

HOLY REDEEMER AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION COLLABORATIVE PARISHES

SERVING MERRIMAC, NEWBURY, NEWBURYPORT, AND WEST NEWBURY

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2016

hriccatholic.org

All Are Welcome



The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt. 1:20-21)

OUR COLLABORATIVE

Holy Redeemer Parish



St. Ann

Church: 300 Main St., W. Newbury 01985
Rectory: 46 Maple St., W. Newbury 01985
Phone: 978-346-8604
Email: holyredeemer@verizon.net



Nativity

Parish offices and church:
4 Green St., Merrimac 01860
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: 978-346-8604
Email: holyredeemer@verizon.net

Immaculate Conception Parish



Immaculate Conception

Parish, church, rectory, and offices:
42 Green St., Newburyport 01950
Office Hours: M-F 8:00 am-3:30 pm
Phone: 978-462-2724
Fax: 978-234-7399
Email: info@newburyportcatholic.org



St. Mary's Cemetery

36 Storey Avenue,
Newburyport 01950

Immaculate Conception School

1 Washington Street, Newburyport 01950, Pre K-grade 8,
Mary Reardon, Principal, Phone: 978-465-7780,
Fax: 978-234-7331, www.icsnewburyport.com



Collaborative Staff

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St. Vincent de Paul Society at Immaculate Conception, 978-518-0728

St Mary's Cemetery

Joseph Viel, 978-208-0266
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COLLABORATIVE NEWS

Collaborative Mass Schedule

Saturday (12/17)

4:00pm **IC** John & Katherine Kelley, Richard Creeden, Roger Gagnon (Fr. Morin)

4:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)

Sunday (12/18)

7:15am **IC** (Fr. Broderick)

8:00am **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)

9:00am **IC** Miguel Martinez, Bob O'Handley, Ethel Upchurch (Fr. Morin)

10:15am **St. Ann Marguerite & Nancy Pendergast** (Fr. Harrison)

11:30am **IC** Lawrence Kiszka, John D'Ambrosio, Christopher Boissoneau (Fr. McLaughlin)

Monday (12/19)

9:00am **St. Ann Michaelnia & James DiResta** (Fr. Harrison)

Tuesday (12/20)

7:15am **IC** John & Katherine Kelley (Fr. McLaughlin)

Wednesday (12/21)

7:15am **IC** (Fr. Morin)

Thursday (12/22)

7:15am **IC** Joseph Burke, Anna F. Robinson, John & Katherine Kelley (Fr. Morin)

Friday (12/23)

9:00am **Nativity** (Fr. McLaughlin)

9:00am **IC** School Liturgy Robert McDonough, Jane Welch Connor (Fr. Morin)

Saturday (12/24) Christmas Eve

4:00pm **IC** (Fr. Harrison)

4:00pm **IC School Gym** (Fr. McLaughlin)

4:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. Morin)

4:00pm **St. Ann** (Fr. Christiansen)

6:00pm **IC** (Fr. McLaughlin)

6:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. George)

Sunday (12/25) Christmas Day

12:00 Midnight **IC** (Fr. Harrison)

8:00am **IC** (Fr. Broderick)

8:00am **Nativity** (Fr. George)

10:00am **IC** (Fr. Harrison)

10:15am **St. Ann** (Fr. Christiansen)



In your prayers, please remember John Kamieneski, Jane Welch Connor, and all the faithful departed.

The priests' schedule is subject to change without notice.

IC—Immaculate Conception, Newburyport

Nativity—Merrimac

St. Ann—West Newbury

Confession Times in Advent

In addition to the weekly schedule, Confessions will also be offered from 6:30pm–7:30pm on the following nights prior to Christmas.

Tuesday, December 20, St. Ann's, West Newbury

Wednesday, December 21, Nativity, Merrimac

Thursday, December 22, IC, Newburyport

From the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,



He must have been horribly confused. Deeply hurt by the news that Mary, his betrothed, was with child, Joseph certainly never “saw this one coming.” Everything he knew about Mary would have led him to believe that she was as honest, innocent, and pure as anyone who ever lived. Even more so, he must have thought. But the awful, terrible news that she was pregnant by another was troubling and profoundly unexpected. And yet, Joseph was a righteous man. Even if Mary had somehow faltered, he would not do anything to harm the one he had planned to marry and spend the rest of his life with. He was honorable in every sense of the term, and would divorce or break-off the engagement quietly, so Mary would not be shamed by him. He couldn't do anything to change the pregnancy, but he would not be the one to call down shame on her. He was innocent in all of this chaos, and he wanted no part of any revenge or redress.

And then came the sheer terror of an Angel coming to him in his dreams. All of us, from time to time, have an occasional dream that is more vivid than others. Perhaps it lingers a bit longer before receding into the ether of our unconsciousness, leaving only a few scattered feelings or images behind. But this dream was different. It was vibrant, bright, shockingly clear and lasting. And it was terrifying in every way a dream could ever be: it spoke to an alternate reality that Joseph had never considered possible, namely, that it was through God's hand that Mary had become pregnant and would bear a son. The Angel's voice was as confident as it was authoritative. The marriage was on. Mary would become Joseph's wife. And she would bring a son into this world. And the child was from some...One else. And He was destined for a greatness that seemed so unreal, yet so compellingly attractive. He would set His people free from their sins! What could that mean? And how can this be? And what will be asked of Mary and himself in the time ahead?

I felt the picture on the cover of this week's bulletin captured this supreme emotional turmoil in Joseph perfectly. Most religious art over the years casts Joseph in this stoic, almost serene state as he gazes lovingly on Mary and Jesus in the manger. It is classic holiday fare. Yet the reality of what this guileless saint endured must have been far more messy and undetermined than any Hallmark image could convey. Our saints were real, flesh and blood people who faced doubts and uncertainties as much as anyone of us ever did. What makes them holy is that they found a way, sometimes by the skin of their teeth, to stay faithful to God and what they believed to be right and just despite the many odds arrayed against them. At the end of the day, we don't know very much about Joseph. We know he was from “the House of David” and was a distant ancestor of the great King from many centuries before. He was an artisan or craftsman—a carpenter, if you will. He

(Continued on page 4)

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

This Week in Our Collaborative

See our website calendar for more events and details.

www.hricatholic.org

Monday, December 19

AA 10:30am & 7:30pm, *IC Nazareth Library Room 205*
IC Religious Ed., Grades 1–6 6:00pm, *IC Parish Center*
Boy Scouts Troop 41 Meeting 7:00pm, *Nativity Hall*

Tuesday, December 20

IC Knitting Ministry 1:00pm, *IC Conference Room 209*
Breaking Bread Meal 5:00pm, *IC St. Louis Hall*
Confessions 6:30–7:30pm *St. Ann Church*
HR St. Vincent de Paul Meeting 7:00pm, *Nativity Rectory*

Wednesday, December 21

IC School Faculty Retreat 8:00am *IC St. Louis Hall*
Collaborative Offices Close at 12:00noon
Holy Quilters 3:00pm, *Nativity Hall*
IC Youth Choir Rehearsal 4:30pm, *IC Church*
Adoration 6:00pm, *IC St. James Chapel*
Centering Prayer 6:00pm, *IC Charity Dining Room*
Confessions 6:30–7:30pm *Nativity Church*
IC Adult Choir Rehearsal, 7:00pm, *IC Church*
Women’s Prayer Service 7:00pm, *St. Ann Church*

Thursday, December 22

Rosary for Life 6:30pm, *IC St. James Chapel*
Confessions 6:30–7:30pm *Immaculate Conception Church*

Friday, December 23

Adoration 8:00am, *IC St. James Chapel*
Decorate Nativity for Christmas 10:00am, *Nativity Church*
AA 7:00pm, *IC Nazareth Library Room 205*
Merrimac Cub Scouts Pack Mtg. 7:00pm, *Nativity Lower Hall*

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve

See page 3 for Mass schedule

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day

See page 3 for Mass schedule

worked for a living, but likely made little more than was needed for basic subsistence. He lived in Nazareth, but had roots in Bethlehem. He was a faithful Jew and likely made the expected pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the required feasts and religious observances. He likely died at what was a normal age for most men of his time, probably in his late 40s and before Jesus began his earthly ministry. And that is about it.... Along with the fact that he said yes to what God was asking of him through the Angel’s words.

In our modern day, holiness and faithfulness are often nothing more than a willingness to say yes to what God is asking of us. Most of the time this happens without the extraordinary intervention of an Angel. Most of the time what is asked of us does not even come close to embracing the realities of a divinely-initiated virgin-birth. Most of the time God simply asks us to forgive the one who hurts or offends us, to comfort the one who is ill, visit the one who is lonely, listen to the one who is speaking, welcome the stranger, feed the one who is hungry, offer compassion to the one who is misunderstood, reach out to the one who is neglected, stand up for the one who is at a disadvantage, speak up for justice when it is lacking and try and bring about peace in the midst of conflict. Most of the time these aren’t even terribly difficult things to accomplish. But they will stand out against the backdrop of sin and hatred, of mistrust and division. When we live our lives in the moment with simplicity and integrity, we can make real the same gentle love that Joseph brought to bear for Mary, Jesus and the new life they ushered into our world. God can work with and through our simple acts of faithfulness and love. As we anticipate this coming week our many individual Christmas celebrations, may we call upon the Universal Patron of the Church and Protector of Families for his prayers for us all.

I would like to extend a warm invitation to everyone to join us for our Christmas Masses in the days ahead. Please reach out to your extended family members, to neighbors, friends, and even perfect strangers and invite them to come and celebrate the Savior’s birth. All are welcome!

Fr. Tim Harrison, Pastor

Christmas Collections

This Christmas, our parishes’ collections once again will benefit the Clergy Health and Retirement Trust which cares for the needs of our priests. **Our priests are always there for us**; they share Christ’s good news, perform good works, and build communities of good faith. All are welcome to learn more and make a gift online at www.clergytrust.org. And don’t forget to find the Trust on Facebook by searching “@ClergyTrust.” Thank you in advance for your prayers and support.

Preparing for Mass

Visit <http://liturgy.slu.edu> to read this weekend’s Scripture, historical and theological commentaries, and prayerful reflections. It is a great way to get ready to hear and respond to God’s Word.

Scripture for the Week

- 18 Sun Is 7:10-14/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24
- 19 Mon Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Lk 1:5-25
- 20 Tue Is 7:10-14/Lk 1:26-38
- 21 Wed Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Lk 1:39-45
- 22 Thu 1 Sm 1:24-28/Lk 1:46-56
- 23 Fri Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Lk 1:57-66
- 24 Sat 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Lk 1:67-79
- 25 Sun Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25, Night: Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14, Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20, Day: Is 52:7-10/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve Masses

The 4:00pm Masses fill up quickly. Please arrive early.

4:00pm Immaculate Conception
 4:00pm Immaculate Conception School Gym
 4:00pm St. Ann
 4:00pm Nativity
 6:00pm Immaculate Conception
 6:00pm Nativity

Christmas Day Masses

12:00midnight Immaculate Conception
 8:00am Immaculate Conception
 8:00am Nativity
 10:00am Immaculate Conception
 10:15am St. Ann



Winter Weather Mass Cancellations

Due to the hazards of travel and the safety of priests and parishioners alike, this winter, Daily Mass within the Collaborative will be cancelled if either Pentucket Regional or Newburyport Public schools are cancelled because of inclement weather. Any Religious Education classes will also be cancelled on such days. WBZ Chanel 4 will have the updated school cancellation information. It is also available on their website at boston.cbslocal.com.

In severe situations, it may also be necessary for safety reasons to cancel weekend Masses. Please watch WBZ or consult their website for cancellation information.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. In all things, God gave us the gifts of wisdom, reason, and prudence. Let's use them wisely this winter and exercise sound judgment when considering going out in severe weather.

Fr. Broderick's Scripture Study

Scripture Study will meet on December 18

Father Broderick's Scripture Study will meet on its regular third Sunday of the month on December 18 at 2:00pm in the IC Parish Center. We will be reading and discussing Chapter 66, the concluding chapter in *The Book of Isaiah*. The group will then consider and decide which Book in the Bible to focus on in the New Year. We encourage parishioners in the Collaborative who may have an interest in a particular Book to attend this meeting. We are looking forward to the year ahead and beginning another study.

Our beloved teacher, Father Broderick, not only explains the meaning of the Scripture passages, but also presents rich description of the period and places cited, as well as the culture and practices of the people involved. He connects the events in the New Testament to Old Testament prophecies and events, as well as to our own time. This is a worthwhile way to spend an hour and fifteen minutes on a Sunday afternoon. All are invited to attend these sessions and grow in knowledge and faith.

Women's Evening of Prayer

There will be a Women's Evening of Prayer on Wednesday, **December 21** from 7:00pm–8:00pm in St. Ann's Church.

Come take time with the Lord. We will have some readings, music, and quiet prayer and reflection time. All women of the collaborative parishes and friends are invited.



Blue Christmas Prayer Service

A Prayer Service of Comfort and Hope

The Catholic parishes of Amesbury, Merrimac, Newburyport, Salisbury, and West Newbury extend an invitation to all for whom the joy of this season does not seem to match the current reality of their lives. To those who are lonely, broken-hearted, or grieving, join us in a Blue Christmas prayer service at 3:00 p.m. on **Sunday, December 18**, at the Star of the Sea Parish Town Church, 18 Beach Road in Salisbury. Our prayer time together will help us to feel the true meaning of love and hope that this season gives to each one of us.

Christmas Office Hours

Our Collaborative offices will be closing at noon on Wednesday, December 21.

Offices will also be closed on Monday, December 26 and on Monday, January 2.

March for Life

The March for Life will be held in Washington, DC on Friday, January 27, 2017. If you are interested in taking part in the March, contact Steve Swochak, (978) 270-4924, swochak@netzero.net.



R C I A

RCIA meets every Sunday at 10:15 in the Youth Ministry Room at the IC Parish Center. If you are interested in learning more about this program, contact Marin at 978-462-2724 or fortune@newburyportcatholic.org.

Fourth Sunday  of Advent

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

Centering Prayer for Advent

In the business of preparing for Christmas we may miss the gifts of Advent. Waiting with trust in God's promise of love that saves deepens our faith and we become people of true hope who, loved by God, are able to love.

Join us weekly for Centering Prayer. As we enter the silence of God's love we assent to God's presence and action within us. We say yes to His invitation to be transformed into people of hope. Resting in God in silence, we surrender and come to know in our hearts God's unmerited, unconditional love for us and transformed by this grace we can share His love in daily life. All are welcome to join as we pray in this ancient Christian tradition and together prepare this Advent to welcome the Savior into our hearts and our lives. We meet every Wednesday from 6:00pm–7:00pm in the IC Charity Dining Room. For more information contact Elizabeth McCarthy, 978-462-7483.

Cursillo/Ultreya

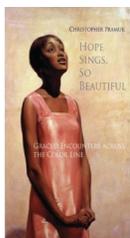
Cursillo is an invitation for you to experience the love of Jesus Christ on a personal level and to bring this love and joy into your daily life. The next Cursillo weekend is January 5–8 (women).

The next Ultreya is January 6 at 6:30 at IC St. Louis Hall. If you have questions, feel free to contact either Pat Forbes (978-462-1258) or Jonathan Temple (978-809-9337). **All are welcome.**

Collaborative Book Discussion

Save the dates. February 1, 8, 15, & 22

The Collaborative of Holy Redeemer and Immaculate Conception will host a book discussion on Wednesday evenings during February from 7:00pm–8:30pm at the IC Charity Dining Room. The book discussion will be on Christopher Pramuck's *Hope Sings So Beautiful: Graced Encounters across the Color Line*.



Christopher Pramuck offers a mosaic of images and sketches for thinking and praying through difficult questions about race. The reader will encounter the perspectives of artists, poets, and theologians from many different ethnic and racial communities. All are welcome. Contacts: Dr. Art Ledoux, ledoux@merrimack.edu Nancy Ledoux 978-270-5488, nancyledoux@comcast.net Dr. Mag McKinnon, mmckinnon@newburyprotcatholic.org.

Questions of the Week

Adult: How is St. Joseph a model of faith for you?

Child: How do you know when God is with you?

Archdiocese Web Site

Visit www.bostoncatholic.org for the latest news and information around the Archdiocese of Boston.

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Let Us Hear From You



Disciples in Mission
Archdiocese of Boston

- How can we foster a welcoming community?
- How do we form disciples eager to share their love of Christ?
- How can we assist in the growth of vocations?
- How can we better serve our communities and our Collaborative?

Please Join the Conversation. Contact Our Pastoral Plan Writing Team. We welcome your ideas and participation.

Youth Masses

Following the Youth Mass at IC this past Sunday, students from Immaculate Conception and Holy Redeemer gathered to make scarves and shawls in different sizes and colors for new moms being helped by the Pregnancy Care Center. It was a wonderful and productive evening for our students performing a great act of service during this Advent season of waiting and preparing for the birth of our Savior, Jesus. The fleece gifts were blessed by all through prayer and will be delivered to the center before Christmas. Thank you to all who participated.

Also, special thanks to the **HR Prayer Shawl Ministry** for the beautiful crocheted shawls also donated for the PPC.

Youth Masses (5:00pm) for the year are:

January 22 Holy Redeemer, Church of the Nativity, Merrimac. Guest Speaker: Kim Keene, The Pelican Intervention Fund. This weekend we will begin selling Mardi Gras dinner tickets to benefit The Pelican Intervention Fund. \$12/adult and \$5/ for children. Ages 5 and under are free.

March 12 Immaculate Conception
April 2 Holy Redeemer, Church of the Nativity
May 7 Immaculate Conception

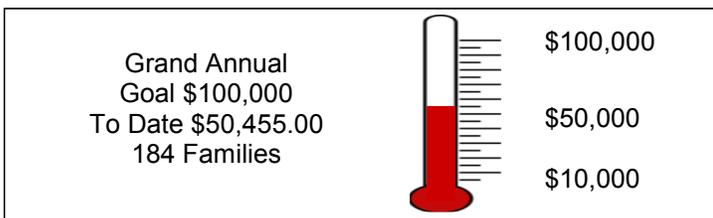
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

Offertory Collection

Offertory, December 10–11	\$10,788.00
Monthly	\$ 2,259.00
Immaculate Conception	\$ 896.00

The second collection this weekend is IC Haiti. **Please make checks payable to IC Haiti.**

Next week, at all our Christmas Masses, our only collection will be to support the retirement, medical, and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. On behalf of all of our priests, thank you in advance for your generosity. For more information, please visit www.clergyfunds.org.



IC Haiti

IC Haiti Second Collection This Weekend

This weekend is IC Haiti's final second collection of the year. We are so appreciative of the generosity that our parish showed during our drive for hurricane relief last month. As a result of your contributions, our community has contributed \$30,000 to the distribution of thousands of oral cholera vaccines and water purification kits, stemming the tide of this terrible disease in the Puit Chacha and surrounding community.

Now we must ask you again for your contributions, as we go back to the usual work of funding the Fr. Marc Piché school. We cannot fall behind on our efforts to support the school and the feeding program. As food prices rise—and the results of the destroyed crops become more severe—it is critical that we keep providing the shelter and consistency that the school and daily meal provide. This is often the only meal that children in the school receive—and it offers desperately critical support to families without secure food supplies.

The Fr. Marc Piché school has provided shelter, comfort, and hope to the families of Puit Chacha since it's opening. During the hurricane it was a primary source of security for the entire community. Our parish community is making a real difference in Haiti and every donation counts. In the last year, IC Haiti's administrative costs amounted to less than .3%, so almost every penny of your contribution goes directly to benefit the people we serve. Thank you!

Rose Window Update

This past week, Burnham Laroche Studio has begun the Rose window repair project. Initially, you will see a staging erected in the choir loft, over the organ, which will remain in place until the project is completed. The window and frame will be sent off-site to Burnham Studio for repair. The project is expected to take three months to complete. We will provide you with more information and updates as the project progresses.

Immaculate Conception School

Greetings Friends,

The holiday clock is winding down, and Christmas is a week away. What joy!



Last week, the Immaculate Conception School (IC) hosted its annual Christmas Store and fundraiser in the school's gymnasium, and students from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade had a great time shopping for Christmas presents for their families. The IC Christmas Store gave students the opportunity to shop in a safe and supervised environment and also raised money to help eighth graders with their yearbook and graduation expenses.

Eighth graders ran the store and helped all the younger kids have a great Christmas shopping experience. The older students served as guides for the younger students, helping with gift giving lists, budgeting, spending money, and making the right buying decisions. The eighth graders even helped wrap presents.

This year the store featured over 1,500 gifts including Christmas socks, hats, gloves, teddy bears, jewelry, candles, coloring books, and so much more. Prices ranged from 25 cents to at most \$10, and the average price students spent was two to three dollars. Everybody especially loved buying ornaments and other Christmas decorations.

I want to thank Kari Bernard and her team of IC moms for putting on such a great event. They shop all year round to make sure there are plenty of presents for everybody in the family including dads, moms, grandparents, aunts, uncles, other kids, and pets.

Parents tell me that their favorite presents are the ones that their young children picked out all by themselves at the IC Christmas Store.

Next Tuesday the IC will be presenting its annual Advent Show, a musical celebration of Christmas performed by students for their families. Every grade will perform a Christmas song on stage. Songs include "Prepare Thee the Way," "Soon and Very Soon," and "Do You Hear What I Hear?" In between songs, individual students will entertain the audience playing musical instruments. After the sixth, seventh, and eighth graders perform a medley of Christmas carols, all the classes will join in a rousing finale, with songs like "I Love You Lord" and "Silent Night."

I want to thank Mr. Driscoll, the IC Music Director, for our wonderful Advent Show. It is such a joy to hear the voices of children celebrating the holiest time of the year.

Sincerely, Mary Reardon, Principal

Upcoming Events

Tuesday Tours ~ IC school tours, including classroom visits, second Tuesday of each month, 9:00–11:00 a.m. Call Mrs. Kelley Pappalardo at (978) 465-7780.

Open House ~ Sunday, January 29, 12:30–2:00 p.m.

Fashion Show ~ Sunday, March 5, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

135th Gala ~ Friday, May 19, 7:00–10:00 p.m.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society



Poor Box	\$ 202.00
Collection	\$ 20.00
Total	\$ 222.00

Help Us Help Others

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul at IC invites parishioners to donate gift cards during Advent. The gift cards (for food, gasoline, household products, and medicine) are used to help local residents who call on St. Vincent de Paul Society for help. There is a display in the entrance of the church. Please take a tag, purchase the gift card, and return it in the offertory basket at any Mass during Advent. If you have any questions about this project, please call the St. Vincent de Paul line at 978-518-0728. Thank you for helping us help others.

Baptisms

We rejoice with the families of our new brothers and sisters who received the Sacrament of Baptism in October and November:

**Miles Williams Biagioni • Carson Tyler Carney •
Grayson Emmett Cormier • Rónán John Farren •
Annabella Catherine Fournier • Claire May Loughlin •
Gina Marie McManus**

IC Knitting Ministry

We meet every Tuesday from 1:00–3:00pm at the IC Parish Center, Room 209 to knit prayer shawls, hats, mittens, and scarves. We bring prayers and hope to people who are sick and their caregivers and to celebrate happy occasions. We have made and distributed hats and scarves to the hundreds of homeless children in our area. Please come and help us to keep these boys and girls warm this winter and to send joy to our friends who are experiencing illness at this time. We are happy to help you brush up on your knitting or we can teach you to knit or crochet. Our membership is open to all. Please join us for knitting, fellowship, and tea (and goodies).

If you know anyone who needs a prayer shawl or for more information please call Frances Ronan 978-462-4972 or Julia O'Connor at 978-465-3350.

The Compassionate Friends

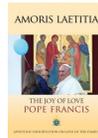
The Compassionate Friends (TCF) of Greater Newburyport provides support for bereaved families after the loss of a child, grandchild, or sibling—any age, any cause. Our monthly support meetings are held in Room 209 of the IC Parish Center at 7:30 to 9:00pm on the fourth Mondays.

Because the IC Parish Center is closed for holidays on December 26, December's TCF chapter meeting will be held at Chapter Leader's home: Barbara Hopkinson, 64 Northern Blvd., Newbury, MA.

IC Religious Education

Amoris Laetitia...Pope Francis

Pope Francis released the Exhortation on the Family. In the weeks to come, you will be introduced to various statements from the Holy Father.



Jesus Restores and Fulfills God's Plan—In #70—
“Pope Benedict XVI, in his Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, returned to the topic of the truth of the love of man and woman, which is fully illuminated only in the love of the crucified Christ (cf. #2). He stressed that ‘marriage based on an exclusive and definitive love becomes an icon of the relationship between God and his people, and vice versa. God’s way of loving becomes the measure of human love’ (11). Moreover, in the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, he highlighted the importance of love as a principle of life in society (cf. 44), a place where we learn the experience of the common good.”

Religious Education Classes

School year registration is ongoing. Class: 12/18 & 12/19.

Grades K–6: Next classes: 1/8 & 1/9.

Grades 7–8: Next class 1/8.

Baptism

Baptism info: <http://www.hricatholic.org/Baptism>

Jan. 8 Parent Class—Charity Dining Room 1:00pm

Jan. 15 Group Baptism—Church 1:00pm

Confirmation

The next Confirmation session is Sunday, January 29 from 3:00–5:00pm in the Church for Years 1 and 2. The candidate and his/her sponsor, parent, or another adult are to attend the session.

First Reconciliation

Our First Reconciliation Prayer Service and retreat is Saturday, January 7 at 11:00am. Candidates and their families will be celebrating the gift of God's merciful love given to us through Jesus Christ. Please pray for our candidates. (Snow date: January 21).

Pre-Planning/At-Need Burial Space

Immaculate Conception Parish owns and operates a private cemetery located on Storey Avenue. St. Mary Cemetery is a 35-acre cemetery with consecrated grounds that provide tranquility and peacefulness at those difficult times that we all are faced with. Please visit the parish cemetery and you will find the cemetery to be well managed and maintained. Cemetery plots are available for full-body and cremated remain burials in any denomination. Call Joseph Viel, Superintendent at 978-208-0266 to schedule an appointment.

IC School Calendar Sale

Immaculate Conception School is selling holiday calendars after IC Masses. Calendars are \$10 each for 40 chances to win a total of \$5,000 in cash prizes. From December 24–February 1, daily winners are randomly chosen to receive cash prizes of \$100, \$200, \$300, or \$400. You can win as often as your number is drawn. Winners will be announced in the Communicator and the bulletin. The school will also contact each winner directly.

HOLY REDEEMER PARISH

Offertory Collection

Offertory December 10–11 **\$3,809.00**
Immaculate Conception **\$ 385.00**

Next week, at all our Christmas Masses, our only collection will be to support the retirement, medical and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. On behalf of all of our priests, thank you in advance for your generosity. For more information, please visit www.clergyfunds.org.

HR St. Vincent de Paul

The HR Saint Vincent de Paul Society thanks you for your continuous generosity. Without your help, we would be unable to assist our many clients. Please be aware that the Society is always interested in learning about used automobiles that you are getting rid of and might wish to donate; several of our clients are looking for used automobiles, as their autos have reached the end of their useful lives. Thank you for your consideration.



If you are writing a check for us, please write the check to HR Saint Vincent de Paul. That will help expedite our banking.

Coffee After Mass



Coffee will be served after the 8:00 Mass at Nativity on Sunday, December 18. Plan on coming, and if possible, bring your favorite treat to share.

EWTN: Catholic News

Want the latest Catholic News? EWTN News has got you covered. Check this link daily for news about the Catholic Church, and the latest issues in Catholicism. EWTN News: Your Online Catholic Resource.

<http://www.ewtnnews.com/>

Boy Scouts



The two Boy Scout Troops that Holy Redeemer Parish charters, Troops 41 and 26, have merged into a single troop. The leadership of the two troops decided that a single troop could better serve the boys as well as both of the communities of Merrimac and West Newbury. Members of Troop 41 wish to extend a warm welcome to all scouts and leaders of Troop 26 who have joined with us.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the troop or joining, meetings are held every Monday 7:00–8:30pm in the Nativity Church hall, Merrimac. All faiths welcome. Contact the scoutmaster, Mark Friend at msf4087@gmail.com.

HR Religious Education

Congratulations to our students who have received the Sacrament of Penance for the first time on Saturday, December 10. Special thanks to their parents for being such an important part of the students' preparation. God bless!

Mark your calendars now: Our next Collaborative Youth Mass is Sunday, January 22 at Church of the Nativity, Merrimac at 5:00pm.

New Email Address

The Office of Religious Education at Holy Redeemer has a new email address. Please change it in your contacts: reledhrp@gmail.com.

Sanctuary Light

The Sanctuary Light at Nativity, Merrimac, the week of December 25 is donated for a special intention.



Saturday Mass at St. Ann

Please remember that our Saturday 4:00pm Mass will move to **St. Ann** in West Newbury on **December 31**.

HR Christmas Decorating

All are welcome to assist with decorating and preparing our Churches for Christmas.

St. Ann: Sunday, December 18 directly after 10:15 Mass. *Religious Ed. students:* this is an excellent way to fulfill your service requirements. Call Sue Coppinger with questions: 978-465-4078.

Nativity: Friday, December 23 at 10:00am. Call Cindy Quinn if you know you are able to help: 978-346-0072.



HR Prayer Shawl

Would you like to help those in need this winter without it costing you anything? Join us at 1:00pm on **Thursday, January 5**, at Nativity Hall, Merrimac. We knit/crochet hats, scarves, and mittens for Merrimack Valley Hope Mission, the group supported by our Parish youth. We'll provide yarn, knitting needles and crochet hooks, and patterns. We can even teach you to knit/crochet. Can't make it on January 5? Gather your own group at a time convenient for you, give us a call, and we'll provide you with everything you'll need. If you need information or a blessed prayer shawl, they are free, call Helen Kelley, 978-771-4673, Connie Cormier, 978-363-2020, or Terry Duhamel 978-384-8099.

