Just as our Blessed Mother Mary and the Evangelist, called John, came together at the foot of the Cross to serve Christ crucified, so also do the parish families bearing their names come together to serve God by serving each other and all who make up the Body of The Risen Lord.

ST. JOHN the EVANGELIST
115 MIDDLESEX STREET
NORTH CHELMSFORD

ST. MARY
25 NORTH ROAD
CHELMSFORD

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE
Saturday • 4:00 PM
Sunday • 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM & 5:00 PM

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE
Monday - Friday • 9:00 AM
Monday - Friday • 7:00 AM

Saturday 9:00 am Mass alternates between parishes. Refer to calendars.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Saturday • 3:00 - 3:45 PM
or by appointment

Saturday • 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
or by appointment

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION
First Friday of the Month •
Monday - Wednesday •
9:30 - 11:30 am in OPC Chapel
Last 3 Wednesdays of month •
6:30 - 8:30 pm in OPC Chapel

MASSES ARE AVAILABLE VIA LIVE STREAM
Visit www.chelmsfordcatholic.org
LIVEVIEW resides on the right-hand sidebar of the home page

PRAYER LINE
To have prayers said for yourself or a loved one,
call the parish office and ask for ext 223.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday • 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Wednesday • 9:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Friday • 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Sunday • 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

February 23, 2020
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

I say to you;
Love your enemies
and pray for those who persecute you.

-Matt 5:44

facebook.com/ChelmsfordCath
twitter.com/ChelmsfordCath
instagram.com/chelmsfordcatholic
The Lord is kind and merciful.” — Responsorial Psalm 103

St. Mary Calendar

- **Sunday, February 23**
  - Faith Formation Events • Refer to Page 6
  - Grace Notes Choir Rehearsal • 8:10 - 8:35 am • Church
  - 11 am Choir Ministry Rehearsal • 9:45 - 10:50 am • Choir Loft
  - Children’s Liturgy of the Word • 11 am Mass • PC Chapel
  - 6 pm Music Ministry Rehearsal • 5:00 - 5:45 pm • Church

- **Monday, February 24**
  - Matthew Bible Study • 10:00 am - 12 noon • PC Conf Room 1
  - Fr. Brian Presentation • 7:00 pm • St. John Church

- **Tuesday, February 25**
  - Epic Bible Study • 7:00 - 8:30 pm • Parish Hall

- **Ash Wednesday, February 26**
  - SM Masses • 7 am, 4 pm and 7 pm
  - Boy Scout Troop 77 Meeting • 7:00 - 8:30 pm • Parish Hall

- **Thursday, February 27**
  - Rosary Makers • 10:30 am - 12 noon • PC Conf Room 2
  - Rosary • 12:00 - 1:00 pm • PC Adoration Chapel
  - Adoration • 3:00 - 9:00 pm • PC Chapel
  - Social Justice Immigration Presentation • 7:00 pm • Parish Hall

- **Friday, February 28**
  - Adoration • 7:30 am - 9:00 pm • PC Chapel
  - Knitting and Crocheting • 2:00 - 4:00 pm • Parish Hall
  - Soup (6 pm) and Stations (7 pm) • Parish Hall and Church
  - Baptism Preparation • 7:00 pm • PC MR 5

- **Saturday, February 29**
  - 9:00 am daily Mass at St. John
  - Adoration • 9:30 am - 3:00 pm • PC Chapel
  - Reconciliation • 11:00 am - 12 noon • Church
  - Music Ministry Rehearsals • 2:30 - 4:00 pm • Conf Room B
  - Anointing of the Sick, following 4 pm Mass • Church

- **Sunday, March 1**
  - Faith Formation Events • Refer to Page 6
  - 11 am Choir Ministry Rehearsal • 9:45 - 10:50 am • Choir Loft
  - Children’s Liturgy of the Word • 11 am Mass • PC Chapel
  - Group Baptism • 2:00 pm • Church
  - 6 pm Music Ministry Rehearsal • 5:00 - 5:45 pm • Church
  - Parish Council Meeting • 7:00 pm • PC Conf Room 1

St. Mary Church

**Wedding BANNNS III**
Sarah Snow and John Bergstrom

Holy Land Pilgrimage Travelers

Next Sunday, March 1st, through March 10th, xx individuals (xx are parishioners and/or staff members) will be travelling alongside Fr. Brian to The Holy Land. If you have not yet taken the opportunity to write your prayer intentions in the book that will be travelling with them, please do so by this coming Wednesday, February 26th. The book can be found at the front of both churches.

!! ATTENTION !!

St. Mary 11 am MASS GOERS

Please be aware that the duration of the 11 am Mass next Sunday, March 1st will be slightly extended due to our welcoming of a child into the family through the Sacrament of Baptism.

We do hope you will decide to celebrate this joyous occasion with us.

2020 Mass Intentions

We are now accepting the scheduling of Mass Intentions through December 2020.
As of now, the 2021 calendar is not yet open, but we will inform you as soon as it is.
**The Knights Membership Drive**

The Knights of Columbus is an international Order of Catholic men who are called to lead with faith, protect our families, serve others and defend values in a busy changing world.

Whether you become an individual member, or a member of our council, you will find that KOC membership brings Catholic men together in a powerful way. If you would like to join today, visit www.KofC.org/joinus and enter council #9275.

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**St. John Calendar**

- **Sunday, February 23**
  - Faith Formation Events • Refer to Page 7
  - Children’s Liturgy of the Word • 8:30 am Mass
  - Coffee and Donuts, following 8:30 am Mass • Hall
  - African Community Mass • 12:30 pm • Church

- **Monday, February 24**
  - Adoration • 9:30 - 11:30 am • OPC Chapel
  - Chelmsford Quilter’s Guild • 6:00 - 9:00 pm • Hall
  - ACTS CORE Meeting • 6:30 - 9:00 pm • Linehan
  - Families with Addiction Support Group • 7:00 pm • NPC
  - Fr. Brian Presentation • 7:00 pm • Church

- **Tuesday, February 25**
  - Adoration • 9:30 - 11:30 am • OPC Chapel
  - Open Music Rehearsal • 6:30 pm • Church

- **Ash Wednesday, February 26**
  - SJ Masses at 9:00 am and 6:00 pm
  - Liturgy of the Word w/ Distribution of Ashes 12:00 noon
  - Adoration • 9:30 - 11:30 am • OPC Chapel
  - Adoration • 6:30 - 8:30 pm • OPC Chapel

- **Thursday, February 27**
  - Charismatic Prayer Group • 10:00 am - 12 noon • OPC
  - BINGO • 6:45 pm (doors open at 3:00 pm) • Hall
  - Charismatic Prayer Group • 7:00 - 8:00 pm • OPC

- **Friday, February 28**
  - Soup (6 pm) and Stations (7 pm) • Parish Hall and Church

- **Saturday, February 29**
  - Daily Mass at 9:00 am
  - Grief Support Group • 10:00 am - 12:30 pm • OPC
  - Reconciliation • 3:00 - 3:45 pm • Church
  - Jason Gaudette Farewell • 4 pm Mass followed by fellowship

- **Sunday, March 1**
  - Faith Formation Events • Refer to Page 7
  - Children’s Liturgy of the Word • 8:30 am Mass
  - Coffee and Donuts, following 8:30 am Mass • Mariotti
Imagine living in a war-ravaged country where the destruction of hospitals, homes, historic landmarks, schools, and once bustling downtown centers is a daily occurrence. You live in constant fear that your home could be the next target of arbitrary shelling. And then the unthinkable happens — your home is nearly leveled in a fiery explosion. You and your family survive, but you realize that it’s no longer possible to make a life in the only country you have ever known. You must leave your friends, all of your possessions, your school, and your native language. You wait two years while working tirelessly to obtain the necessary paperwork to come to the United States with the hope of a better life. This is the story twenty-three-year-old Syrian refugee Zainab Abdo courageously shared with our community last November.

Through Zainab, we learned firsthand the tremendous courage, resilience, and hope that it takes to come to the United States and start a new life. We learned how difficult it is to learn a new language, start over in a new school, and obtain work. We also learned that immigrants and refugees cannot do this on their own. Every immigrant and refugee needs the support of their new community to survive and thrive.

Engelie Blomberg, an immigrant herself, shared with us how her immigration experience led her to help others who are also facing such a life-changing transition. She spoke about her work helping refugees through outreach and relationship building. She also spoke about a "Conversation Room" program that teaches English to recent immigrants and refugees.

Many of you were excited about starting a program like this in our Collaborative. As a first step, the Collaborative Social Justice Committee is hosting this meeting to explore what our community might do to support refugees. Refreshments will generously be provided by Nawal and Raedha, two Iraqi refugees who will also join us.

If you are unable to attend this event, but are interested in getting involved, email Craig at cbonaceto@gmail.com.

When we enter into the celebration of Mass, we must recognize it is not about what we are doing. Rather, the Mass must ultimately be understood as the action of Christ in which we, as a community, are called to participate. We are united to the lone sacrifice of Christ and through this act of worship give voice to our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Understanding that the Mass is a sacrifice is a theological truth that the Church has taught in memoriam. This was most clearly articulated by the teaching of the Council of Trent, the Second Vatican Council, and the theology of the Mass as presented in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. In celebrating the Mass, we partake of the one sacrifice of Christ, which is a participation in his death, resurrection, ascension, and the pouring forth of the Spirit. Our sharing in this sacrifice comes through the presentation of the gifts of bread and wine and our prayer of praise. As the First Eucharistic Prayer says, “We ask you to accept and bless these gifts we offer you in sacrifice” and “We offer you this sacrifice of praise.” In the Eucharistic Prayer we unite our words of praise with the words of Christ, which form the great prayer of thanksgiving. Through this prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit, we offer back to the Father the gift He has given us—Christ, through the bread and wine transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Through this prayer we participate in the one sacrifice of Christ. The theology of sacrifice is truly at the heart and soul of the Mass, and always has been.

Therefore, if we are to understand the Mass we must understand the true nature of sacrifice. A true sense of sacrifice calls us not simply “to give something up,” but rather to offer back to the Lord some good gift that He has given to us. When we offer true sacrifice, we are called to recognize that all we have in our lives that is truly good is a gift from God, and we can only offer to God what He has given to us. Hence, sacrifice is not so much about the action as it is about attitude. As the psalmist tells us, "For you do not desire sacrifice; a burnt offering you despise” (Ps 51). When we sacrifice, we must do it with a humbled and contrite heart which then opens to the right attitude. It leads us into understanding our proper relationship with God: that we depend on God for all things and seek to live our lives centered in God’s grace and mercy.

This true sacrifice, therefore, is about seeking to give back to the Lord what is truly important to us, in order that we may be led into a proper relationship with God. The ultimate and truly pure sacrifice is, of course, that of Christ on the cross. Christ sought not his own will but that of the Father, and He offered back to God his entire being. It is on the cross that we see the great kenosis, or self-emptying of Christ. He offers the greatest gift the Father gave Him, his life and his will, back to the Father. This self-offering and self-emptying are the ultimate goal of true sacrifice. As we enter into the sacrifice, our ultimate desire should be to die to ourselves, seeking only the will of the Father—to lead us to a sort of resurrection as we empty ourselves of all that is not of God. Seeking God’s will is intended, therefore, to become not a momentary thing but a way of life.

In the Mass, then, we want to unite ourselves with the one true sacrifice which is the Cross of Christ, in order to lead a life centered in Christ and his sacrifice. How do we that? That is what we will explore over the coming weeks.
**Abstinence:** Catholics over 14 years of age are bound to the obligations of abstinence. Abstinence (no meat) is to be observed on Ash Wednesday, Fridays of Lent and Good Friday.

**Fasting:** Catholics over the age of 18 and up to the beginning of their 60th year are bound to the obligation of fasting. Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent, are defined as the days of fasting. On these days, only 1 full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted; but liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed.

**The Sacred Paschal Fast:** The Paschal Fast should also be kept sacred. It is to be celebrated everywhere on the Friday of the Lord’s Passion and, where appropriate, prolonged also through Holy Saturday as a way of coming, with spirit uplifted, to the joys of the Lord’s Resurrection.

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**Lenten Scripture and Song**

Tuesday Evenings  | March 3, 10, 24
7:00 pm at St. John Church

*This is the previously titled Taizé Prayer Deep Dive*

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Monday Evenings
St. Mary  | March 2, 16, 30
St. John  | March 9, 23; April 6

Wednesday Evenings at both Parishes
March 4, 11, 18, 25; April 1, 8

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**Fr. Brian Presentations**

**The Three Temptations of Christ**
Monday, February 24 | 7:00 pm at St. John

Fr. Brian will explore how we are faced with these temptations in our daily living and what we can learn from Christ in how to resist them.

**The Four Ways of Love**
Wednesday Evenings: March 25, April 1
7:00 pm at St. John

The season of Lent calls us to love better, and by better understanding the four ways of love—Storge (empathy), Philios (friend), Eros (romantic) and Agape (unconditional ‘God’ love) — Fr. Brian will walk us through these, one by one, in the hopes that we are better able to give — and receive — love from family, friend, neighbor, and God.

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**Lenten Retreat**

Details to follow

Fr. Marcos Enrique
Monday, March 16 - Wednesday, March 18
7:00 - 8:30 pm at St. Mary

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**Holy Week and Easter Sunday**

**Wednesday of Holy Week: April 8**
Tenebrae Service  | 7:00 pm at St. John

**Holy Thursday: April 9**
Morning Prayer  | 9:00 am at St. Mary
Mass of the Lords Supper  | 7:00 pm at St. John

**Good Friday: April 10**
Morning Prayer  | 9:00 am at St. Mary
Teen Stations of the Cross  | 3:00 pm at St Mary
Passion of Our Lord  | 7:00 pm at St. John

**Holy Saturday: April 11**
Morning Prayer  | 9:00 am at St. John
The Great Easter Vigil  | 8:30 pm at St. Mary

**Easter Sunday: April 12**
St. Mary Masses  | 7:00, 9:00 and 11:00 am
St. John Masses  | 8:30 and 10:30 am

*Easter Egg Hunt after 8:30 am Mass*
Upcoming Deep Dive Events

Ash Wednesday
NEXT Wednesday, February 26th
Mass Schedule is as follows:
St. Mary at 7 am | 4 pm | 7 pm
St. John at 9 am | 12 pm (Liturgy of the Word) | 6 pm

Soup and Stations
Fridays of Lent: Feb 28; Mar 6, 13, 20, 27; Apr 3
5 pm Service* | 6 pm Soup | 7 pm Stations
Attendance at Stations is Deep Dive Event for all families. *Service is a Confirmation Only Deep Dive Event and is available only at St. Mary. RSVP (sign-up) is REQUIRED. To do so, visit our website…
www.chelmsfordcatholic.org/soup-stations

Lenten Scripture and Song
previously titled Taizé Music and Prayer
Tuesday Evenings: March 3, 10, 24
7:00 - 8:00 pm at St. John Church
Join us for 30 minutes of solitude and peace as we keep with the spirit of the Lenten Season.

Completion of a reflection sheet is REQUIRED for ALL deep dives. Downloadable or online reflection sheets can be found on our website on specific deep dive page.

February 23rd Class Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1 Class</th>
<th>Grade 2 Class</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>9:00 - 10:30 am</td>
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<td>Parish Hall</td>
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<th>Grade 3 - 6 Class Groups A &amp; C</th>
<th>Grade 3 - 6 Class Groups B &amp; D</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 10:30 am</td>
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<td>Parish Center</td>
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<th>Grade 7 &amp; 8 Class</th>
<th>4:15 - 5:45 pm in Parish Hall</th>
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February 29th

Confirmation I: 12:45 - 2:15pm
Teaching Baptism in Church

March 1st Family Gathering Sessions in the Parish Hall

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1 FGS, Group A</th>
<th>Grade 2 FGS: Group B</th>
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<td>9:00 - 10:30 am</td>
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<th>Grade 3 FGS: Group A</th>
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<th>Grade 4 FGS, Group A</th>
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<th>Grade 5 FGS, Group A</th>
<th>Grade 5 FGS, Group B</th>
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<th>Grade 6 FGS, Group A</th>
<th>Grade 6 FGS, Group B</th>
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<td>9:00 - 10:30 am</td>
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CONFIRMATION II: 4:15 - 5:45 pm

Because the normally used “Handicap Use” door will be out of service—due to construction of the new LIFT—students will be dismissed from the rear door of the parish hall. For safety purposes, the gate that separates the front parking lot from the rear lot will be closed in order to keep traffic from driving through. For those picking up a student prior to the 6 pm Mass, please enter the rear lot from the Fletcher Street side.
ST. JOHN FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE AND EVENTS

Upcoming Deep Dive Events

Ash Wednesday
NEXT Wednesday, February 26th
Mass Schedule is as follows:
- St. Mary at 7 am | 4 pm | 7 pm
- St. John at 9 am | 12 pm (Liturgy of the Word) | 6 pm

Soup and Stations
Fridays of Lent: Feb 28; Mar 6, 13, 20, 27; Apr 3
- 5 pm Service* | 6 pm Soup | 7 pm Stations
Attendance at Stations is Deep Dive Event for all families. * Service is a Confirmation Only Deep Dive Event and is available only at St. Mary. RSVP (sign-up) is REQUIRED. To do so, visit the website...
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Completion of a reflection sheet is REQUIRED for ALL deep dives. Downloadable or online reflection sheets can be found on our website as part of the specific deep dive page.

follow us on Instagram
instagram.com/chelmsfordcatholic
Upcoming Deep Dives can be found on our Instagram page!
Youth Ministry

"You, dear young people, are not the future but the now of God."
~Pope Francis, World Youth Day Homily, Panama

The Chelmsford Catholic Collaborative’s Youth Ministry program seeks to ensure that the young people of the Collaborative feel known, valued, and loved by God and by their parish community. By providing opportunities for youth to encounter Christ in their lives and connecting them with mature Christian mentors, youth ministry strives to equip and empower our young people to be lifelong disciples of Jesus.

Catholic Heart Workcamp 2020

“"I am”

July 19-24, 2020
North Haledon, NJ

I AM. These words can be found in the Bible hundreds of times. They refer to God, who is the Great I AM. Through all space and time, God continues to declare “I AM who I AM.” God is not dead; He is not only the God of long ago. He is the God who will always live forever and ever, who is alive today and beckons us into relationship by reassuring us, “I AM who I AM.” He is the God we meet in the Eucharist, in prayer, and in our service to His kingdom. We are pulled in an overwhelming number of directions when trying to discover our identity. We seek belonging and purpose in so many places. Still, the fullness of our worth can only be found in one place. Our truest identity is being children of the Great I AM. This summer, CHWC invites you to ask yourself the question: “Who am I?” Join us as we discover the answer to this question by encountering the great I AM through love, service, and connection to His people.

$500 per person
$100 non-refundable deposit due at registration
Online Sign-ups available...
https://chelmsfordcatholic.org/catholic-heart-work-camp

Steubenville East 2020 Theme: RESTORED

July 10-12, 2020 in Kingston, Rhode Island

“Restore us, O God; Let thy face shine, that we may be saved.”

Can you remember a time when you weren’t anxious about something? The chaos of our lives can overwhelm us and we’ve forgotten who we are—and, more importantly, who God is. We have a good, loving Father in heaven who created us to share in His glory, to see everything and everyone with His eyes. His greatest desire is to raise us up out of our fear and anxiety and restore us to the hope and abundant life that only He can give. This summer, over 50,000 Catholic teens across North America will attend one of 25 Steubenville Youth Conferences to encounter the God who calls us out of darkness and into His marvelous light. Will you be one of those teens? Lift your eyes to the glory of God. Be restored.

$275 per person
$50 non-refundable deposit due at registration
Online Sign-ups available...
https://chelmsfordcatholic.org/steubenville-east

DEADLINE TO SIGN UP FOR THESE EVENTS IS MARCH 1, 2020
If you would like to submit a notice for the bulletin, please submit it no later than 12 NOON, TWO Fridays prior to the weekend in which you would like to have it published. Submittals should be emailed to christine@chelmsfordcatholic.org or via US Mail to the Parish Offices at 115 Middlesex Street, North Chelmsford, MA, 01863, ATTN Christine. We will do our very best to accommodate your request.
The other day, as I was walking into my bathroom, I saw my cat Harry sitting on the toilet seat waiting for me. He then went to jump from the seat into the sink. But I noticed he hesitated as he wanted to make sure he could make the jump. His front paws were on the sink and his back paws were on the seat. He sort of rocked back and forth on his hind legs until he felt sure he could make the transition, and then he did. Harry and his sister Sally are getting older. In April they will be eighteen years old which is getting up there for cats (equivalent to 88 human years). And I have noticed the changes over the years of what they can no longer do. When Harry got here almost five years ago, he could easily jump five feet in the air. One time I came into the bedroom and saw Harry on top of the bureau, which is about five feet in height, and the only way he could have gotten there was by jumping from the floor. Now his ability to jump is getting more limited, but for his age he is still doing pretty well.

The changes that happen as we get older are inevitable. Our limitations obviously increase as we age and we cannot quite manage the things we did easily in the past. We can try to mitigate these changes, but in time we must adjust to our new norm. Harry cannot jump like he could in the past, but he finds other ways to get where he wants to go. But, it is interesting that what is true for our physical ability is not true for our spiritual.

This week we will enter the wonderful season of Lent—a time to assess our spiritual limitations and see how we can change and grow stronger in our faith and in our relationship with Christ. I think one of the biggest issues we have with Lent is that we have a misunderstanding of what the season is really about. People focus on what they will do and not on why they do them. And that usually comes from God, and God alone. It should help us to grow in humility and a desire to empty ourselves of all that is not of Christ.

We are also called to grow in prayer during Lent, and not with the idea that once Lent is over we are done praying. Rather, Lent helps us to focus on our need for prayer. We come to recognize that prayer is simply having a dialogue with the Lord, and to understand that we are not the authors of our conversation. God began this conversation the moment He created us. And from that point on He has been talking to us. The problem is that we don’t hear Him because we are not listening to Him. Lent is a time to stop and truly try to learn how to hear God in our lives. It is a time to make the prophet Samuel’s words our own, “Speak Lord, your servant is listening.” One powerful way to grow in prayer is through the devotion of Adoration—taking time simply to be with the Lord. When we enter into the prayer of Adoration, whether before the tabernacle or the Eucharist exposed in the monstrance, we know Jesus is right there with us. And it is a powerful way to pray. I usually spend somewhere between ½ and 2 hours in Adoration each day. I usually begin my day with this prayer. And being with Jesus in this way makes a major difference in my day. I am not asking people to do this. If you have not prayed in Adoration before, try coming for only 10 minutes and just be with the Lord.

These practices and others we can do during Lent should be about one thing: helping us to discover our limitations—the places where we are stunted spiritually and need to grow. It is about recognizing that I cannot change myself, but God’s grace can help me change from the person I am to being the person He created me to be. Unlike Harry, who cannot change the process of his physical decline, we can change our spiritual state with the help of God. And Lent is the perfect time to do just that.

May we use this Lent to grow in our desire to praise God. May we use this Lent as an opportunity to truly listen to the Lord. May we use this Lent to grow in faith, hope, and charity!

Wishing you all a fruitful Lent!

If you have any questions about anything, please do not hesitate to ask me directly, or send your questions to me at fr.brian@chelmsfordcatholic.org.

Please keep me in your prayers.

In Christ,
Jesus, I Trust in You.

We have been navigating some rough waters during this time of transition. As a team we have wrestled with how to respond to people who are less than charitable in their interactions. It can be exhausting to deal with, and a hindrance to, the work we are trying to achieve in His name. Yet, we know that any work we do on the Lord’s behalf will be challenged; just read the Bible to see how this experience unfolds repeatedly throughout the history of God’s people, as disciples were sent out to preach the good news. The scriptures reassure us that God will comfort us in our troubles, so that we can help others who face the same challenges, and be salt and light in the world.

Both common sense and scripture teach us that we should avoid those who cause divisions. (Romans 16:17) Whenever we are trying to faithfully follow the will of God, we should expect to encounter divisive behavior, knowing full well it is the work of the adversary trying to discourage us and the good work He intends for us to accomplish. How does one handle the inevitable? We can try to avoid these altercations and easily fall into the trap of thinking that Christianity is all about simply “getting along.” It’s easy to believe that if we are loving and kind, then everyone will also love us. But that’s not what Jesus said.

Jesus made it clear that persecution is going to be a part of the Church, and that we should not be surprised when this happens to us. We should not be surprised when those within step on us and act maliciously. When this happens, it is easy for us to lose faith and to lose heart.

Examples of a growing hostility toward the Christian faith are all around us. For that reason, we need to heed Jesus’ words today more than ever. We need to have hope in His promise that He will be with us and will give us the words to say when we need them.

When we look back at how Jesus treated those who persecuted Him and mocked Him, He never treated them rudely. He may have been bold in speaking the truth, but He always did it with love, never separating the two. You can’t have truth without love, nor can you have love without truth.

While we may still feel the sting of bad behavior, we should never respond out of our wounds. We are told instead to pray unceasingly. Be ready and willing to face hostility, and strive to have courage and strength to endure any and every persecution with the help, strength and wisdom of Christ. And so, we pray.... Lord, give us strength, courage and wisdom as we live out our faith. May we respond with love and mercy in the face of harshness and misunderstanding. Jesus, I trust in You.

The holy season of Lent is upon us! With that, the Catholic Church requires Catholics on the day after their 14th birthday to abstain from eating meat on all Fridays during Lent and Ash Wednesday. On these same days, adults beginning on their 18th birthday through the day of their 59th birthday must fast, having only one full meal and two smaller meals not equaling the quantity of the full meal.

Throughout the history of the Church, the rules for fasting and abstinence have changed, including within the last century. Currently, the law of abstinence does not apply to dairy products, eggs, or condiments or shortening made from animal fat. In addition, fish and all cold-blooded animals may be eaten on the Fridays during Lent and Ash Wednesday.

Christ Jesus told us, “Unless you do penance, you shall likewise perish” (St. Luke 13:5). In justice to God, Who gives us our very bodies and souls, we poor sinners who so often misuse our own bodies and souls, and those of others, owe our Creator recompense for our sinfulness. Knowing our weakness and laziness, Holy Mother Church has imposed upon us these ecclesiastical laws to ensure that we perform works of penance at certain times annually.

In addition to making satisfaction for our sins, fasting, Saint Thomas Aquinas tells us, restrains the desires of our flesh and raises our minds to contemplate God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the angels and saints in Heaven. Indeed, for one struggling with impurity, priests often advise disciplining the body by fasting and refraining from alcohol, such that the body is tempered by moderation in food and drink. Interestingly, studies show that the intermittent fasting trend has health benefits and might increase life expectancy. But this is nothing new. The Greek physician Galen, whose writings were known by medievals like Aquinas, stated that fasting is “the supreme medicine.”

But why abstinence from meat? The Church calls for abstaining from flesh-meat during certain days of Lent (or all of Lent, as once was the case) for the sake of our overcoming the passions of the flesh, particularly the temptations to lust and anger long associated with meat. Here is another example in which Faith and science neatly coincide. Nutritionists have found that zinc is a major factor in exciting the concupiscence of the flesh. And guess which food products are high in zinc: meat, shellfish, legumes, seeds, nuts, dairy products, eggs, whole grains, and dark chocolate.

The general rule is that fish, excepting shellfish, and most vegetables do not have much zinc and thus do not excite our passions as much as most meats, eggs, and dairy products do. How amazing it is that the traditional practice of the Church included abstinence not only from flesh-meat but also from all dairy products, eggs, and even shellfish! This Lent, then, we can follow the current Church disciplines with greater conviction and understanding of why we undertake them, and not simply “that’s just what we Catholics do.”
Help Save Lives in Boston!
You are invited to join fellow Christians for 40 days of fasting and prayer for an end to abortion.

You are also invited to stand and peacefully pray during a 40-day vigil (7am—7 pm) in the public right-of-way outside Planned Parenthood at 1055 Commonwealth Ave in Boston.

If you would like more information, or especially if you'd like to volunteer to help, please contact rita.a.russo@gmail.com or (781) 762-4391.

For a full schedule of events, visit www.40daysforlife.com/BOSTON

FORMED.ORG is here to assist us on our Lenten journey. Visit www.chelmsfordcatholic.org/formed.

You will find the link to the PICK OF THE WEEK on the left. If you do not currently have a FORMED account, this page will assist you with that process as well.

**Come to the Waters of Healing**

A Retreat for Hope and Healing After Abortion

“My spirit was broken, and as far as I knew, beyond repair. I was living a decision that I will regret for the rest of my life. I was haunted by the choice, and consumed with feelings of remorse. During the retreat, I realized the lasting impact of forgiveness. I knew God had forgiven me, and now I needed to forgive myself.”

- Project Rachel Retreat Participant

The Project Rachel Ministry of the Archdiocese of Boston extends a special invitation to women suffering from the pain of a past abortion to attend a one-day retreat. Spring retreat dates are:

Saturdays, April 4th and May 30th
9 am - 5 pm at a Confidential Location

Because the retreat is limited to 10 participants, pre-registration is required.

To register, or for more information, contact Project Rachel via telephone at (508) 651-3100 or visit their website at help@projectrachelboston.com

**Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving**

... the three tenets of the Lenten Season

In regards to prayer, we are hoping that you will accept our invitation to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus in the age-old practice of...

**Eucharistic Adoration**

St. John the Evangelist
Old Parish Center Chapel

Weekly:
Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays
9:30 - 11:30 am

Monthly:
First Friday Nocturnal Adoration
Begins 1st Friday following 9 am Mass;
concludes at 9am on Saturday

Last 3 Wednesdays of the Month
6:30 - 8:30 pm

**Why do we go to Adoration?**

Maybe better put, why do we adore God? The simple and obvious answer... because he is God and we’re his creations. It’s a unique and basic form of prayer.

God doesn’t need our adoration. We’re the ones who benefit from this prayer form because it sets our relationship with Him in its proper order and, at the same time, deepens the personal relationship we can have with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**St. Mary Parish Center Chapel**

Thursdays 3:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Fridays 7:30 am - 9:00 pm
Saturdays 9:30 am - 3:00 pm

**Boy Scout Troop 77 : 3rd ANNUAL Cake Auction**

Wednesday, March 18th . 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Byam School . 25 Maple Road Chelmsford

Momies raised from this event will be used to send Scouts to Leadership Camp!

Questions? Kristi at walshdavid@comcast.net
St. John Evangelist’s 6th Grand Annual Campaign

“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”
-2Corinthians 9:7

We are eternally grateful for your ongoing and faithful support of this campaign. Your generosity has helped us to REACH 60.07% OF OUR GOAL! Please know that NO gift is ever too small or unnoticed. Pledge cards can be found at the church entrances, or you may make your donation online at www.saintjohnchelmsford.weshareonline.org. Thank you for helping us get closer to our goal with every passing week.

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Online Giving Programs: visit www.chelmsfordcatholic.org.
Links to both programs can be found on the right-hand side of home page.

ST. MARY LIFT CONSTRUCTION

This entire project is estimated to take 9-10 weeks, but with the usual and expected construction delays, that may change. During this time, there will be NO access in and out of the exterior hall handicap door and interior hall kitchen door.

This construction WILL effect the dismissal of Sunday evening Faith Formation Students!

Because the normally used “Handicapped Use” door will be out of service, students will be dismissed from the rear door of the parish hall. For safety purposes, the gate will be closed in order to keep traffic from driving through.

For those picking up a student prior to the 6 pm Mass, please enter the rear lot from the Fletcher Street side. For those attending the 6 pm Mass, please enter from the North Street side if you require the use of a handicapped parking space. For all other parking (rear and parish center lot), please enter from the Fletcher Street side. Thank you for your assistance in keeping our students safe!

Due to the President’s Day holiday, the collection figures for the weekend of February 15th/16th will be posted in February 29th/March 1st bulletin.

All monies collected on Ash Wednesday will benefit our parishes.

This week’s second collection will support the Church in underdeveloped areas of the world... Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Church in Africa and in Central and Eastern Europe and three important National Catholic Missions: The Military Archdiocese, Home Missions and the Black and Indian Missions. Your generosity will help fund the spiritual, educational and humanitarian needs of the Church around the world. To learn more about these organizations, please visit www.chelmsfordcatholic.org/2020-second-collection-schedule and click on the links that can be found among the text. Thank you for your generosity!

Next weekend’s second collection will be taken up to support the mission of Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities provides services to people in need, advocates for justice in social structures, and calls the entire church and other people of good will to do the same. Thank you in advance for your support of this important ministry.

A monies collected on Ash Wednesday will benefit our parishes.

Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of Boston

St. John Chelmsford Catholic Church
If you would like to request that a Mass be celebrated for a specific intention or person, please call the parish office. A donation of $10 per Mass intention is requested to be made at the time you schedule your intention.

St. John
- SAT, FEB 22: 4:00 pm; Paul W. Myers: 27th Anniversary
- SUN, FEB 23: 8:30 am: John DaSilva: 2nd Anniversary; 10:30 am: For the People of the Parish; 5:00 pm: John Cullen: Memorial
- MON, FEB 24: 9:00 am: Richard and Betty Pendergast: Memorial
- SAT, FEB 29: 4:00 pm: For the People of the Parish
- SUN, MAR 1: 8:30 am: Denise Dunn: Month’s Mind; 10:30 am: John Wright: 1st Anniversary; 5:00 pm: Adam Jacobs: Memorial

St. Mary
- SAT, FEB 22: 4:00 pm: Mildred LaRock: 3rd Anniversary
- SUN, FEB 23: 9:00 am: John, Betty and Mark Leary: Memorial; 11:00 am: For the People of the Parish
- TUE, FEB 25: 7:00 am: Michael Slattery: 6th Anniversary
- THUR, FEB 27: 7:00 am: 40 Days of Life Initiative
- SAT, FEB 29: 4:00 pm: For the People of the Parish
- SUN, FEB 23: 7:00 am: Marguerite Farley: Memorial; 9:00 am: Deacon Dennis Vandi: Memorial; 11:00 am: Mary Ann Zampell: Memorial; 5:00 pm: William Hoar: 10th Anniversary

Funerals Recently Celebrated
May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
- John Francis Souza
  - February 19 at St. Mary
- Michael J. Vaccaro
  - February 22 at St. Mary

St. Mary Memorial Altar Flowers
Parishioners are invited to donate a floral arrangement, to be displayed on the altar in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one. The requested donation for an arrangement is $40, and includes an acknowledgement in the bulletin.

If you would like to donate altar flowers, please call the parish office.

Rose for Life
Someone special you'd like to honor? You can do that by having a rose signifying your intention placed in the church, as well as having your intention published in the bulletin. To book a Rose for Life, contact the parish office. Be sure to let them know at which parish you would like the rose placed. The suggested offering for a rose is $5.00.

This week’s St. Mary Rose for Life:
Bruce Carr

Parishioners are invited to donate a floral arrangement, to be displayed on the altar in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one. The requested donation for an arrangement is $40, and includes an acknowledgement in the bulletin.

If you would like to donate altar flowers, please call the parish office.

A Floral Moment by Juju Buds

Monday, FEB 24
James 3: 13-18
Psalm 19
Mark 9: 14-29

Tuesday, FEB 25
James 4: 1-10
Psalm 55
Mark 9: 30-37

Wednesday, FEB 26
Joel 2: 12-18
Psalm 51
2Corinth 5:20-6:2
Matt 6: 1-6, 16-18

Thursday, FEB 27
Deut 30: 15-20
Psalm 1

Friday, FEB 28
Isaiah 58: 1-9
Psalm 51
Matthew 9: 14-15

Saturday, FEB 29
Isaiah 58: 9-14
Psalm 86
Luke 5: 27-32

Sunday, MAR 1
Genesis 2: 7-9; 3: 1-7
Psalm 51
Romans 5: 12-19
Matthew 4: 1-11
Anne Marie (Aldrich) Roy-Blanchet of Tyngsboro

Mrs. Anne Marie (Aldrich) Roy – Blanchet, 54, of Tyngsboro passed away unexpectedly at her home on December 26, 2019.

She was married to Kevin Blanchet with whom she celebrated their 11 year anniversary on December 12, 2019.

Born in Lynn, MA on January 5, 1965 she was the daughter of the late Boyd F. Aldrich and Barbara M. (Keirnan) Aldrich.

Mrs. Roy-Blanchet was educated in the Tyngsboro school system and graduated from Tyngsboro High School with the class of 1983 and attended Middlesex Community College.

She was previously employed at the Dunkin Donuts at Lowell General Hospital’s Main Campus, Alan Mello Dodge of Nashua, NH, was a spiritual bereavement counselor and owned and operated Fantasia Hair Salon of Hudson, NH.

Mrs. Roy-Blanchet was a member of the Harbor of Hope in Chelmsford.

Anne enjoyed traveling especially to Disney World, was an animal lover and above all else, she enjoyed spending time with her children.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her children, Matthew Blanchet of Haverhill, MA, Kevin Deibert of Dracut, MA, Nathan Blanchet of Haverhill, MA, Harrison Roy of Tyngsboro, MA, Amberley Deibert of Tyngsboro, MA, Brad Aldrich and his wife Michelle of Hudson, NH., and Arline Shea of Tyngsboro, MA, as well as many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Relatives and friends were respectfully invited to attend her visitation from 3PM to 7PM on Thursday, January 2, 2020 at the DOLAN FUNERAL HOME, 106 MIDDLESEX ST. CHELMSFORD, MA. Her funeral was Friday, January 3, 2020 starting at 10:00AM from the funeral home with a funeral Mass at 11:00AM at St. John the Evangelist Church, Chelmsford. Interment in Memorial Cemetery, Tyngsboro. Memorials may be made in her name to Autism Speaks. Online guest book is available at www.dolanfuneralhome.com.