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

PARISH OFFICE HOURS
The Parish Offices are closed to the public until further notice. Our staff will continue to support you via telephone and email.

WEEKEND MASS LIVESTREAM SCHEDULE
Saturday • 4:00 PM and Sunday • 11:00 AM
Click on St Mary Church LIVEVIEW from home page of website

Sunday • 8:30 AM
Click on St John Church LIVEVIEW from home page of website

WEEKDAY MASS LIVESTREAM SCHEDULE
Monday - Friday • 9:00 AM
Click on St Mary Church LIVEVIEW from home page of website

DAILY DEVOTIONS LIVESTREAM SCHEDULE
Refer to Page 2

“OPEN CHURCH” HOURS
Both churches are closed until further notice as we take steps to fully disinfect both properties

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Parking Lot Confessions • 4:30 - 5:30 pm • weather permitting
Mondays at St. John • Wednesdays at St. Mary

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

April 26, 2020
Third Sunday of Easter

“The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon” –Luke 24:34
| Sunday, April 26    | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Sunday Liturgy • 11:00 am  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Monday, April 27   | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Daily Mass • 9:00 am  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Tuesday, April 28  | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Daily Mass • 9:00 am  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Wednesday, April 29| Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Daily Mass • 9:00 am  
Parking Lot Confessions • 4:30 - 5:30 pm  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Thursday, April 30 | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Daily Mass • 9:00 am  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Friday, May 1      | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Daily Mass • 9:00 am  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Saturday, May 2    | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Weekend Liturgy • 4:00 pm  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |
| Sunday, May 3      | Morning Prayer • 7:00 am  
Sunday Liturgy • 11:00 am  
Rosary • 7:00 pm |

The parish offices, parish centers and churches remain closed until further notice.
**FUNSTERS:** Calling ALL children Pre-K (age 4) through 5th grade (entering 6th in the fall) to climb aboard for Mountains of Fun at Rocky Railway, where they will discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life’s ups and downs.

**YOUTH:** Looking for dynamic and power-driven youth from grade 6 (entering 7th in the fall) through age 17 to help our FUNSTERS have the VBF experience of a lifetime. Join the fun and faith-filled staff of 2020!

**ADULTS:** You are an essential part of our program! Without you, we cannot facilitate this powerful and dynamic experience for our children! Trust us: it’s a rewarding experience for you as well.

Register TODAY by clicking on the VBF image on our homepage.
Please remember that your generous and consistent giving is needed and greatly appreciated as the offertory is our main source of funds for paying our daily operating expenses.

### St. Mary Offertory Summary FY 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Since the Suspension of Masses:</th>
<th>Weekend of April 18th/19th</th>
<th>Year-To-Date April 19th</th>
<th>Year-To-Date Average/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of March 14th/15th: received $7,787 (shortfall of $9,353)</td>
<td>$17,140</td>
<td>$702,740</td>
<td>$17,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of March 22nd/23rd: received $6,390 (shortfall of $10,750)</td>
<td>$15,380</td>
<td>$630,712</td>
<td>$15,383</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekend of March 28th/29th: received $11,969 (shortfall of $5,171)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of April 4th/5th: received $11,144 (shortfall of $5,996)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of April 11th/12th: received $18,384 (overage of $1,244)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses</td>
<td>-$1,760</td>
<td>-$72,028</td>
<td>-$1,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortfall/ Overage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### St. John Offertory Summary FY 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Since the Suspension of Masses:</th>
<th>Weekend of April 18th/19th</th>
<th>Year-To-Date April 19th</th>
<th>Year-To-Date Average/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of March 14th/15th: received $4,741 (shortfall of $6,299)</td>
<td>$11,040</td>
<td>$452,640</td>
<td>$11,040</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekend of March 22nd/23rd: received $6,096 (shortfall of $4,944)</td>
<td>$9,604</td>
<td>$413,369</td>
<td>$10,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of March 28th/29th: received $8,207 (shortfall of $2,833)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekend of April 4th/5th: received $8,272 (shortfall of $2,768)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of April 11th/12th: received $13,512 (overage of $2,472)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offertory Required to cover Budgeted Expenses</td>
<td>-$1,436</td>
<td>-$39,271</td>
<td>-$958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortfall/ Overage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you to all of you, whose donations to the St. John Grand Annual, total $48,365... 96.73% of goal!

How many more ways can we say thank you? Many, many more, we are sure! We are so very blessed to have our parish family come together in support of our offertory, hence, each other. Your weekly offertory donations not only fund operating expenses and staff salaries, but also the programs that we build and grow to support your needs…the needs of our parish families.

Our Easter Weekend collection was an incredible thing to witness…that in a mere month (yes—it certainly does feel MUCH longer, doesn’t it?) of closed churches, suspended Masses and social distancing, we increased from an average weekly shortage of -$4,211 at St. John and -$7,818 at St. Mary to an overage of over $1,000 at BOTH PARISHES!

In the words of the famous Vince Lombardi:

“Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”

Thank you for your commitment to the effort!
As we get more and more creative during this time, allow us to introduce a Gift Basket Raffle. Some of the items that can be found in this basket—monetary value of $250—contains a bottle of wine and wine glasses; Fairtrade® coffees, teas and chocolates; two books and a $100 dollar visa gift card!

The name attached to each new online giving account sign-up who sets up active giving to their parish—not quick-pay—between March 15th and May 30th, will be entered into a raffle drawing for this basket. Since March 15th, 64 names have been already been entered! Good Luck! (directions to sign-up can be found below).

In addition to the usual ways that we are receiving donations, the Archdiocese has implemented a program called 90 Days Now—For Your Parish. This initiative was spear-headed by a lay-person concerned with the potential financial downfall of parishes due to the Mass suspension. It offers a simple and easy way to make a daily financial commitment—in addition to your weekly offertory commitment—to your parish over the next 90 days, with the assurance that your contribution will remain IN your parish; no portion or percentage will be kept by the Archdiocese.

Contributions will be immediately credited and direct-deposited into the parish bank account. The link to this site can be found on the home page of our website, and will distributed in an upcoming Flocknote email (if you don’t currently receive Flocknotes, please see below).

Thank you for the crucial part you are playing in providing for the financial health of our collaborative community in meeting our financial obligations, such as payroll and daily operating expenses.

BE IN “THE KNOW” WITH Flocknote

Our goal has been, is, and always will be to be by your side; to keep you up-to-date and connected to your parish community. We are able to do this efficiently and effectively through a communications/email tool called Flocknote!

If you are not receiving these notifications, send an email to christine@chelmsfordcatholic.org with your first name, last name, at which parish you are registered, and your email. We’ll get you set up immediately so you are in “THE KNOW”. God Bless and Be Well!
Is God a real Being for you or simply an idea to be entertained?

Often, we reduce God to a set of ideas, theories, and principles and neglect to see Him as the One who takes joy in helping us understand all of the events and mysteries of life. God delights in journeying with us and is the only One who can fill us with joy and make our hearts burn with excitement and jubilation. He is the One who assists us in recognizing the truth that is before us and interpreting not only the jewels of Sacred Scripture but the events of history. If we recognize God, we can also see that He inspires us to see the divine meaning of our own lives as well. Sometimes it takes us a little time. After all, even Jesus’ closest friends had to walk with him for a while on the road to Emmaus before their eyes were opened in the breaking of bread.
In order to promote communication and transparency throughout the Chelmsford Catholic Collaborative, you are encouraged to forward any comments and concerns you may have directly to the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils.

**COLLABORATIVE PARISH COUNCIL**

Parish council matters can be sent to:
CollaborativePPC@chelmsfordcatholic.org
or 978-256-2374/ 978-251-8571, ext 145
Current Council Members are ...

St. John Members                     St. Mary Members
Scott Davidson (co-chair)           Peter Lando (co-chair)
Ray Wagner                          Laura Conte
Mike Condor                         Rob Donnelly
Katrina Horan                       Karen Drake
Beth Jacavanco                      Jessica Hägg
Drew Jubinville                     Matthew Kunze (youth)
Angela McMaster                     Cathy Latina
Ellen St. George                    Lori McDonald
Delaney Schiefs (youth)             Steve McMillan
Augustine Tweneh                    Alma (Chicki) Rigazio
                                      Paul Therrien

**ST. JOHN FINANCE COUNCIL**

Finance matters concerning St. John’s can be sent to:
SJ.FC@chelmsfordcatholic.org
or 978-251-8571, ext 146
Current Council Members are ...

John Bagni                          Jeff Brown
Paul Brzezenski                     Celeste Dunn
Grace Ann Steed

**ST. MARY FINANCE COUNCIL**

Finance matters concerning St. Mary’s can be sent to:
SM.FC@chelmsfordcatholic.org
or 978-256-2374 ext 147
Current Council Members are ...

Armand DiLando                      Lauren Desforge
Jack Parsons                        Ted Powers
Paul Rigazio                        Paul Therrien

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.
I was asked by one of our parishioners who teaches religion at Lowell Catholic if she could interview me via ZOOM. She wanted to ask me questions from her freshman classes about the Church and specifically about the priesthood and my own journey. I said, “Sure!” It took a couple of weeks before we could do it, but last Tuesday we had that meeting. It was interesting to hear the questions the kids had for me. But one question ended up really intriguing me, more about my response than the question itself. The question was, “What do you miss the most right now?” If you had asked me a month ago—before this all started—what my answer would be, it would most likely have been very different than what I said. Most likely I would have said something about the sacraments. Instead, my answer was quick and easy: I did not even have to think about my response. “I miss being with my parishioners.” The reality is that I am a rather big introvert and, honestly, being alone does not bother me at all. I enjoy being by myself, and solitude generally is something I personally look forward to. The best retreat for me is being with only one other person and having a lot of time alone with God.

But, I was also ordained to be a diocesan priest which generally means working with people in a parish. And I have come to realize that this is one of the things I truly cherish. Especially during this time, it has become abundantly clear to me how important the people of God are in my life. When I look out at the empty church, there really is an ache in my heart. I feel a true need to have people physically present, and without them there exists a real emptiness. For me, as an introvert, it is not about being alone; that does not bother me. Rather, as a human being it is about making connections with a community. And, as a person of faith, it is about making connections with people who gather for the same purpose, the same intention, the same desire to worship the one true God. Led by Christ! Empowered by the Holy Spirit! I know people are watching and participating. I know people are being nourished by what we are doing. However, it is not the same as their being with you in the same place, at the same time with a common goal and vision.

As human beings we are made in the image and likeness of God. And God, as Trinity, by His very nature is community. Therefore, we also, by our nature, are intended to be united in community. It is at the heart of what it means to be truly human. And though our technology is helping us to bridge some of the gaps during this unprecedented moment in our history, it does not have the capacity to create personal bonds that can only exist when people are together in same space.

But this moment is also creating an opportunity for us to begin to recognize what is truly important to us. As I said above, I believe the answers I would have given a month ago, about what is important to me, would most likely have been different. Trust that the people of God have always been important to me, but when they are no longer directly present, the longing it creates helps me to reevaluate what matters most to me.

I am also, at the core of my being, an optimist. And I see every challenge generally as an opportunity. It is simply a question of how one wants to approach any given situation. I am learning a lot about myself, my staff, and my parishes during this time. And it also is making me wonder how we can do things differently or better. I have no answers yet but the challenge before me is to start trying to figure out the right questions to ask. I know I will not be doing this alone. But it is important to begin a process of self-discovery whenever we are confronted with moments that upend our lives. It is important to ask the questions we might think we already know the answers to, and discover whether or not we are correct in our assessment.

We do not know when we will be back together again as a family, joining in our worship in the same place, at the same time. It is a day that I personally am very much anticipating and desiring to be sooner rather than later. However—whenever that day may be—the time we have beforehand does not have to be a time that is wasted. It can be a time in which we all can learn more about ourselves and our community of faith.

We are living out Lent and Easter in a very different way this year. But God is with us and He is calling us not to focus again on what is not there, but rather, that we are still together as a community joined in prayer, faith, hope and love. In this time let us simply remember what Paul wrote to the Ephesians, and know that it is still true for us this day: “I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.”

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,
"What experience has most stuck with you from your pilgrimage?" I have been asked this question many times since our group’s return from the Holy Land. It is a difficult question to answer, both because so very many things have stayed with me from the trip, and because many of them I find myself not fully ready to discuss. However, I can easily say which image has most stuck with me. It is one that I cannot get out of my head (nor do I want to). I thought it profound and beautiful when I first saw it. Now that we have moved through Lent and Easter during this time of pandemic, I find that it has only grown in meaning for me.

On the ceiling above the sanctuary in the Church of the Flagellation is a gorgeous mosaic. Waves of bright gold surround a striking crown of thorns; its entwining branches are thick and unyielding, its thorns imposing and dripping with blood. Without any words it attests to an abuse both cold and cruel, the painful mocking of our King. It is a stark testament to the torment that Christ endured for our sakes. Yet, as with Good Friday, agony is not the only thing contained within this crown; there is hope and beauty as well. Amidst the branches shines a second crown of brilliant stars; springing forth from the thorns are blossoms of new life. The stars and blossoms point to the promise of the Resurrection and are a beautiful reminder that with Christ, death and despair are never the end of the story. God was able to take the most awful act in history, our killing of His Son, and through it offer us His greatest gift—our salvation. There is nothing so terrible that it is beyond God’s power to bring about good.

This is a needful truth at any time, but one that has become even more crucial in recent times. There is no denying that this is a time of suffering; there is illness and death, isolation and fear, uncertainty and sorrow… When we look at the crown of thorns we can know that our God knows what it is like to suffer, that He is with us in all our adversities. We can also trust that He can and will offer us His grace in the midst of, and perhaps even through, this situation. Yes, there may be thorns but there will be blossoms too. I know in my own life I am already able to see a few buds and blooms, and I find hope in believing more will grow. For this I am grateful and I would encourage you to reflect on where in this time you can see God working. Remember, in the spirit of this moving mosaic and as St. Pope John Paul II once urged that we should “…not abandon [ourselves] to despair. [For] we are the Easter people and Alleluia is our song.”

As you are social-distancing, is there a ‘thought’ or reflection that you would like to share with us? If so, email it to… christine@chelmsfordcatholic.org

And reference BULLETIN ARTICLE in the subject line. Also please let me know if, in addition to publishing it in the bulletin, I have your permission to share it via Flocknote. If editing is required, I will send it to you prior to publishing. Thank you.

This brings me to the introduction of our first sharing: a poem, penned by St. John Parishioner Marie Sevigny.

EASTER 2020

This Eastertide is different, few crowds or cars in sight—lines forming at the stores continuing day and night.

Before one stops to find T.P. or some good cut of meat, they are cautioned by a booming voice “Please say back 6 feet!”

Just one more thing to do, embracing every task, Take a deep breath—and hear “You should put on your mask!”

Two weeks ahead of us to do what they think best—Live one day at a time; God will do the rest.

So, may Easter find you safe and all days in between.
Precaution is the secret to deal with COVID 19
Do we really believe that God died and rose again nearly 2,000 years ago?

The short answer: YES! If Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Son of God is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), then we can and should believe that God died and rose again about 2,000 years ago.

This argument hinges on whether we accept the preaching of the apostles of Christ (Sacred Tradition) and the writings of the New Testament, especially the Gospel accounts (Sacred Scripture, which also includes the Old Testament). Both Catholic Tradition and the Holy Bible explicitly teach that Jesus of Nazareth was put to death by the Roman procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate, around the year A.D. 33. Such a bold assertion requires the supernatural virtue of faith in order for us to believe in the Risen Lord.

However, we can be assured that there really lived the Man named Jesus of Nazareth, preaching throughout Judea for about three years, during the reign of Tiberius Caesar in Rome. Non-Christian historians, such as the Roman historian Tacitus and the Jewish historian Josephus, provide ample proof that Jesus lived in the Roman province of Judea and died in Jerusalem. Moreover, such historians recount that Jesus’ followers rapidly made converts to this “new sect” of the Israelite religion, as the Gentiles considered it.

Granting that Jesus Christ was a real Person, based on historical fact, what do we, as people of faith, say about His life in the world? In the Nicene Creed, the summation of the Catholic Faith that we profess at Sunday Mass (hopefully interiorly and not just exteriorly!), we assent to the statement that the “one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God…suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.” This declaration is at the heart of the mysteries we recalled during the Triduum and are celebrating these fifty days of Easter.

When we say that Jesus Christ suffered death and was buried, we do, in fact, mean that the Son of God was executed. We believe this because Jesus Christ is true God and became true Man at the Incarnation, in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit. We know that Christ is the Son of God because Saint Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, exclaimed to Jesus, “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God” (St. Matthew 16:16). Those Jews who had Jesus sent to Pilate questioned our Lord on this pivotal matter at His trial (see St. Luke 22:70). In neither case did Jesus deny this claim, but rather He confirmed His Divinity as the Son of God.

Thus, we believe that about two thousand years ago in Jerusalem, the Jewish leaders conspired with Roman officials to have the Second Person of the Trinity unjustly tortured and ultimately executed. In the same way we believe that our Mother, Holy Mary, is the Mater Dei, the Mother of God—by virtue of being the Mother of the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God—so also we say that God died on that fateful day for our salvation.

Now, only living beings with matter (or material) can die, including plants, animals, and humans. God cannot die, for He is the very Source of all existence, given His Name: “I Am Who Am” (see Exodus 3:14). Nor can angels or demons die, for they are immaterial. If God willed, spiritual creatures could cease to exist, but the loving Creator would never do such a thing. Man is a special case, because he is a composite of spirit and matter. We call man’s spirit his soul and man’s matter his body. Every human person has a soul, by which he thinks (through his intellect) and makes choices (through his will). Death results when the human soul departs from the body, leaving the body to corrupt on earth and await “the resurrection of the body” at the end of time, an affirmation we state in the Apostles’ Creed.

So, when we claim that the Son of God died, we mean just that: the human soul of Christ left His human body after Jesus breathed His last. As a Divine Person (the Second Person of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) however, something unique occurred. While the soul and the body of Christ were separated for three days, the Divinity of the Son of God remained with BOTH His separated soul and body. This prevented Jesus’ body from rotting from about the sixth hour of Good Friday (about 3:00 PM) to early Easter Sunday morning.

With utmost assurance in the Catholic Faith, therefore, we believe that Jesus Christ, Who is the Son of God, and thus God Himself, really suffered death and rose on the third day. Our Lord was not pretending to lie dead in the tomb, nor was He sleeping. Rather, Christ felt the unnatural pains of death that we all one day sadly will endure, as a result of the original sin of Adam and Eve.

But “let us rejoice and be glad,” for “The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone” (Psalm 117:22,24). God truly did die nearly 2,000 years ago for our sins and rose from the dead on the third day so that we can live forever in Heaven, showing that death has no victory: “O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? … But thanks be to God, Who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (First Corinthians 15:55,57).
Rosanna Alfano of Tewksbury, MA

Rosanna Helen Alfano, 82, a longtime resident of Tewksbury, MA peacefully passed away surrounded by loving family on Monday, March 9, 2020 at Lowell General Hospital. She married her devoted husband, Arthur Alfano, in 1957 to whom she was married for 60 years before his death in 2017. Born in Lowell, she was the daughter of the late George and Rose Hurley. She attended Lowell High School and later enriched her life through adult education courses.

Rosanna’s main passion in life was her family. She enjoyed hosting dinners at her home, participating in adventures and celebrations with family, and simply getting together to chat. In addition to taking care of her family, she was also kind to animals whether it be taking in a days old kitten abandoned in the woods behind her home, or “grammysitting” family dogs and other pets. She will always be remembered for putting the needs of her family above her own.

Rosanna is survived by her daughter, Donna Graham and William Marshall of Nashua, NH; her son, Arthur Alfano of Tewkbury; a daughter in law, Belinda Alfano; her adored granddaughters, Sophia Alfano and Isabella Alfano; her sister, Jo and her husband Don Williamson of Tyngsboro; brothers in law, Richard Lanoue of Tyngsboro and Peter Berys of Chelmsford and sister in law, Mary Alfano of Holyoke. She also leaves behind many precious nieces, nephews, and their children.

Rosanna was the sister of the late Catherine “Dolly” Hurley and the late Frances “Chic” Lanoue; sister in law of the late Joan Berys and the late Joseph Alfano; aunt of the late Richard Lanoue Jr.

Family and friends gathered at the Dolan Funeral Home on Saturday, March 14, 2020 at 10 AM, with the Funeral at 11 AM at St. John the Evangelist Church, 115 Middlesex St., Chelmsford, MA 01863. Burial in Tyngsboro Memorial Cemetery. If wishing to make a donation in her memory, please consider The Assistance Fund at tafoacs.org, or an organization close to your heart. Online guest book is available at www.dolanfuneralhome.com

ARRANGEMENTS BY DOLAN FUNERAL HOME 978-256-4040.