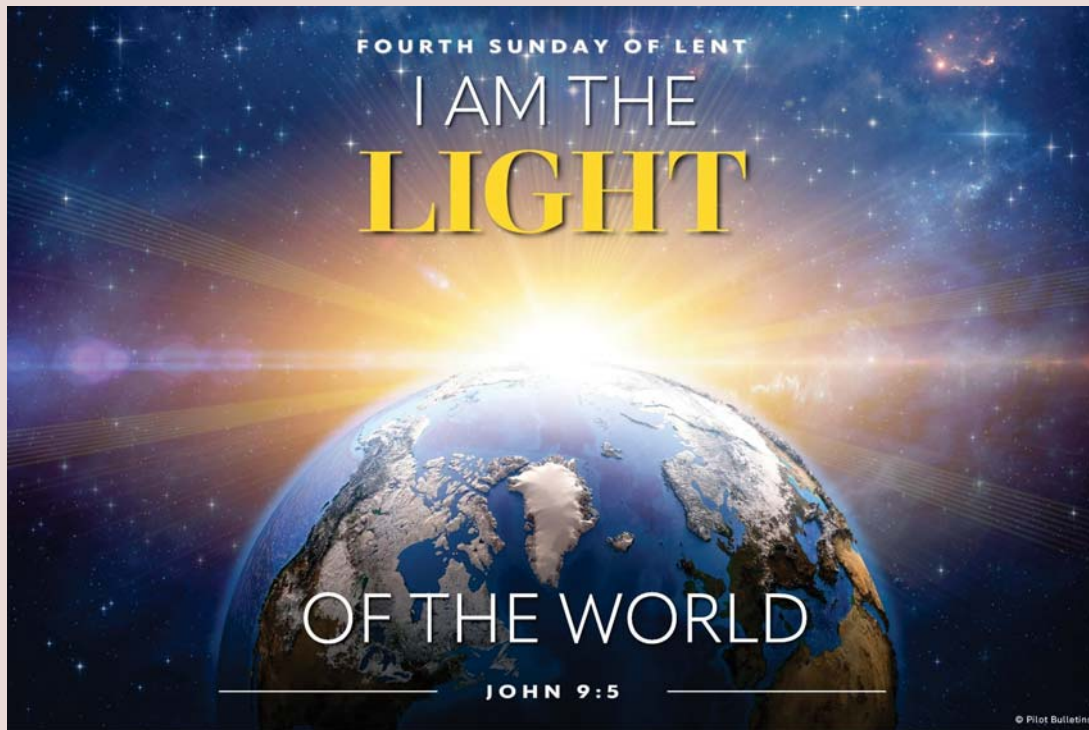


Braintree Catholic Collaborative



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, March 14, 2026

5:30PM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Sunday, March 15, 2026

9:00AM Ann Picewick 4th Anniv.

11:30AM Domenico Federico 4th Anniv.

6:00PM Peter LeRoy 1st Anniv.

Monday, March 16, 2026

7:00AM

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

7:00AM Healy, O'Donnell and Jordan Memorial
Families, Pat Bracken,
Bernadette Canney and
Mattie Coleman

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

7:00AM Helen Murphy Spec. Intent.

Thursday, March 19, 2026

7:00AM MaryRose Brady 4th Anniv.

Friday, March 20, 2026

7:00AM

Saturday, March 21, 2026

5:30PM Thomas Pokaski 25th Anniv.

Sunday, March 22, 2026

9:00AM Pasquale & Benedetta Memorial
Compagnone

11:30AM Dennis O'Connell 20th Anniv.

6:00PM Kaitlyn Haugh Memorial



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.



Mass Intentions

St. Clare

Saturday, March 14, 2026

8:00AM Patricia Welch Memorial

4:00PM Helen Farmer Anniversary

Sunday, March 15, 2026

7:45AM Robert W. Graham 40th Anniv.

10:15AM Joseph Marino 5th Anniv.

Saturday, March 21, 2026

8:00AM Thomas Targonski Memorial

4:00PM Anna DiCenso Memorial

Sunday, March 22, 2026

7:45AM Parishioners of the Collaborative

10:15AM Sean Michael O'Donnell 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.





Today is called **Laetare Sunday**, which comes from a Latin word meaning “rejoice”. It marks the halfway point of Lent and provides a bit of a breather from the austerity of the rigors of Lenten penance. It is a good occasion to take stock in how we are doing with our Lenten disciplines. If Lent has not turned out to be the way you had hoped, then let me offer a word of encouragement. Recalibrate your spirit and use the remaining weeks of Lent to prepare for the renewal of your Baptism at Easter Mass. Don’t be discouraged! If you have not kept your intentions from Ash Wednesday, then re-engage today.

One of the important ways in which we prepare for Easter (and indeed for eternal life!) is through the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**, or Penance or Confession. One of the precepts of the Church is that we receive the Sacrament at least once a year. As a confessor, I find that many who have been away from the Sacrament for a period of time have done so because they are simply not sure what to say. Not to worry! The priest will help you to make a good confession. Just let him know you need a bit of help, and he will talk you right through it.

When making your confession, let the priest know roughly the last time you were at confession. If you don’t know, simply tell him that you don’t know. This helps to give some context to what you will say next. Then simply tell the priest your sins. You don’t need to give the back story or explain why you did what you did. Just say it. If the priest needs more information for the sake of the confession, he will ask you.

So, what exactly is sin? The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines sin: an offense against reason, truth and right conscience. It is a failure in genuine love for God and neighbor. There are different kinds of sin, of course, however, they fall into one of two categories: mortal (or grave) and venial. The difference between the two has to do with the gravity or seriousness of the sin. **Mortal sin** destroys charity by a violation of God’s law. It turns a person away from God by choosing something other than God as the center of his/her life. There are three criteria for mortal sin: there must be grave matter. In other words the sin must be objectively contradictory to God’s law. Secondly, mortal sin must be committed with full knowledge. You have to know what you are doing is in fact mortal sin. Thirdly, there must be deliberate consent, you must freely choose to do. If you are not doing it out of freedom, then it is not a mortal sin. Mortal sin requires a new initiative of God’s mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. So important is the

Sacrament of Reconciliation in the case of mortal sin, that a person conscious of it should not receive Holy Communion until first receiving absolution. Think of it this way: having committed a mortal sin, a person needs to set things right with God.

Venial sin is likewise an offense to charity however the charity remains. Charity is weakened because of the venial sin. This kind of sin slows the progress of virtue. It happens by our disordered affections for created goods. Think of it this way: in a moment of frustration you say something mean to your husband/wife. He/she is hurt by your remark but it does not destroy the marriage. In this case, an apology ought to be made and there is usually some small expression of forgiveness. Such it is with God. It is important to all our sins, as the grace of the Sacrament gives us strength to avoid temptations and choose God in all things.

Having confessed your sins, the priest will offer you a penance. This is an outward expression of your desire for God’s mercy and intent to avoid sin. Often this takes the form of prayer and may involve some act of charity too.

It’s important, then, that you express your sorrow for your sins. This is what we call an Act of Contrition. This may be read, memorized or spoken spontaneously. It can be in any language.

Having expressed your regret for the sin, the priest will say the prayer of absolution over you.

How often should you go to Confession? Hard to say. Everyone is different. The Church precepts say a minimum of once a year. I find that people who go three to four times a year generally draw a great benefit from it and seem to move into a virtuous life more easily. I go about every three weeks or so. However, if I have done something I truly regret that I know is not God’s will for me and is offensive to the Church, I will go as needed. Confession times between now and Easter are elsewhere in the bulletin.

I am grateful to all who came out for the **Lenten retreat** last week. I think it was an inspiring time to help prepare ourselves for the celebration of the Lord’s Passion and Resurrection during Holy Week.

This week gives us two major feasts to inspire us in the practice of our Christian faith. On Tuesday, we celebrate the feast of the patron saint of the Archdiocese of Boston, **St. Patrick**. Thursday is the feast of the patron of the universal Church, **St. Joseph**. Many cultures celebrate these two hero’s of the faith with various foods, music and gathering with family and friends. Enjoy it all as feasting is important in our faith. I have long thought that the challenge we have culturally with fasting (abstaining from something good) is because we have difficulty feasting. I don’t mean gorging ourselves, but rather taking pleasure in special things that are reserved for special occasions.



From
Deacon Joe MacDonald

A reflection on the man born blind (John 9:1-41)

This is such a human story. It shows us the best and the worst that people can be and everything in between. From the very first line we see how prejudice and ignorance affect even the Disciples of Christ. His own followers, the ones we would expect to know better, pass judgment on this poor blind man. Someone must have done a terrible thing for God to punish him in this way. "Lord, was it this man or his parents? Who's the sinner here?"

No one sinned, blindness or any other affliction just happens sometimes. But that doesn't stifle God. God still brings good to any situation.

"Who's the sinner," they ask? – Who is blind is the better question.

After the blind man regained his sight there are all kinds of reactions. People can't believe it. "He's lying." "It's some kind of scam." "Prove it!"

Can't we just rejoice with someone in their good fortune?

Who's the one that's blind?

The man's parents come in and acknowledge that this is their son who was indeed blind from birth. They acknowledge their son, but they are too afraid to acknowledge Jesus. In their human weakness they allow fear to keep them from seeing the reality of Jesus and by their silence others were also kept in the dark.

How often do we let fear keep us from acknowledging Christ or keep us from bringing others to Christ? How many are kept in the dark because of our fear?

The reaction of the Pharisees is mixed. John uses the word "divided." Some are clouded in jealousy; others wallow in self-righteousness and indignation. Others resort to slander.

Who is blind here?

The only one in the story that had any real vision was the guy that was blind. He was the only one with the courage to stand up to the authorities and he found himself kicked to the street – expelled from the temple.

By the time the Gospel of John was written a terrible thing had happened to Israel. The Roman armies came in like Operation Epic Fury, broke the back of the nation, and destroyed the temple. For ancient Israel, the temple was the very sign of who they were. It was the focal point of their worship. It was where God resided.

What must it have been like, to be a faithful Jew, and to gaze upon the rubble of what was the very essence of everything you believed? Where do you go from there? What do you do now? It must have been difficult to see any future, blinded as they were by the rubble. Like the man born blind they all found themselves out on the street – expelled from the temple.

I imagine it must be like surviving a house fire and watching everything you held dear smolder in the ruins the next morning. It was their 9/11.

Everything seems like it's falling apart. You can't see the forest for the trees. It's like the Jewish people looking at that temple in ruins. It's like Mary Magdalene in the garden after the Resurrection unable to recognize Jesus - blinded by her own tears. It's like the Apostle Thomas asking Jesus to show us the Father – blind to the reality of who Jesus really was and to see Jesus is to see the Father.

We aren't such great visionaries either. We, too, are blinded.

Maybe we're unable to see Christ in the Church because we are blinded by the rubble left by scandal. Perhaps like Mary Magdalene we are unable to see the glory of the Resurrection because we can't see beyond the tears of our own grief and sadness. Maybe we can't see Jesus in our neighbor because we can't get beyond the fact that what we see on the outside doesn't agree with our own perception of Who Jesus is, just as the religious leaders 2,000 years ago were blinded by their own perception of religion and who or what they thought the Messiah should be.

The Jewish people after the destruction of the Temple were looking for answers, as are we, "Where do we go now?" they asked. John and the other Apostles had the answer – go to Jesus. The answer is passed on to us in today's Gospel by the only person in the whole Gospel account who had true vision – the man born blind. Do what he did – he went to Jesus.

When Saint Pope John Paul II came to Boston in 1979 and spoke on Boston Common, he used a two-word mantra. They are the two most important words any of us will ever hear – "Follow Christ!" It was the same message that the early Church proclaimed to those the Romans left behind and it's exactly what the man born blind did in today's Gospel when the religious leaders threw him out – he went to Christ.

May we, still blinded by our own prejudice, unable to see over the debris the world leaves in our path, sightless in the midst of our own tears, and unable to see anything good in our future, heed the call of John and of John Paul II and of the man born blind, go to Jesus. May we always keep our eyes focused on the One who lets us see clearly, Jesus Christ our Lord.



We can help children participate in Lent without turning it into a burden they can't carry. So what counts as Lent for kids?

- ◆ **Prayer** - Simple moments - mealtime blessings, bedtime reflections, listening to Sunday readings together. Lent invites children into more intentional prayer, not longer prayer.
- ◆ **Fasting & self-denial** - Not a strict fast, but small sacrifices: extra prayers after screen time, giving up a favorite treat on weekdays. These are invitations to freedom, not punishment.
- ◆ **Almsgiving** - Sharing time, toys, or charity from a “Lenten jar” teaches children that Lent looks outward toward neighbors.

What matters is growth - not perfection. Children learn most not from strict performance but from watching us embrace Lent ourselves. When they see us pray with joy, offer sacrifices with calm hearts, and give generously, they begin to understand that Lent is not just about what we give up. It is about whom we draw closer to - **Jesus**.

Practical ways to celebrate Lent together:

- ◆ Read the Sunday Gospel at breakfast and ask, “How does this invite us to grow?”
- ◆ Choose one simple weekday sacrifice as a family.
- ◆ Create a small almsgiving plan together.
- ◆ Keep Sundays restful and joyful - Lent never cancels the Resurrection.



Teaching Masses are a terrific way for kids to learn the structure and responses of the Mass. They are also a great

review for parents! During a teaching Mass, the priest narrates what is happening and why as it happens, kind of like a sportscaster. Participants are able to ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of the beauty of the Mass.

Upcoming Teaching Masses:

St Clare - Tuesday, March 24 and Thursday, March 26 at 4:00 for First Communion students and their families.

St Francis - Sunday, March 15 at 6:00 for Confirmation students and their families.



Upcoming Events:

BPS Half-Day Hangout! - Thursday, March 26 1:00-4:00 at St. Clare. Bring a lunch and drink and come have some fun on the half-day!

Easter Movie/Game Night! – Friday, March 27 6:00-9:00 at St. Clare. Pizza and treats will be served – bring a drink. Come watch a movie and have some Easter fun!

Please email Karen Lane at klane@sfab.org if your child would like to attend either event.



Our next meeting is at St. Francis in the church hall THIS Wednesday, March 18 at 6:30pm.

March is CORI month!

All volunteers, employees and clergy serving in the Archdiocese of Boston are required to submit a new CORI every year. The South Region, of which we are a part, is due by the end of March.

If you have not filled out a CORI since February of this year you need to complete one in the next couple of weeks.

We will have some in the sacristies at both churches beginning this week. Next week there will be someone after each Mass to help you fill them out, check them and sign them. All lines highlighted in yellow, back and front, must be filled in.

You can also come to the parish office to fill one out. Thank you.



March 15: Fourth Sunday of Lent

In today's Gospel, as Jesus gives sight to the blind man. Through grace we are also transformed from not seeing to seeing and then Jesus sends us to help others see and to

believe.

Your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul brings joy, peace, forgiveness, mercy and kindness to the hurting hearts of the poor.



FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY is THIS weekend, March 14-15. 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, cat-**

sup, 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.**



The Community Meal Ministry is in need of another Chef. The Chef would be a team member and would be responsible to cook once every four months in rotation. If you have any experience as a chef we would love to talk to you about this important and

fulfilling volunteer position. ServSafe certification would be a plus but is not required. If interested please email Kathy Whalen-Giannandrea at Kathywg@sfab.org or call Patty in the Collaborative Office.

Our next Community Meal is scheduled for THIS Wednesday, April 1, 2026.



If you are a registered parishioner who utilizes the parish envelope system or the online giving option and would like a copy of your total contributions for 2025 please call the collaborative office at 781-843-1332. If you do not currently utilize the parish envelope or online giving system, but would like to; or if you have any questions regarding your statement, please contact Patty Kinnally in the collaborative office.



Lenten Calendar

Mondays at St. Francis

Eucharistic Adoration 6:00—7:15PM; Scriptural Rosary followed by Benediction 6:45PM; **Confessions** 6:30-7:15PM

Fridays at St. Francis

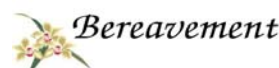
Stations of the Cross at 12:10PM

Saturdays at St. Clare

Mini Course on the Second Vatican Council

Confessions

In addition to the time listed above, confessions are heard on Saturdays at 8:30AM at St. Clare and 12:30-1:30 at St. Francis. Additional times during Holy Week will be added.



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



St. Francis of Assisi

Mary Dennehy

Theresa Augenti

Sr. Katherine Kinnally, SSND

St. Clare

Violet K. Erickson

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.

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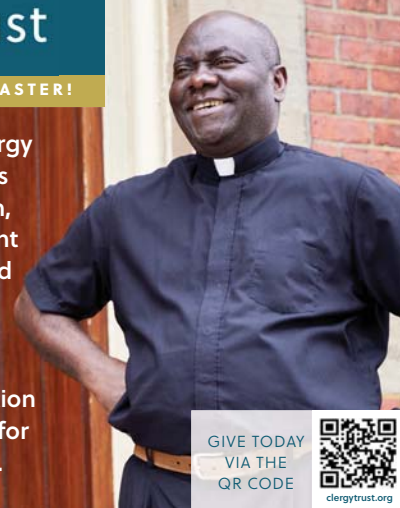


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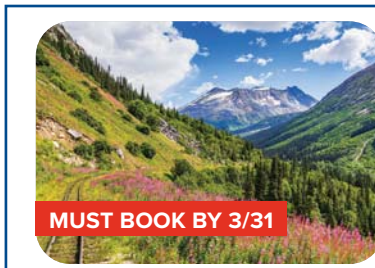
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