



Saturday, December 24—Christmas Eve

9:00am Edward Hunt (*Living Intention*)

4:00pm

6:00pm

10:00pm

Sunday, December 25—Christmas Day

8:00am

10:00am

Monday, December 26

9:00am Steve Carr (*Memorial*)

Tuesday, December 27

9:00am Frank Cluff & Suzanne McMahon (*Mem*)

Wednesday, December 28

9:00am George Ramsey II (*Memorial*)

Thursday, December 29

9:00am Michaela MacDonald (*Memorial*)

Friday, December 30

9:00am Philip Haggerty (*8th Anniversary*)

Saturday, December 31

9:00am Maureen Methot (*Memorial*)

4:00pm Louise Gauthier Mason (*11th Anniv.*)

Sunday, January 1

8:00am *Parishioners, Benefactors & Deceased Members of St. Francis Parish*

10:00am *Deceased Members of Jussaume & Tabor Families (Memorial)*

11:30am Leonard Conole (*1st Anniversary*)

5:00pm Theresa Dore (*Special Intention*)



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

**May the glory of Christ's birth shine
in your hearts and homes this
Christmas!**

-Fr. Brian Mahoney and the St. Francis Parish Staff

Parish Office Christmas & New Year Hours



The Parish Office will be closed until Tuesday, December 27. There will be **no evening office hours from Tuesday, December 27-Friday, December 30**. We will also be closed on Monday, January 2. Regular office hours, including evening hours, will resume on Tuesday, January 3. Thank you and may your family have a blessed Christmas and a joyous New Year!

Take a Chance!



We are now selling lottery calendars to benefit our Religious Education program. The calendar runs for the whole month of January, and you have a chance to win every day—a combined \$2500! Your name is re-submitted if you win for a chance to win on another day as well. Calendars are \$10 each. They make a great Christmas gift!

Evening of Prayer

Monday, January 9, 7-8pm

Please join us for this wonderful evening in the church. Our speaker will be Dr. Celia Sirois, Old Testament Professor at St. John's Seminary. She will be praying with us and speaking on the Spirituality of the Psalms. All are welcome!

Partners in Parenting



Join us on **Saturday, January 21 from 5-7pm** for our next Partners in Parenting series on "Couples Communication and Values Clarification". Our speaker for the evening will be Carlita Anderson, Ph.D. Asking the right questions and listening to the answers makes all the difference in a marriage. What is important to you? What is important to your spouse? Are your values mutually exclusive or do they help in motivating you as a couple? Listen to ideas and strategies for improved communication and choosing values. **This is a FREE evening.** Dinner will be served and babysitting is provided. Please call the Parish Office at (978) 452-6611 to sign up. Join us!

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

A Note from the Pastor, Fr. Brian Mahoney

Dear Parishioner,

Two thousand years ago, an angel appeared to a young woman in Nazareth and announced to her that she would conceive and bear the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her response in that moment has resounded through the centuries, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) In that moment, she accepted the responsibility to bear Christ not only in her womb, but truly in her heart.

At the birth of Christ, she witnessed God's sublime love break through the darkness of sin and shine a light that led complete strangers to a manger in Bethlehem. The moment of the birth of Christ was a truly a moment for the world to rejoice. It was the moment that God revealed to the world that He had come to save us from ourselves. In the birth of Mary's child, Mary reminded us that life is a precious gift that comes only through the hand of the living God. All life truly is a precious gift that God chooses to share with us. It was Mary's yes or choice for life that made it possible for her to give birth to our salvation.

What was true of Mary two thousand years ago is now true for us. Christmas is a time to ponder the great gift that God has given us in Christ. At our baptism, Christ came to be conceived in our hearts and we now are called to bear him in our hearts and lives. And, like Mary, we need to give birth to Christ in the lives of others; we need to bring the reality of salvation that is found in Christ into the lives of others. For without Christ, we cannot truly live our lives in the fullness of God's joy and love that he desires to share with us in Christ. We give birth to Christ, therefore, when we center our lives in Christ as our Lord and Savior. The true meaning of Christmas is not found by focusing on the birth of Christ, but rather how we choose to live out the birth of Christ in our lives. Mary's yes to God did not end on that day in Nazareth when Christ was conceived in her womb. Her yes to God was lived out each day; so in a sense she gave birth to Christ in every decision she made. We must be willing to do the same in order to live out the true meaning of Christmas each day of our lives. We must choose life, that life that is lived in Christ, and allow God to use us as his instrument to break through the darkness of sin to bring the light that is Christ to others.

May we give ourselves the best of Christmas gifts possible by truly bearing Christ in our lives and choosing to give birth to Christ in the lives of others. May Mary's response be our response in order for us to truly live out our lives in Christ. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

If you have any questions about anything, please do not hesitate to ask me directly or send your questions to me at frmahoney@saintfrancis.net.

Please keep me in your prayers.

In Christ,



Fr. Brian



Military Support Group

All adults are welcome to join us for a support group for those who have a loved one serving in the military. Mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, wives, husbands, girlfriends, boyfriends, friends of those serving are invited; no one who loves a soldier will be left out. We know a deployment doesn't necessarily end when your soldier steps back on U.S. soil. Let us support you while you are supporting your soldier. Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 10 from 7-8:30pm in the St. Dominic Conference Room**. For more information, call Kathy Long in the Parish Office at (978) 452-6611 or contact Tara Lynch at taraleelynych@gmail.com.

Men's Spirituality Breakfast



All men 18 and older are welcome to join us on **Saturday, January 14 at 7:00am in the Parish Hall** for a delicious breakfast and spiritual discussion. Hope to see you there!

Need help with Christmas decorations?

If any of our senior parishioners are in need of help taking down Christmas decorations, please call Jamie in the Parish Office at (978) 452-6611 to set up a time.

Binding Spirits



Join us for the next meeting of the Binding Spirits book club on **January 21, 2012 from 9:30-11am**. Our next selection is The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21st Century, by Sr. Joan Chittester. Read the book beforehand and join the gabfest. Bring a friend! Refreshments will be served.

**Day of Prayer
With Fr. Bill Sheehan, OMI
Saturday, January 14, 10am-3pm
Please join us!**

NATIVITY OF THE LORD



Altar Bread & Wine
this weekend is given by
Mary Jo and Stephen Sudol
In memory of
Philip Haggerty

Clergy Benefit Trust

Merry Christmas from all the priests of the Archdiocese of Boston! The Christmas Collection supports the retirement, medical and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. These priests have given their lives to faithfully serve Christ, the Church and you. Please be generous to this important collection. For more information, please visit www.CareForSeniorPriests.org.

Wine, Women and the Word



Join us on **Thursday, January 26 from 7-8:30pm** for our next Wine, Women and the Word. What is your New Year's resolution? Does it include happiness and peace? We are all looking for the keys to life: the key to success, the key to happiness, the key to serenity; and we are always looking for it somewhere else. The problem is that we have it and don't recognize it. Come explore in a faith-filled atmosphere the key you need right now that you are resisting, overlooking, avoiding or rejecting. Come in from the cold, have some hot chocolate, get cozy and explore with us. Call the office to sign up.

Discipleship Days

All high school aged teens are invited and encouraged to be a part of our monthly Discipleship Days. As Jesus tells us in Matthew 25, "whatever you have done for the least of my brothers, you have done for me". This year's Discipleship Days will focus on service to those suffering in poverty. As we partner with Lazarus House ministries, "Team Laz" will be our group of teens who help in a variety of ways. The next date is **Saturday January 7, 2012 for Operation Soup and Sandwich Truck from 10AM-1PM**. All projects will begin and end at Saint Marguerite Parish. Teens are asked to pack a bagged lunch and drink and come prepared with a permission slip and an open heart! Adults (age 25+) are asked to consider helping on Team Laz as a driver and team member. Pre registration for these Discipleship Days is necessary to plan transportation. Please contact Jamie Deignan at DracutCathYM@yahoo.com or drop off a permission slip at either parish office at least one week before.

Stay in Constant Contact!

The BEST way to receive information about Youth Ministry is to subscribe to our Constant Contact data base. If you'd like to receive monthly updates and information, and last minute reminders about Youth Ministry events and opportunities, please email Jamie at DracutCathYM@yahoo.com to be placed on the list.

Grieving & Healing

Grieving is especially difficult during the holidays. Join us as we support one another to come through what can be a very trying time of year for many. We will meet on **Wednesday, January 4 at 7pm and Wednesday, January 18 at 7pm in Fr. Brian's office**. All are welcome and all meetings are kept confidential.

Boston Bruins Tickets!



DCYM will be selling raffle tickets for the February 11th game vs. Nashville. The \$10 raffle tickets buy you a chance to win 2 tickets to the game! A \$180 value! Tickets will be available after the New Year. Please watch the bulletin for details!

Drummer Wanted

Instruments of Faith (the 5:00 Sunday Mass Band) is seeking a drummer. If you play drums and feel the call, please come join us! We rehearse on Sundays from 3:30pm until Mass begins at 5:00. For more information, please contact Scott Dolliver at sdguitarist@gmail.com or drop by rehearsal or the 5:00 Mass to check it out.

Mark your calendar for our next Pasta Dinner!



January 14th will be the next Pasta Dinner fundraiser for the upcoming Mission Trip to New Jersey. Support our group of teens and adults buy coming **by St. Francis Parish Hall from 5:00-6:30 on Saturday January 14th. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids under 10. Children under 3 eat for free.** Thank you for your support!

UPCOMING EVENTS—Save the dates!

Monday, January 9: Religious Education Classes begin again

Sunday, January 15, 2-4pm: Widow & Widowers social support group meeting

Sunday, January 15, 7pm: Separated, Divorced & Beyond Group meeting

Tuesday, January 17, 12 Noon-2pm: Lunch and Learn series - Healthy Aging Programs and Managing Chronic Illness (call the Office to register!)

Thursday, January 19, 7pm: Parish Game Night

Saint Francis Parish presents
**Winter Wonderland
Dinner Theater**

Friday, January 27, 2012
6:30PM in the St. Francis Parish Hall



Be there for the

Winter Wonderland
Raffle Drawing and wonderful entertainment
provided by the St. Francis Parish Show
Performers! We will have a delicious Italian dinner
and a beer and wine cash bar.



Tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased in the
Parish Office or by calling (978) 452-6611.

Sacraments

Baptism: Please call the parish office to make arrangements.

Marriage: Contact one of the parish priests at least six months prior

Anointing of the Sick

Every First Saturday of the month, we will gather after the 4pm Vigil Mass and with those who wish to remain to celebrate the sacrament.

Eucharistic Adoration

Mondays 9:30 AM-5:30PM.

Centering Prayer Group

Men and women are invited to join the contemplative prayer group at **7pm on Wednesday nights in the Conference Room**. Come every week or once a month for this enlightening form of meditative prayer!

Children's Liturgy

We offer a Children's Liturgy portion of Mass at the **10am Mass each Sunday** for children ages 4 and older up to 4th grade.

Rosary

The Rosary is prayed Monday – Friday at 8:30 AM.

Divorced, Separated and Beyond

Meets the 3rd Sunday of every month at 7pm.

Prayer Line

Call Barbara at 978-937-0239 or Pat at 978-685-1137, also online at www.saintfrancis.net/prayerline.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Meeting in the Parish Hall every Saturday at 8:00 PM.

Saint Vincent de Paul Society

Call the Parish Office at 978-452-6611.

Spiritual Direction

If you are interested in spiritual direction, call the parish office at 978-452-6611 or Marcy at 978-458-9715.

Joyce Dyer, Spiritual Director, is also open for appointments. She may be reached at (978) 490-7343 or Joyce.A.Dyer@IRS.gov.