

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
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 **11:30AM**
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, July 4, 2026

5:30PM J. Richard Hamel Anniversary

Sunday, July 5, 2026

9:00AM Marty Murphy 23rd Anniv.

11:30AM Stella Ngugi Spec. Intent.

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative

Monday, July 6, 2026

7:00AM Jason Spec. Intent.

Tuesday, July 7, 2026

7:00AM Samuel A. Dentino Anniversary

Wednesday, July 8, 2026

7:00AM Helen Murphy Memorial

Thursday, July 9, 2026

7:00AM Margaret "Peg" Kelly Memorial

Friday, July 10, 2026

7:00AM Sean Duane & Deceased
Members of the Duane Family Memorial

Saturday, July 11, 2026

5:30PM Margaret "Peg" Kelley

Sunday, July 12, 2026

9:00AM Laurie Melchionda Memorial

11:30AM Lucy Ngugi Spec. Intent.

6:00PM Parishioners of the Collaborative



We are now booking Mass Intentions for July 1 through December 31, 2026. To schedule a Mass or for further information please call the Collaborative Office at 781-843-1332.

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Mass Intentions

St. Clare

Saturday, July 4, 2026

8:00AM Our Nation's 250th Birthday

4:00PM **NO MASS**

Sunday, July 5, 2026

7:45AM Agnes C. & Richard S. Cripps Memorial

10:15AM Robert F. Murphy 3rd Anniv.

Saturday, July 11, 2026

8:00AM Mark Fitzsimmons Memorial

4:00PM Edward O'Leary Memorial

Sunday, July 12, 2026

7:45AM Ellsworth F. Rice Memorial

10:15AM Marissa Ellis Schneider Healing

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.





During the summer, I like to use the bulletin column to present a series on a topic of our faith. Pope Leo has encouraged Catholics to take a look at the documents from the Second Vatican Council this year. We did that here during Lent. And given the recent conversation by the Collaborative Pastoral Council, I thought it would be a good idea to take a deeper dive into the document on the liturgy that was promulgated in 1965 called *Sacrosanctum Concilium* which called for a renewal of the Mass, Sacraments and Liturgy of the Hours. During the summer week, I will look at parts of *Sacrosanctum* in this column with the hopes that it will get us thinking more about what it is we do when we celebrate the Mass.

Pope Saint John XXIII called for an *ecumenical council* on January 25, 1959, after only three months as Pope. His announcement shook the Church as even the mere calling for a council was considered radical. At that time, he only called for a council. He gave no details what it was about, when it will be held or how it would work.

An ecumenical council is a meeting of all the bishops of the Church. It is the highest authority in the Church. Its primary purpose is to look at the mysteries of the faith. Such a council is where major dogmatic issues are discussed and promulgated. Examples of such issue over the centuries: the two natures of Jesus, Mary is the Mother of God, the role of the pope and bishops, etc. An ecumenical council enjoys the charism of *infallibility*, that is, what it teaches is without error. We hold this as true because of our firm conviction that the Holy Spirit is always active in the Church leading it to truth. All this to say, even the Pope cannot change dogma. He cannot decide, for example, that there is to be a fourth person of the Trinity.

There have been 21 ecumenical councils in the history of the Church. The last one before Vatican II was Vatican I in 1869. That council was never completed because of wars in Europe. When John XXIII called for the council, there was some thinking initially that he wanted simply to complete Vatican I. However, in July 1959 he spelled out what he wanted from the council which was to take a fresh look at the Church and not merely pick up where the bishops had left off some 90 years previous.

Over 2600 bishops from all over the world descended on St. Peter's Basilica in October 1962. It took several years to prepare for the meeting by surveying the bishops about what they thought the agenda should be. The top two items the bishops wanted to discuss were Sacred Scripture and the Liturgy. There were a number of working papers that were passed around, argued, debated and

discussed. The first document was the Constitution on Revelation called *Dei Verbum*. It decreed how Sacred Scripture was to be used in the Catholic Church. Up until this time, Catholics were not encouraged to read the Bible. Remember up until fairly recently, most people were not able to read or write so this was not such a concern. Up until the liturgical changes of Vatican II, only 1% of the Old Testament and 16% of the New Testament were used at Mass in one year cycle. After the Council, 14% of the Old Testament and 71% of the New Testament in a 3 year cycle (which we use currently). Why not more? Much of the Bible is repetitive, in a sense. If you go to Mass every Sunday for three years and every weekday for two years you will have heard the entire cycle and have a very good grasp of what is in the Bible.

Sacrosanctum Concilium promulgated how the Church is to look at worship. Many will think that the biggest changes in the Mass to come out of the Second Vatican Council is having the priest face the people or that Mass can be celebrated in the local language. Actually, the biggest change in the liturgy is that lay people are full and active participants in the Mass. We take this for granted now, but prior to the council, the Mass was considered to be the activity of the priest alone. People went to Church to "hear" Mass be said. And because it was completely in Latin, most people were not able to follow along, nor were they encouraged to do so. Many people would pray the rosary during Mass. Those more interested had a missal which had the parts of the Mass printed in Latin with an English translation (or whatever language).

If you find this interesting, I encourage you to join Sr Georgeanne and myself for the next four Saturday mornings for a look at what the Council called for in promulgating *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. There are many surprises. The presentations will happen on July 11, 18, 25 and August 1 at 9:00 at St. Clare Church Hall. You are welcome to come to all or any of them.

12:10 daily Mass at the Pastoral Center

Many have heard that the 12:10 daily Mass at the Bethany Chapel at the Pastoral Center has been discontinued. Given that this chapel is in our collaborative, I want to tell you what is happening. For the past couple of years it has become increasingly difficult to maintain the midday Mass because of the declining number of priests assigned to Pastoral Center. When I started there in 2012, there were 13 priests assigned to departments in the Pastoral Center. That number has decreased to six. That includes the Archbishop and his priest secretary. Given the scope of the ministry for which they are responsible, they are often out of building in parishes or schools many weekdays. Fr Kevin and I have been covering two Masses a week there, meaning that our collaborative has been

responsible for 50% of the 12:10 Masses. Given the number of funerals here and parish demands, we are not able to take on more. The demands on those at the Pastoral Centers makes it difficult makes it nearly impossible for them to make a regular commitment to Mass at that time. Whereas before, we could always find another priest to cover if we had to be out of the building, this is simply not possible anymore. We tried asking priests nearby as well as retired priests to cover, but it was haphazard because of funerals in their own parishes. This is a very hard decision and a sad one indeed. I enjoy going to the Pastoral Center each week. So does Fr. Kevin. I wish it could remain. We have discussed various scenarios to make it work, but it's simply not feasible at this time.

Fr. Bob



The St. Francis of Assisi Offertory envelopes beginning July 12th will most likely be late again this mailing. Please use one of the envelopes available in the church or your own envelope with your name on the front. Because of this ongoing issue we have switched to a new provider. The change will take effect beginning with the September/October envelope mailing. We apologize for the inconvenience.



July 5: Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time:

In the Gospel today we hear Jesus say: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

Your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul brings peace to those who are overwhelmed with life's burdens.

Pantry donations can be dropped off at the Collaborative office during normal business hours (M-T 9-4; and F 9-1). **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.**

**REST IN
PEACE**

St. Clare
Paula Grimes

Archdiocese of Boston
Rev. Vincent J. Gianni, 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.



From
Deacon Joe MacDonald

On Freedom

It being the Fourth of July weekend, I thought I'd write something about freedom. Not the freedom we are celebrating this weekend or the freedoms that our Constitution guarantees, though those are certainly wonderful things to celebrate. I'm talking about an even greater freedom – the freedom of the Children of God. Bear with me.

Some years ago, at a sales conference, (yes, I once sold insurance many years ago) a man told us a story about how people in a particular country trained elephants, specifically how to keep them from running away or escaping. It goes something like this.

When an elephant is just a baby, its owner/trainer would tie a very thick rope or a chain around its ankle and attach the other end to a post driven deep into the ground. The baby elephant of course would try to break away but because of its size it was unable and after many attempts it would simply give up.

As the elephant grew it became so accustomed to being tied down, unable to leave, that the metal chain or thick rope could be replaced by a much thinner cord. It would be like tying a string around our ankles and expecting it to hold us.

That gargantuan beast could easily snap that cord like a twig, but it had become so accustomed to its captivity it became impossible for it to even conceive of being free.

Are we also not like those elephants? Sometimes?

Let me illustrate.

As a young man, I had not been to Confession in several years. A lot of things kept me away – guilt mostly. But I was also certain that God could not love me as much as he loved everyone else. I was convinced that my sins were more serious than anyone else's. I knew he wanted and could heal people – but not me. But I went to Confession anyhow. I had no choice I was miserable and depressed, and I knew I needed God in my life.

What do you think the penance would be for someone who has been away for so long? I was expecting fifty rosaries, one hundred Novenas. But this is what the priest told me to do, "rejoice and give thanks to God for calling me home." I left that confessional light as a feather; I could have danced out of that church. The weight of the world was lifted off my shoulders. God could love me. God could forgive me.

But like that elephant, I had become so accustomed to my captivity that I couldn't live the freedom that Confession promised me. It was as though the enemy had tied a string around my ankle and although I was in fact free, I still lived like a slave. I still felt like God could not love me as much as he loves you. I couldn't understand how he could forgive my sins or heal me. I didn't deserve it. So, I continued to be miserable and depressed. It took years to be healed - to snap that string and live in the freedom of God's children.

"For freedom Christ set us free; so, stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

Here's another illustration for you – the story of the ten lepers.

I was trying to picture it, Jesus said, "Go show yourselves to the priests" and the Gospel tells us that **as they were going**, they were cleansed, not immediately. They're walking away, talking to each other. "Did you feel anything?" "No, did you?" "I'm not going to embarrass myself by going to the priest. Why would God heal the likes of us" One leper falls behind because his sores were on the bottom of his feet. He couldn't keep up but then he notices – his feet didn't hurt anymore. He looks; the sores are gone. He realized he was healed and returned to give thanks.

Christ had freed the ten lepers not only from their illness but from the isolation and humiliation that leprosy brought with it. Only one was able to snap that string and be freed. I wonder how long the others continued to live unnecessarily like lepers, in isolation, rejected, un-loved, before they too realized what Christ had done for them.

"Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. You are the savior of the world." (a Memorial Acclamation pre-2012)

Christ has indeed set us free. All of us!

- Free from sin
- Free from death
- Free from diseases
- Free from addiction
- Free from depression and mental illness
- Freedom to *worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight.* (Luke 1:74-75)

It has nothing to do with deserving it or earning it. It has everything to do with the grace of God. It has everything to do with God's complete personal love and care for each one of us.

"To ransom a slave, you gave away your son." (from the Easter Proclamation – Exultet)

My brothers and sisters it is time to live in the freedom Christ has given us. The freedom he bought for us with his own blood.

Christ broke the chains that enslaved us. He paid the price of our ransom. There is no reason to live like lepers. "*We are God's children **now**.*" (1 John 3:2) And He fills us with *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control –now!* (paraphrase of Galatians 5:22-23)

God has freed us but for what purpose?

"Stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. (Gal. 5:1) Use this freedom as an opportunity to serve one another through love." (Gal. 5:13)

My friends, enjoy the Fourth of July! Have a hot dog or hamburger, some smoked ribs. Go to a parade and watch fireworks. Enjoy the freedom we celebrate as a free nation and give thanks to God for it. Also, thank a veteran. They, along with their families, sacrificed much that we might have the great opportunities our nation provides.

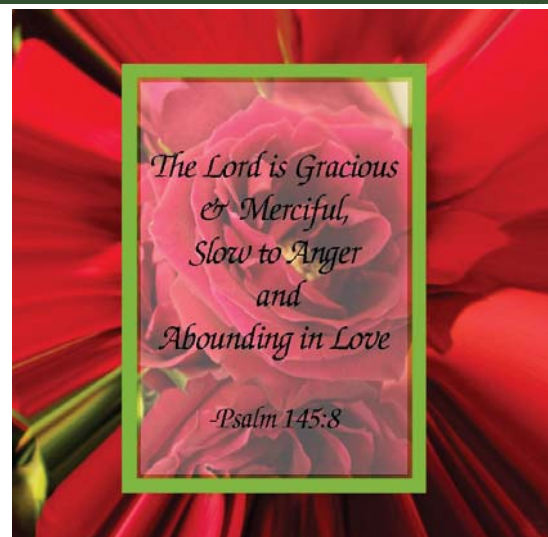
Most of all let us never forget the freedom God has given us through the redemptive act of his only Son, Jesus Christ.

Praise God.

SCRIPTURE READINGS 2026 YEAR A

SUNDAY July 5	Zec 9:9-10/Ps 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14/Rom 8:9, 11-13/Mt 11:25-30
MONDAY July 6	Hos 2:16, 17c-18, 21-22/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9/Mt 9:18-26
TUESDAY July 7	Hos 8:4-7, 11-13/Ps 115:3-4, 5-6, 7ab-8, 9-10/Mt 9:32-38
WEDNESDAY July 8	Hos 10:1-3, 7-8, 12/Ps 105:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Mt 10:1-7
THURSDAY July 9	Hos 11:1-4, 8e-9/Ps 80:2ac, 3b, 15-16/Mt 10:7-15
FRIDAY July 10	Hos 14:2-10/Ps 51:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14, 17/Mt 10:16-23
SATURDAY July 11	Is 6:1-8/Psalm 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5/Mt 10:24-33
SUNDAY July 12	Is 55:10-11/Ps 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14/Rom 8:18-23/Mt 13:1-23 or 13:1-9

Pilot Bulletins



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Parents' Night Out/Kid's Movie Night last Friday was a lot of fun! We talked about how we are on vacation from school, but not from our Faith! While the kids made Popcorn Prayer Buckets, we discussed ways to stay connected to our faith during the summer by weaving spiritual practices into daily activities and adventures.



We watched "The Goat" which is a sports underdog story. The story highlights that integrity and heart matter more than physical size or talent. The animal characters demonstrate perseverance in the face of impossible odds and highlight the value of lifting others up with teamwork – some wonderful lessons that came with a lot of laughs and some fun music!



Braintree Day celebrated America's 250th anniversary with a wonderful parade! Father Bob, Father Kevin, Deacon Joe, and a bunch of others were on hand with treats, drinks, and red-white-and blue beads for all who came by the tent. The kids decorated the sidewalk in front of the church with chalk, and had fun with bubbles as they watched the parade. God Bless America!



Interactive Scripture Challenges

- **Summer Reading Chart:** Create a "Summer Bible Challenge" with achievable weekly goals, for example, reading a specific Bible Story or faith based book, and reward milestones with ice cream or movie nights. ****Feel free to borrow any books from the Children's Library at St. Clare for your summer reading!****

Faith-Focused Family Travel

- **Bulletin Exchange:** When visiting new towns on vacation, attend local services and ask your kids to pick up a worship bulletin. Read through it together and discuss what they saw, heard, and learned.
- **Landmark Pit Stops:** Research Christian historical sites or beautiful nature trails along your travel route to marvel at "God's creation".

Service & Community

- **Secret Servant:** Challenge your kids to do anonymous, kind deeds for neighbors or siblings (e.g., pulling a neighbor's weeds or leaving a note of encouragement).



Registration for Religious Education Classes for the 2026-2027 year is open! Scan the QR code below to open the registration form. (A link to the form can also be found on the Faith Formation page of the Collaborative website at <https://braintreecatholic.org/faith-formation/>).

In order to make the process a little easier, you can check on "returning family" at the top to use information from last year's form so you only need to fill in information that has changed since last year (i.e. student grade, session day, emergency contact, etc.) Class schedules will be posted on the Faith Formation page of the website (see address above) in early August. Email klane@sfab.org for more information or any questions.



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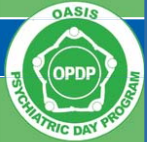
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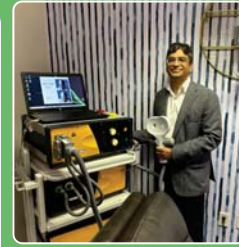
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