

# The Weave

Summer 2019

Volume 23 Issue 3

A Newsletter of St. Mary Parish Family, Franklin MA

## Spiritual Life at St. Mary's

Fr. Brian Manning

The life of Saint Mary's Parish is certainly an amazing spiritual life. Though the church building sits in stately splendor, the priests, staff, and parishioners are busy with so much activity. It means that sometimes we have to stop, back up, and remember what is really important. We need to remember what we are really about. We need to keep this vision in our minds and hearts as we live our daily life. This keeps us from getting so wrapped up in ourselves and all the noise and busy things of life that seem so important at the time. As we roll up to the Fall and, in a sense, the re-start of everything, we need to remember what really matters.

To keep things clear and simple, there are four pillars of living our faith in the Catholic Way of Life that matter. The first and most important is clearly worship, which in our Tradition is attendance at Sunday Mass. Indeed, this is a distinctive hall-

mark of who we really are. The second pillar is faith formation, which for young people is usually called Religious Education, or, as in the older days, CCD. The third is service, which means giving of one's time, talent, and treasure to the work of God and God's Church in serving others. The fourth pillar is daily prayer — a topic that deserves its own special space and attention — which will be the subject of another article in the future.

This year because of serious pastoral concerns, and after consultation, we have made a major calendar change in

Religious Education for our young people in grades 1-8: all classes for these grades are being held Monday through Thursday afternoon or evening. When Sunday Reli-

gious Education began in this parish about twenty-five years ago, our younger people (grades 1-8) were not engaged

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## The Elusive Spirit

Joan McGuire

When we think of the Trinity we can easily create images of the Father as a grey-haired ancient benevolently listening to us and the Son either as a baby in the manger or the redeeming figure on the cross, but the Holy Spirit draws a blank except as a dove. Actually, there is a good theological reason for this elusiveness. The spirit of God's love and presence is fluid and subtle. We sense the Spirit's presence in flashes of illumination in times of doubt and as a peacefulness in the midst of whirling activity or anxiety. The Spirit stirs our minds and moves our hearts in spontaneous and unplanned ways.

In scripture the Spirit has been revealed many times - at the creation and through Moses, the prophets, and the teachers of Israel. The presence was most prominent at the birth of Jesus and at His baptism. But these examples were just forerunners of the generous pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost. Jesus promises over and over again that His followers will not be left alone. They will be given the Holy Spirit if they truly ask, seek, and knock (Luke 11:9-10). Unfortunately, we some-

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### Blessed by our Teens

St. Mary’s is blessed in many ways, but the healthy, active participation of our parish teenagers stands as one of the most visible blessings we have. There are very few events held at St. Mary’s that have not been significantly enhanced — or even made possible — by our parish youth.

According to Karen Ackles, Director of Religious Education, each of the more than 400 Confirmation students (usually grades nine and ten) is responsible for the equivalent of twenty hours of community service per year — and much of this time is spent serving St. Mary’s parish. “This year, the students will focus on one of the Corporal Works of Mercy. They might bring in a backpack with school supplies that will be distributed to a needy student by our St. Vincent de Paul Society. Then they might help out at the annual St. Vincent de Paul Walk for the Poor,” Mrs. Ackles says. “Our kids also help the Knights of Columbus with pie sales and their annual blood drive.”

The Religious Education Program itself has many opportunities for teenagers to make a difference. Teens help in the classroom as teachers or assistant teachers, as hall monitors, and

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### Education for Life

Sheila St. Sauveur

The primary purpose of the St. Mary Respect Life Commission is to create awareness about and provide education and resources concerning life issues from natural conception to natural death.

We offer opportunities to engage St. Mary parishioners about:

- the difference between hospice and palliative care.
- Death With Dignity, whose Massachusetts Pioneer Valley director John Berkowitz said his work on promoting the so-called End of Life Options Act grew out of work he did with support groups for aging people.
- the United States Council of Catholic Bishops Statement: *To Live Each Day with Dignity: A Statement on Physician-Assisted Suicide*.
- the Church’s stand on the death penalty: “The dignity of human life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil. Modern society has the means of protecting itself, without definitively denying criminals the chance to reform.” — Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 1995

◆ Attorney General William P. Barr has directed the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to adopt a proposed Addendum to the Federal Execution Protocol—clearing the way for the federal government to resume capital punishment after a nearly two decade lapse.

◆ The death penalty is allowed in Massachusetts per Article 116 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution.

• Massachusetts bills S.1209 and H.3320 that propose expanded abortion services.

• Abundant Hope, a pregnancy resource center in Attleboro that provides lab-quality pregnancy tests, options counseling, material resources, community referrals and a pro-woman, pro-life message. <https://ahprc.org/>

• The Project Rachel ministry of the Archdiocese of Boston offers one-day retreats to women suffering from the pain of a past abortion. Locations are confidential. 508.651.3100 or [help@projectrachelboston.com](mailto:help@projectrachelboston.com)

For more information about the Respect Life Commission, please contact Sheila or Deacon Guy St. Sauveur.



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## ...Spiritual Life

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in other extra special activities such as Math Class, Gymnastics, Sports, Music Lessons, and Drama Class. Life was quiet for our young people; they were not transported about and obliged to attend activities that are believed to further their lives in various ways. Thus families came to Mass and then to Religious Education, or the reverse. With the rise of the frantic level of Sunday activities for young people in the last ten years, now many families drive the child(ren) to Religious Education and skip church completely. Over 90% do not attend Mass, and there is 40% absenteeism at Sunday classes. It appears that we have taken away the possibility of families attending Sunday morning Mass by making it appear that Religious Education is the first and only priority for parents. In fact, it is the second. Sunday Mass is the first priority for parents, actually for all of us, and then followed by Religious Education.

The Dynamic Catholic Institute maintains in their research that if your family is a faithful church-going family, your children will be 70% less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as taking drugs. The sense of self as a creature of God with a purpose and meaning does influence young people in their choices of behaviors. An interior moral sense is developed over time by faithful participation at Mass. A moral sense is developed in younger children, not as teenagers or as adults. The Institute also says that approximately 60% of young people who are church goers tend to be the striving students and achievers in schools, and attend more prestigious schools of higher education.

In general, church-going young people seem to be healthier in mind, body, and spirit, which means they achieve more and are safer and happier in life. We hope by giving parents the practical possibility of coming to Mass each Sunday with their children, they will. Parents no

longer have to choose between Religious Education, our second priority, and attending Mass, our first priority. Both are possible with for almost every (99%) family. Parents will still be able to have their child (ren) in the many other activities of late Sunday morning programing. As one parent told me, "We can get them to everything else on Sundays; we can also get them to Mass."

The commitment to serve and help others follows rather easily if one is attending Mass and listening to God's Word in the Scripture and receiving Holy Communion. Praying and encountering God each week easily directs us to help others. So this article is to (re-)announce to you that Mass is our number one priority for all of us and invite you to be a part of the worshipping Sunday Community — if your health al-



lows it. Perhaps you have been coming faithfully, but it is good to be reminded that Mass places you in the Sacred and Real Presence of God. Perhaps you can graciously invite other family members or neighbors to come with you to Mass. Sometimes a gracious and warm invitation repeated over time helps someone to come back.

To those who have been missing the graced power of Mass because of hurt or anger or disappointment, please consider returning because Mass feeds the soul, lifts up our spirit, and gives us joy, hope, and peace in our lives. Do not let the behavior of others keep you from God and Holy Communion. I do not. I always hear in my head the clear and direct words of Jesus: "Do this in memory of me." And so in good times or bad, whether in the church or in our own life, health permitting we belong at Mass.

Our Saturday evening Mass at 4 pm is offered as a Mass with inspiring music from traditional though contemporary selections;

our 7:30 am is the silent Mass, which allows you to hear God alone and for God to hear your heart without distraction; the 9 am after the first Sunday in October will welcome our families with young people with special Children's homilies and also special music; our 10:30 am Mass will continue with our magnificent choir composed of many, many parishioners; our noon Mass will again be similar to the 4 pm and our 5 pm Sunday Mass will be for people of All Ages with Contemporary Music. Each Mass reflects the variously expressed and quietly felt needs of all our people. Please find a Mass that is "home" to you.

Religious Education for our young people is also very important, as it is for us adults. Our young need to attend class faithfully each week to build their knowledge and understanding of our faith. Parents talking with their children after Mass or class during the ride home or during the week will help to reinforce their new learning.

We adults also need to grow in faith through learning so as to be faithful disciples. Adult learning is the most expressed need of parishioners, but also the one activity that parishioners think is for other people. For adults, please consider our Women's or Men's Faith Formation Group held one Saturday morning a month.

Our special Christmas and Lenten Books are opportunities to read and grow in closeness to God, and then to pass the book on to someone else who needs to be uplifted in life. Faith has to be spread around for it to grow.



## Parish Calendar

- Aug 27** Mass at Chestnut Street 2pm  
**Aug 28** Protecting God's Children  
 7-9pm  
**Sep 2** **Labor Day**  
**Sep 3** Confirmation Practice  
**Sep 4** Mass at Atria 2pm  
**Sep 6** Confirmation 6pm  
**Sep 7** Confirmation 10am, 1pm  
**Sep 8** Baptisms 1:30  
**Sep 11** Mass at Forge Hill 2pm  
**Sep 14** Men's Faith Formation 8:45am  
**Sep 15** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Sep 22** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Sep 22** Baptismal Catechesis 1:30pm  
**Sep 24** Mass at Chestnut Street 2pm  
**Sep 28** SVdP Walk for the Poor 9-11am  
**Sep 29** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Oct 2** Mass at Atria 2pm  
**Oct 5** Women's Faith Formation 9:30am  
**Oct 6** Grand Annual Appeal begins  
**Oct 6** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Oct 9** Mass at Forge Hill 2pm  
**Oct 12** Men's Faith Formation 8:45am  
**Oct 13** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Oct 13** Baptismal Catechesis 1:30pm  
**Oct 14** **Columbus Day (observed)**  
**Oct 19** Catholic Women's Club Bake  
 Sale after the 4:00 Mass  
**Oct 20** Catholic Women's Club Bake  
 Sale after the 7:30, 9:00, 10:30,  
 and 12:00 Masses  
**Oct 20** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Oct 22** Mass at Chestnut Street 2pm  
**Oct 23** Bereavement Support Group  
 begins, pre-registration required  
**Oct 27** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Oct 27** Protecting God's Children  
 2-4pm  
**Oct 31** **Vigil Mass 4pm**  
**Nov 1** **ALL SAINTS Day**  
**Masses at 7am and 7:30pm**  
**Nov 2** Women's Faith Formation 9:30am  
**Nov 2** Mass of Remembrance 11am  
**Nov 3** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Nov 7** Mass at Atria 2pm  
**Nov 9** Men's Faith Formation 8:45am  
**Nov 10** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Nov 11** **Veterans Day**  
**Nov 13** Mass at Forge Hill 2pm  
**Nov 17** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Nov 17** Baptismal Catechesis 1:30pm  
**Nov 24** Baptisms 1:30pm  
**Nov 26** Mass at Chestnut Street 2pm  
**Nov 28** **Thanksgiving**



## Our Youngest Theologians

Fr. Jack Sullivan

For babies, being left alone is a challenging experience. It seems that babies begin to wonder: will my caregiver return to be at my side? Experts in child development claim that an important game for babies is peek-a-boo. As parents hide their faces and then quickly return, the young child learns to trust that parents are frequently nearby but unseen. For us as Christian believers, the experience of prayer sometimes seems to resemble the childhood games of peek-a-boo and hide and seek. Friends, we sometimes are alone – like infants wondering whether God has gone away, abandoning us. Along with the ancient poet in Psalm 27 we pray: “Your presence, O Lord, I seek. Hide not your face from me... You are my helper, cast me not off.” Like these infants, we learn to trust that our God is always nearby but unseen. Saint Ignatius of Loyola reminds us that even before we begin to pray, our God is there watching and waiting for our conversation in prayer.

Robert Coles of Harvard University has written on the spiritual life of children. Professor Coles teaches us to pay attention to the simple but profound questions of children. Every year our Religious Education Director Karen Ackles organizes a spiritual retreat program for children who are preparing for the celebration of their First Communion. These young people experience growth in their knowledge and love for Jesus in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. One youngster asked me about the recipe for the bread for the Eucharist. Friends, as you all remember and as you experience at every Mass: the Eucharist is always a wondrous mixture of what is visible and invisible in our world. There are the visible ingredients of wheat flour and water. And there is the invisible, self-giving love of Jesus for us and for

all people – of every age and time and place.

Every Sunday we keep before us the generous promise of Jesus our Good Shepherd: “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). Pope Francis deepens our experience of the saving work of Jesus by teaching us: “The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 47; *Amoris Laetitia*, footnote 351).

As we begin as a parish to make our Sunday 9:00 am Mass both attractive and accessible to our young people, the stunning prayer-text for July 4 will guide us. “By showing us in this Eucharist, O Lord, a glimpse of the unity and joy of your people in heaven, deepen our unity and intensify our joy, that all who believe in you may work together to build the city of lasting peace.” The Risen Lord Jesus, although he remains unseen because he has passed beyond the range of human sight, smiles upon our youngest theologians as they assemble together on the Lord's Day to worship with praise and thanksgiving “in Spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).



## Educated in Compassion

by Stephen May

St. Mary Parish, in its commitment to respecting human life from conception to natural death, supports the Franklin Senior Center in its commitment to educating Franklin as a “Dementia Friendly Community.” A Dementia Friendly Community creates a compassionate environment where individuals living with dementia, and their care partners, can live as independently as possible, and continue to be part of their communities by receiving support and understanding at local facilities such as churches, banks, shops, cafes and restaurants, and maintain their social networks.

The main goals of this program are:

- to educate the community by increasing awareness and understanding of dementia type diseases, and
- to reduce social isolation by offering a Memory Café, a monthly social event for individuals living with dementia and their care partners so they can enjoy social interaction and engaging activities in a safe and welcoming environment.

Dementia is a disease that causes nerve cells in a person's brain stop working. Although it typically happens in older people, it is *not* an inevitable part of aging. The natural deterioration of the brain happens to everyone as they grow older, but it occurs more quickly in people with dementia.

There are several different types of dementia. According to the National Institute on Aging, the most common is Alzheimer's Disease. Other types include Lewy body dementia, vascular dementia, or a combination of types.

There are a number of typical signs of dementia. For a person to receive a dementia diagnosis, they would usually experience two or more of these symptoms, and the symptoms would be severe enough to interfere with their daily life. Symptoms include:

- Memory loss. A person with dementia may find it difficult to recall information they have recently learned, such as dates or events, or new information. They may find they rely on friends and family or other memory aids for keeping track of things. Most people forget things as they age. They can usually

can recall them later if their memory loss is age-related and not due to dementia.

- Difficulty in following a plan, such as a recipe when cooking, or directions when driving. Problem-solving may also get more challenging, such as when adding up numbers or paying bills.
- Difficulty in completing regular tasks, such as changing settings on a television, operating a computer, making a cup of tea, or getting to a familiar location. This difficulty with familiar tasks could happen at home or work.
- Difficulty in judging the passing of time. People with dementia may also forget where they are at any time. They may find it hard to understand events in the future or the past and may struggle with dates.
- Visual information challenges. It can be hard for someone with dementia to read, judge distances, or work out the differences between colors. Someone who drives may find these activities especially challenging.
- People with dementia may find their spelling, punctuation, and grammar have worsened, and their handwriting becomes more difficult to read.
- Remembering where everyday objects have been left — such as a remote control, important documents, cash, or keys. Misplacing possessions can be frustrating and may mean a person with dementia accuses other people of stealing.
- Paying less attention to keeping clean and presentable.

If you experience any of these symptoms or notice them in a loved one, speak to a medical professional. According to the

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### PARISH COMMUNICATION

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This parish is very large and active. It is important for us to be able to give you accurate information and for you to be able to contact us as needed. If you wish to contact anyone at the rectory we can be reached by phone, 508-528-0020; Fax, 508-528-1641; or email. Here are email addresses for the clergy, Religious Education, and rectory staff:

Father Brian Manning: [bmannings@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:bmannings@stmarysfranklin.org)

Father Jack Sullivan: [jsullivan@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:jsullivan@stmarysfranklin.org)

Deacon Guy St. Sauveur: [deaconguy@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:deaconguy@stmarysfranklin.org)

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Stephen May: [smay@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:smay@stmarysfranklin.org)

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Patricia Murphy: [businessmanager@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:businessmanager@stmarysfranklin.org)

If your parish group or organization would like to place a notice in the bulletin, we must receive it **in writing (email is preferred)** by 5pm Sunday afternoon for the following weekend. Information can also be submitted for inclusion on the parish website at any time. Bulletin or website information can be emailed to [parishpublishing@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:parishpublishing@stmarysfranklin.org)

**If your organization is planning to use any parish facilities**, such as the church, church hall, lower church meeting rooms, or the Center, for your meetings or events, it is **necessary** that you call and reserve the time and place that you want. This is the **only** way that you can be assured of having your activity at the desired location.

**CHECK OUT OUR PARISH WEBSITE:** [www.stmarysfranklin.org](http://www.stmarysfranklin.org). There is a wealth of information available there.

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## Music Notes

Terry Kerr

### Adult Choir

The St. Mary Adult Choir will begin their Choral Season for 2019-2020 very soon! The Adult Choir rehearses Thursday evenings and sings weekly at the Sunday, 10:30 am Mass from October - June.

The First Rehearsal for the season is more of a social event than a rehearsal: a Wine and Cheese Party. The social setting is more relaxed and gives us the opportunity to welcome back returning choir members from a well-deserved summer rest, and to welcome new members to the group.

Mark your calendars:  
**First Choir Rehearsal**  
Thursday, September 26  
at 7:30 pm  
Upper Church Choir Loft!



## A Life of Learning

Elaine Noonan

**“Are you smarter than a second grader?”**

That was the question posed by the priest to the congregation of a small rural church in Maine where we attended Mass while on a weekend getaway this spring. In the course of his homily, it became apparent that the bishop had visited the previous weekend and conferred the joint sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation on the second graders in the parish. The priest’s homily was well received, as his message was that learning about God and our faith extended well beyond the second grade. But is tenth grade, the time when most churches in our area Confirm young people, really the end of our desire to learn more about our religion? Is gaining a deeper understanding of God and our faith truly a life-long pursuit?

Meetings are held the first Saturday of each month, October to May, from 9:30 – 10:30 am in the Sacred Heart Hall in St. Mary’s lower level. Light refreshments are served. Segments are independent of each other, so if you cannot attend one, please feel free to join us for others.

Contact Elaine Noonan or Deacon Guy for more information.

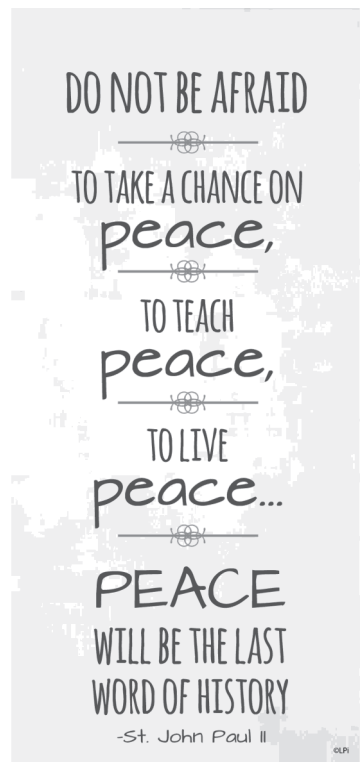
## ...Compassion

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Alzheimer’s Association, it is a myth that cognitive functioning always gets worse as a person gets older. Signs of cognitive decline may be dementia or another illness for which doctors can provide support. Although there is no cure for dementia yet, a doctor may be able to help slow the progression of the disease or ease the symptoms, and so improve a person's quality of life.

For more information on how you can learn to make our community more compassionate and dementia friendly, please contact Maggie Gundersen at the Franklin Senior Center at: (508) 520-4945.

Portions of this article are taken from “What are the early signs of dementia?” by Timothy Huzar, last published on the Medical News Today website on 21 February 2019



## ...the Blessing of Teenagers

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setting up classrooms for the start of the academic year or week to week. Each year teens help the second graders enjoy the annual "Afternoon with Jesus" just a little bit more. This year new bulletin boards have been installed in the school building (now the St. Mary Center), and teenagers are running the entire project. Also, it is teenagers who are doing the majority of the work in moving the Religious Education offices to their new location at the St. Mary Center.

Teens also help out at many of the liturgical events that take place over the year, including First Communion masses, First Penance services, and the Easter Triduum and Christmas masses. They have also taken on important roles at the annual St. Rocco Healing Mass, including this year's that just took place August 10<sup>th</sup>.

"The seven teens who helped with the healing mass did a fantastic job," says Stephen May, Pastoral Associate at St. Mary's. "Over the last year, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with dozens of teens from the parish. They have helped me with several masses here, and even over at Central Park Terrace, where we do a healing mass in the spring. Every kid I've worked with has been polite, well-mannered, courteous, and helpful."

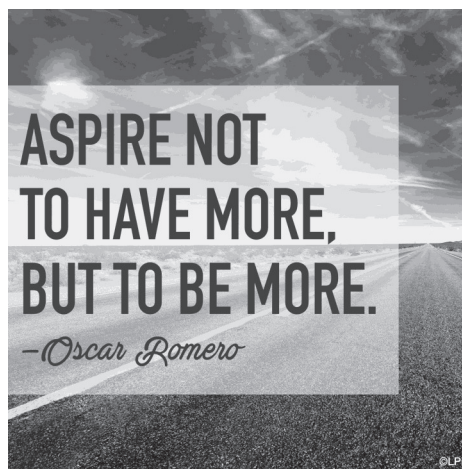
Many of the kids who help out don't stop at the twenty hours. Close to half of the teens participate in multiple events and exceed the minimum expectations for community service. Some teens return after Confirmation to help teach in the Religious Education Program until they graduate high school.

And this trend is not limited to kids. Several entire families (parents too!) help prepare the arts and craft projects for the weekly faith formation classes. Some even make themselves available on short notice. "I had one family last

year who dropped everything to put together over 100 Christmas ornaments in just a day," says Mrs. Ackles. "I have another family that likes to stuff inserts into the 750 weekly bulletins we distribute each weekend."

"In addition to coming from good, Catholic families, it is the strength of our Religious Education Program that has helped to form these teens," says Fr. Brian Manning, Pastor of St. Mary's. "I'm not surprised we have it so good!"

So whether it's doing office work for the Religious Education Program, or replacing 1,000+ missalettes before Advent, or serving at our many beautiful liturgies, St. Mary's teens are a visible sign that Jesus Christ is alive and well in Franklin.



### Bereavement Support Group

**7-week session begins  
Wednesday, October 23 at 7 pm**

This faith-based group is offered to anyone who has experienced a recent loss. There is no charge for this program; however, registration is required. Meetings held at St. Mary.

For additional information or to register, please call **Nan Rafter at 774-571-0092**.

## Baccalaureate Mass

John Ristaino

St. Mary's Baccalaureate Mass for our high school graduating Class of 2019 was celebrated in late May with pomp and circumstance. This year's featured speakers were Lillah Determan and Tim Duval, two graduates from the Franklin High School Class of 2019. Their remarks illuminate grasps of our Catholic faith that are inspirational.

Tim Duval addressed the places, people and programs which have helped form his Catholic identity. Peter Duval, one of Tim's brothers, attended Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Seeing the Basilica located on the campus there fed the flames of faith in Tim. His other brother Adam sings in the choir at Assumption College in Worcester, MA. Hearing Adam and the Assumption choir sing at Mass created a "massive spiritual awakening for" Tim.

Roger Gullo, the Director of our St. Mary Parish Confirmation Program, is a person Tim celebrated as having a profound impact on his Catholic faith. Through St. Mary's Confirmation Program, Tim learned to create the "best version" of himself. As he explained, he began "to take each day of [his] life and use it to become the best version of [himself] that [he] could possibly be on that day." Tim realized and shared that: "You must take each day and think, *How can I use today to strengthen my bond with God?*"

Tim reminded his fellow graduates that they were the "only people" who can change themselves and "to take each day and use it as a stepping stone toward becoming closer with [God] and [to] believe that [they] can do it."

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## Updates on the Parish

*Fr. Brian Manning*

This article is to keep you in the loop and “feed the buzz” on what has been going on and what will be happening at One Church Square.

On Saturday, August 10 the Holy Mass and Blessed Service of Anointing was celebrated in our beautiful church and sanctuary. Our indoor Statue of Saint Rocco was prominent in our sanctuary alongside the Relic of Saint Rocco. Father Jack concelebrated and Fr. Brian was main celebrant and was assisted by Deacon Guy. Over 250 parishioners gathered to seek the grace and healing power of God through the intercession of Saint Rocco. The music was deeply moving and spiritual. A special Hymn of Saint Rocco was exquisitely sung by our Cantor Michelle French who was accompanied by our very talented Director of Music and Organist Terry Kerr. This offering of sung praise moved many of us to deeper prayer. At the end of the Mass everyone was blessed with the relic of Saint Rocco. Many years ago Fr. Frank Campo was able to obtain this relic for our Parish. The devotion of prayer and intensity of spirit added to the spiritual richness of this Mass and Service. Stephen May, our Pastoral Associate, was the Coordinator for this special celebration. Seven young people of our Parish who are in our Confirmation Program offered volunteer service to greet and assist our guests, especially the mobility-impaired. Everyone remarked upon the politeness and gracious assistance that these teenagers provided. We are blessed in our Parish to have many young people who volunteer so very often in serving the various and many needs of our Parish. Many people said that this beginning of a new tradi-

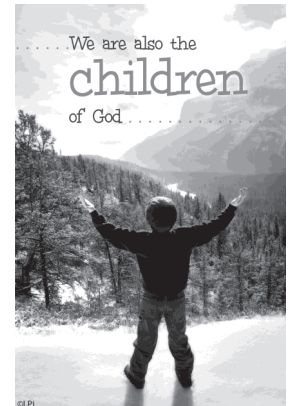


tion to honor Saint Rocco was spiritual, profound, and “a keeper.”

Last May and June our Parish held three public meetings to discuss the future of our property (over 5 acres and a school building, unheated barn, and parking lot) across the street now that the Charter School has departed. These meetings were for anyone and everyone to come to and express publicly their opinion, concerns, or comments for one and all to hear. One important value is that everyone should be free to express what they want, but they must own it by saying it publicly. Elsewhere, gossipers start their acidic routine. Bernard Swain, our Consultant for this process of discerning what is the highest and best use of this land and building to fulfill the Mission of our Parish, is now compiling the data received at these meetings. He will start in the Fall to discuss the results with the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), who will recommend priorities to the Parish Finance Council (PFC), who will make recommendations to Fr. Brian. This all takes time, a lot of time, but this will result in the best possible decision for the good of the Parish, which is our major long-term priority. Religious Education will use all of the building and parish-based groups will be able to use the five meeting rooms in the addition when Religious Education is not in session. We are restricting the

use of the facility, much like the Town did with the new High School, until we have at least one year’s management of it. As things develop, you will be informed. Discerning what is the best (practical) use of the property that will help support the long-term Mission of Saint Mary’s is not an easy task, but by God’s grace and our sincere effort it will happen.

We launch on the first Sunday In October the Children’s Liturgy of the Word at the 9 am Mass. With the change in Religious Education from Sundays, we are hoping that more families with young children will attend this special Mass. Our plans are specifically tailored to meeting the needs of our young people. On the first Sunday of every month, the children will remain in the church proper and the priest celebrant will be the “teacher.” The other three Sundays of the month, a special “docent or teacher” will conduct a special program in the upstairs sacristy for all the young people. We hope to also launch what is called “one hundred voices” at Mass. After Communion, the young children and their parents come forward to the sanctuary to sing a special hymn, which Terry Kerr, our Music Director, will teach them just before Mass. Over time “one hundred voices” will have a wonderful selection of hymns to sing in praise of God.



*(Continued on page 9)*



## ...Parish Updates

(Continued from page 8)

Additional docents and assistants are being recruited. We want this Mass to be as family-with-young-children-focused as possible. A life of faith that involves Mass is essential for our young children so that it will be always a part of their lives. So we all need to cooperate and enthusiastically support this. Perhaps you can even invite and attend Mass with families and young children.

Roberta Trahan has been appointed as the new Vice-Chair of our PPC. This



role provides critical leadership for the Council as they discern our Mission in more concrete

and pastoral modalities. Roberta is also a direct Advisor to Father Brian in his role as Pastor. We welcome her as a committed person of faith who will be a constructive and insightful leader in our community of faith. Our PPC helps to form and direct the Vision and Mission of our Parish. Things do not simply happen. Prayer, thought, effort, and then more effort all go into the many spiritual and life-giving Masses, services, programs, and events of Saint Mary's Parish. The PPC is directly involved in this.

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# Truth

## Fall Back and Stand Up!

John Ristaino

The summer is fading and autumn is on its way. As we bask in the glorious summer sun and look forward to the cool crisp days of September and October, it is a time to reflect on how each of us can BE THE CHURCH. As members of the Catholic Faith, WE ARE THE CHURCH. So, as we fall back into our regular routines, let's all consider how we can stand up, live our faith and help St. Mary Parish to continue to thrive and flourish.

We all get pulled in a hundred different directions on a daily basis. Our spouses need us. Our families need us. Our co-workers need us. Our neighbors need us. Our employer needs us. The clubs and organizations we belong to and that our children belong to need us. And each of these demands carries with it more demands on our time; classes, practices, rehearsals, games, performances, trips, projects, presentations, etc.... You appreciate the drain on our time more than I can possibly explain.

As we transition from summer to autumn, please consider the needs of our parish family. WE NEED YOU! There is a great need for volunteers of all ages to assist at Mass. We need young people to serve as altar servers. We need confirmed Catholics to serve as Lectors (people who read at Mass) and Eucharistic Ministers (people who assist in distributing Communion at Mass). We need people who want to share their voice and sing in the choir. We also have the opportunity for young people, not yet confirmed, to serve as Lectors at the 5 PM Youth Mass.

The celebration of Mass each Sunday is of vital importance to our Parish Family

and our Catholic faith. These particular volunteer opportunities are vital to our being able to celebrate Mass in the best possible way. Not sure what to do? Don't worry. There is not one current volunteer who knew how to fulfill their roles before they started. TRAINING, SUPPORT, AND RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED! Are you concerned about the time commitment? YOU tell us how often (or how seldom) you wish to serve. We build the schedules around YOU and YOUR AVAILABILITY.

You'll find detailed information about these opportunities under the "Parish Life" tab on our parish website [stmarysfranklin.org](http://stmarysfranklin.org). Please consider reading about each of these ministries



and praying on giving some of your time and talents to make a difference in our parish life.

My personal faith journey to serving at Mass began when I was in college. The woman who organized the celebration of Mass each Sunday night on my college campus asked me to read one December evening. On that day, I became a Lector. When I graduated and returned home, the pastor of St. Mary Parish, at the time Fr. Boivin, asked me to be a Lector. Both asks were heartfelt and came from a place of need and love. That was many years ago. When I began serving I was VERY nervous. Over time, I became less nervous, more comfortable with the celebration of the Mass and I found a road to a deeper and more robust sense of faith. The best part of the long journey from then to now is the people I have been able to meet and serve with. Some have become friends, some have become faith mentors, some have become role models and everyone I have met has taught me about myself and OUR faith.

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## View from the Pew

Joan McGuire

### Members of the Family of God

Relationships develop through the daily happenings among people. Sometimes an event that does not seem particular in itself can stay in the mind and affect us in time to come.

As a child, I lived in a wonderful neighborhood in the Bronx that bordered on the East River. The residents were a very diverse group of people. Among the most interesting to us children were the retired people from the circus and the “boat people.”

The boat people lived on houseboats tied up on the river edge because the boats were not sea worthy. The people sold the fish they caught from their boats. Since most of the neighborhood children went to the Catholic schools and the children of the boat people went to the public schools, we did not mingle much.

There were large area of fields between the houses and the water where semi-pros played football and baseball in season. Best of all, each year the traveling circus used the space for pre-season practice. On the last night before starting the season, they had a dress rehearsal. It was a big event and tickets were half price. We stood in line with our father to get tickets for the family – six tickets in all. In front of us were boat people. As they got up to the booth, they were not able to pay the price of the tickets. They walked over to the free Side Show, which had animals in cages and the performers dressed in colorful costumes practicing for their performances and the Grand March into the arena. We were next in line. I was hoping to see red tickets in my father's hand. Those were for the first rows and from those seats, we could almost touch the animals and performers as they passed by. Instead, my father held blue tickets for

seats farther back and less expensive, but all the seats were good and I didn't think anything more about it as I ran to the Side Show. My father disappeared for a few minutes. When he came back, he gave each of us our ticket. We got to our seats to find the boat people sitting next to us. We all enjoyed the performance and it was the beginning of a great friendship between us children and of many adventures as we walked the plank to the disabled boat.

What my father knew instinctively, it took me years of reading and hearing spiritual talks to learn. We are here to serve the other members of God's family. Each morning, ask God to show you how to serve your neighbor. You don't have to worry about planning the activities: the Holy Spirit gives great nudges!

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### ... *Baccalaureate*

*(Continued from page 7)*

Taking steps took on a different form in the words shared by Lillah Determan who referenced the words of Thomas Huxley, a historic biologist. Lillah conveyed that Thomas Huxley had once explained that “the rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold a man's foot long enough, to enable him to put the other somewhat higher.” She went onto explain that every graduate began at the bottom of an imaginary faith ladder when they were born. Through the love of their parents and families, they

were carried to the first rung of the ladder through Baptism. Lillah then illuminated the rungs on which faith was built: First Penance, First Communion, and Confirmation.

In between the rungs of the faith ladder, it was pointed out that hopefully progress was exhibited through the maturity of choices made, interactions with others, and the examples set by living the Catholic faith.

Lillah explained, using Huxley's example, that the sides of the ladder perpetually remain to the left and to the right as constant guides. These constant elements were identified as one entity, our common faith. She reminded the graduates that, using this example, faith is always by their sides. Lillah pointed out that “no matter if the ladder wobbles or stays sturdy, the sides [faith] will always be there” and that “our strong faith foundation will always be our guide.”

Her concluding remark was a quote from the Book of Jeremiah, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

The high school graduating Class of 2019 was well represented by these two wonderful young people. We wish all of the graduates well and hope that

the words offered by Tim and Lillah will ring through their faith journeys. We look forward to seeing all of these great graduates prosper using each day to grow in faith as they journey in many different directions.

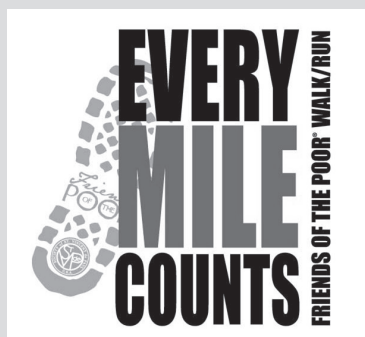




Society of St. Vincent de Paul - St. Mary Parish

**Friends of the Poor Walk**  
**Saturday, September 28, 2019**  
**9:00 am**  
**St. Mary Center parking lot**  
**Rain or shine!**

**The Walk is our ONLY Fund Raiser.**  
**It provides funds that enable SVdP members**  
**to offer help to ALL FRANKLIN RESIDENTS in their time of need.**  
*This past year we were able to help 167 families.*



**We need your support!**  
**Join us for our walk, or donate online at [www.fopwalk.org/event/2374](http://www.fopwalk.org/event/2374)**

**St. Vincent de Paul**  
**508-918-2291**

*...The Elusive Spirit*

*(Continued from page 1)*

times ask for help to fulfill some plan or for some benefit instead of asking for the Holy Spirit. In our prayers we stress our efforts to accomplish things and forget that our primary role is to be receivers of God's gift.

While the Spirit may seem anonymous and absent, we are frequently told in liturgy and by St. Paul in scripture that the love of God has been poured into our hearts in spite of our shortcomings and failures. Our very ability to love is a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. When individuals receive the gift of the Spirit, it is always for the sake of the common good. It is this presence that prompts us to reach out to others in love and service. As God has loved us so we love others.

The major question is not "Do you have the Holy Spirit?" but "Does the Holy Spirit have you?"

**St. Mary's Respect Life Commission**

**invites you to an informational presentation on the current ROE Expanded legislation regarding abortion.**

Representatives from the Archdiocese and Massachusetts Catholic Conference will give a short presentation on the content and process for this upcoming legislation.

Question & Answer period will follow.

**Monday, October 7, 2019**  
**7:00 - 8:00 pm**  
**St. Mary Church Hall**



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