly/loveyourmarriageretreat.

Convalidation Ceremony - 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 14, 2026, at 6 PM with 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/convalidation2026 for more information or call Emily Elliott in Family Life at 617-746-5756.



From
Deacon Joe MacDonald

Exorcisms! With over twenty years as a deacon behind me, I have participated in hundreds of exorcisms.

That statement is what we call an attention grabber! Of course, there is a caveat to this, but you'll have to keep reading to know what it's all about.

Today we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord and so I thought it might be an appropriate time to say something about Baptism. It is always a good idea to start with something the saints have said. Here are some thoughts by Saint Gregory of Nazianzus about Baptism.

Baptism is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift...We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, garment of immortality, bath of rebirth, seal, and most precious gift. It is called gift because it is conferred on those who bring nothing of their own; grace since it is given even to the guilty; Baptism because sin is buried in the water; anointing for it is priestly and royal as are those who are anointed; enlightenment because it radiates light; clothing since it veils our shame; bath because it washes; and seal as it is our guard and sign of God's Lordship.

So, what are the effects of Baptism? Why is it important?

The Reception of the Children

I remember hearing years ago that "the Church prays what it believes and believes what it prays." So, let's see what the actual ritual says. The first thing that happens at an infant baptism is what I like to call "the quiz." We ask two things of the parents. First, "What name to you give your child?" We almost always get the right answer. Why is this important because that's the name that God will use for them. Then we ask, "What do you want of God's Church." There are a few good answers, but "Baptism" would be the one we're most looking for. The parents are then asked if they understand their responsibilities in having their child Baptized to which they respond, "I do." We then turn to the Godparents and ask them if they are willing to help the parents in their duty. To which we expect a positive response.

We then claim the children for Christ, and the priest or deacon signs the cross on their foreheads and the parents and Godparents do the same. This concludes the first part of Baptism.

Liturgy of the Word

Anytime the Church gathers for anything important, especially celebrating the Sacraments, we always include a Liturgy of the Word. As we do at Sunday Mass this might include

a reading from the Old Testament, a Responsorial Psalm, a New Testament Reading, and a Gospel. Usually though, it is typical to just read from the Gospel and then a homily. And just as we do at Mass this is followed by intercessions. Knowing that the Church includes those of us here on earth and those already in Heaven, we ask the saints to pray for us too.

Prayer of Exorcism

I promised we'd get to this! As we all know Baptism frees us from Original Sin and in the case of adults being Baptized all the sins of their past lives are forgiven along with any punishment that would have resulted from those sins. So, if you've ever been to a Baptism, you've also been to an Exorcism. Lucky you! Here is the prayer the deacon or priest says:

"Almighty and ever-living God, you sent your only Son into the world to cast out the power of Satan, spirit of evil, to rescue us from the kingdom of darkness, and bring us into the splendor of your kingdom of light. We pray for these children: set them free from original sin, make them temples of your glory, and send your Holy Spirit to dwell within them."

No head spinning, weird voices or crawling on the ceiling like in the movies. A simple prayer and it's done.

Anointing before Baptism

The children are then anointed with the "Oil of Catechumens" by which we call upon the Lord to strengthen them with his power.

"May you have the strength in the power of Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns for ever and ever."

Celebration of the Sacrament

Before we actually pour the water and Baptize the children, we recall how God has used water in the past and bless the water in the font. We remember the Spirit breathing on the waters at the dawn of creation and the great flood which became a sign of making an end of sin a new beginning of goodness. We recall the parting of the Red Sea as well so that as Israel was led out of slavery through those waters just as we, through Baptism are freed from sin. Then we recall The Lord's own Baptism, water and blood flowing from his side as he hung on the Cross, and the Lord's own command to go out and teach and baptize conclude this section.

We renounce sin and profess our faith and then we are ready to die with Christ. You know that full immersion is one of the ways that we can Baptize and was the usual way in the early Church. Think about it. You're standing in a river, and the priest plunges you beneath the water and holds you there for a bit. You can't breathe, and you are buried under the water symbolizing death. And then triumphantly you are

raised from the tomb to live a new life. A new Christian is born!

Explanatory Rites

These explanatory Rites are meant to unwrap some of the meaning of what just occurred. First, the newly baptized are anointed a second time with the Sacred Chrism (a scented oil). We have been incorporated into the Body of Christ and therefore we share in His life as Priest, Prophet, and King. We are set apart to worship; to speak for God; and to serve as Jesus did.

The children are then clothed in a white garment because they have become a new creation and have "clothed themselves in Christ." They are given a candle because they have received the Light of Christ. Finally, we pray over the ears and mouth of the children so their ears will receive God's Word, and their mouths learn to proclaim His faith.

Concluding Rites

Like at the end of Mass we bless the people. First the mothers and then the fathers and then all present. The celebrant simply says, "Go in peace" and the people respond "Thanks be to God."



To mark the solemnity of the Epiphany, the RE students processed in with Father Bob and presented gifts to Jesus in the manger.



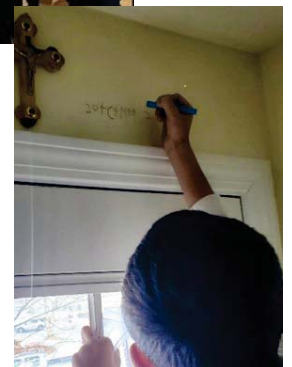
In his homily, Father Bob told the story of La Befana, who wanted to give a gift to the infant Jesus. She regretted not joining the Wise Men on their journey, so she set off on her broom and left gifts for all the children in hopes that Jesus would receive her gift. Father Bob told us that every time we give a gift or do something kind for someone in need, we are doing something kind for Jesus. The gifts the kids brought up to the manger will be used to make Blessing Bags that will be brought to the Community Meal Program. Families are welcome to bring donations of toiletries, warm hats, gloves, socks, and snacks throughout January. There are collection baskets in the lobbies of both churches.



Father Bob also taught us about the tradition of the Epiphany Home Chalk Blessing, which marks the moment when the Magi revealed Christ to the world and invites Jesus to dwell within the home for the coming year.



Father Bob blessed the chalk, and families were invited to bring it home and write 20+26 along with the letters C+M+B above their door. The numbers mark time, reminding us that every year belongs to God. The letters recall the traditional names of the Magi, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, who journeyed far to adore the newborn King.





January 11: The Baptism of the Lord

After Jesus was baptized, he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and a voice was heard "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." As we give to the poor, we also can hear these same words. **Have you considered joining the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that you can live your Baptism more fully?**



FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY is next weekend, January 17-18. Thank you to everyone who so faithfully supports our pantry. **We are in need of the following items:** Laundry Detergent, spray cleaners, dish liquid, personal care items i.e. bar soap, deodorant,

catsup, mustard mayonnaise and coffee. However, we are grateful for anything you wish to donate. If you prefer not to shop, please read below 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.**



St. Francis of Assisi
Jaxon Peter Lusha

REST IN PEACE

St. Francis of Assisi

Robert Busby
Patricia McKeon

St. Clare

Thomas Matthews
Anthony Pettinelli, Jr.

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.



Bereavement

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



**The next Community Meal is scheduled for
Wednesday, February 4, 2026**

SCRIPTURE READINGS 2026 YEAR A

SUNDAY Jan 11	Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10/Acts 10:34-38/ Mt 3:13-17
MONDAY Jan 12	1 Sm 1:1-8/Ps 116:12-13, 14-17, 18-19/Mk 1:14-20
TUESDAY Jan 13	1 Sm 1:9-20/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Mk 1:21-28
WEDNESDAY Jan 14	1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20/Ps 40:2+5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10/Mk 1:29-39
THURSDAY Jan 15	1 Sm 4:1-11/Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25/Mk 1:40-45
FRIDAY Jan 16	1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a/Ps 89:16-17, 18-19/Mk 2:1-12
SATURDAY Jan 17	1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a/Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Mk 2:13-17
SUNDAY Jan 18	Is 49:3, 5-6/Ps 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10/1 Cor 1:1-3/Jn 1:29-34



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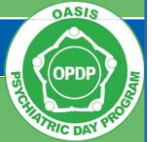
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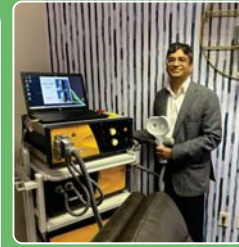
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