



SAINT ANNE - SAINT CATHERINE COLLABORATIVE

Learning and Growing Through Our Faith Formation Program

The parishes of St. Anne and St. Catherine are transitioning to a collaborative approach to Faith Formation (religious education). The collaborative effort of our two parishes has motivated us to take a new look at how we approach religious education.

"In this new model we are making better use of our resources," says Jackie Butterfield. "For me, it is truly the biggest move we have made to enhance the collaborative effort of St. Anne and St. Catherine. This new program will be unified and sustainable."

In the restructured program, Jackie will be responsible for kindergarten through second grade; Clare O'Brien will lead the effort for third through fifth grades; Tom Kinch will direct sixth through eighth grades; Mary Collins will oversee ninth and tenth grades (Confirmation preparation).

"This reorganization gives us a tremendous opportunity to bring Faith Formation in our Collaborative to a higher level," Tom Kinch says. "The action of the reorganization allows us to provide more opportunities for participation by the children and families of our parishes through the availability of class times in a 'standardized' and sustainable program. Simply stated, we can increase the quality of our Faith Formation program while offering a wider choice of class times."



Our Religious Education Directors — (from left) Tom Kinch, Jackie Butterfield, Clare O'Brien and Mary Collins.

The individuals selected to lead each division have both the commitment and understanding to provide a better format and presentation to our young people.

"I have been involved in teaching religious education since I entered the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1965," Jackie says. "I left the community, but I continued to teach in Catholic schools and I spent the past 20 years as Director of Faith Formation at St.

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Anne. My prayer life and my relationship to God have always motivated me to share the Good News. My new role will focus on the early grades of kindergarten through second grade. It is truly a joy to see these young children blossom into unique and beautiful people being nourished and strengthened by God."

And as Mary Collins emphasizes, faith formation is lifelong, and "not just for our children."

"High school teens are trying to balance academics, jobs, sports, clubs, family life, friends, faith, etc.," she says. "We all need support in keeping God first in our day — through Mass/class/adult formation, we all continue to be strengthened in our lives. When teens join the Confirmation Preparation Program, they take this time to stop, engage, pray and connect with one another. We start off by reviewing the Mass. The liturgy is so important in connecting us each week to listening for one thing — to help us become the best version of ourselves during the week. The Mass is the highest form of prayer — putting God first in our day is the most important message to be taught. The richness of the Mass teaches us about community, sacraments, prayer, beliefs, forgiveness, Scripture, etc. Catechesis helps us grow through each stage in our lives looking deeper at the Bible, the Creed, our prayers, our service."

Our Faith Formation leaders recognize how stewardship and religious education are tied together.

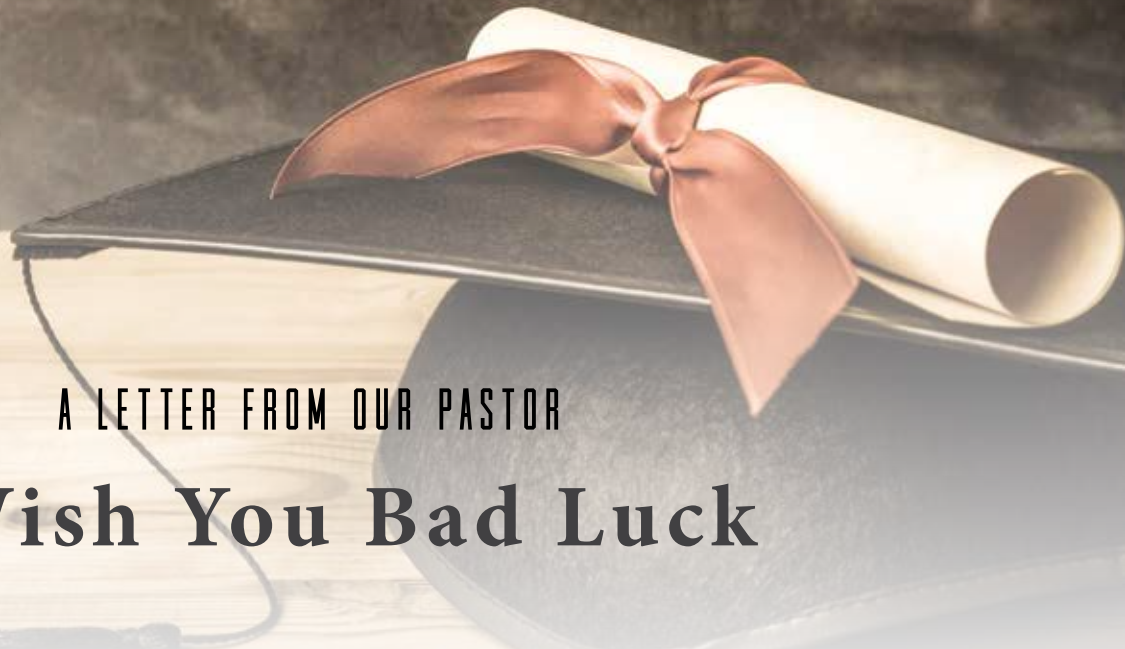
"Stewardship is about prayerfully seeking where God wants people to serve, sharing their gifts and talents, opening themselves to see the important role they have in our collaborative parish effort — not only for our youth but for themselves," Tom says. "I honestly can say I learn and grow so much when teaching religious education. Hopefully members of the community will see new ways to share their gifts and

talents within the new organization from teachers to advisory roles, from coordinators to theatre production volunteers. All are welcome and there are many out there who truly have a passion and gift to lead a specific grade. My hope is that they prayerfully reflect on this important role in our collaborative effort."

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— Tom Kinch

Registration is now open for the 2018-19 program. For more information on this important collaborative effort, please contact the parish offices — St. Anne at 978-486-4100, or St. Catherine at 978-692-6353.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

I Wish You Bad Luck

Dear Parishioners,

Senior year in high school is a truly unique experience for teenagers. It is a year full of many transitions. These transition challenges can sometimes be magnified to an unhealthy degree. Sometimes there are unrealistic comparisons by students forgetting how each one of them is unique in their own way. As one parent stated to their child, "never compare yourself to another. Rather identify how the other person is unique just as you are." Listen to the wisdom and encouragement a father gave to his son's graduation class:

He told his audience that "commencement speakers typically wish the graduates good luck and extend good wishes to them. I will not do that, and I will tell you why.



- From time to time in the years to come, I hope you will be treated unfairly so that you will come to know the value of justice.
- I hope that you will suffer betrayal because that will teach you the importance of loyalty.
- I hope that you will be lonely from time to time so that you will not take your friends for granted.
- I hope you will be conscious of the role of chance in life, and understand that your success is not completely deserved and the failure of others is not completely deserved either. And when you lose, as you will, I hope every now and then your opponent will gloat over your failure. It is a way for you to understand the importance of sportsmanship.

- I hope you will be ignored so that you know the importance of listening to others, and I hope you will have just enough pain to learn compassion.

Whether I wish these things or not, they are going to happen. And whether you benefit from them or not will depend on your ability to see the message in your misfortunes.

He had prepared this advice specifically upon some of the harsh realities that everyone would face in the course of a full life, and how to anticipate them and learn from them.

Once a week, you should write a note to someone. It will take exactly minutes. The handwritten note, he said, might express appreciation for someone who has helped you out or treated you with

kindness and may not know how grateful you are. If you do that once a week for 10 months, 40 people will feel a little more special because you did.

Gratitude is priceless, conveying costs no more than a postage stamp" (Excerpt from 12/29/17 *Wall Street Journal* written by Bob Greene).

The father was Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts.

God Love,

Fr. Peter Quinn, Pastor

Blooming Through Caring Hands: *The Garden Ministry*



Additional hands are always welcome to help with the Garden Ministry.



The welcoming exterior to St. Catherine Church.

Willing hands — hands that aren't afraid to get dirty — are working diligently to make sure the beautiful plantings and gardens around our St. Catherine and St. Anne churches are kept healthy and growing.

During the past year and especially now that spring has arrived, the Garden Ministry at St. Catherine has been working to prune shrubs and trees, and to replace fading plants with new ones.

"The daffodils were coming up in March, and I was hoping if the weather improved we could get in and start doing clean-up," says Mary Anne Jordy of the Garden Ministry. "We've been raking leaves and picking up branches. We'll divide the plants as needed and add some new plantings."

St. Catherine's plantings had been somewhat untouched in recent years, but Mary Anne went to work last year by herself until she struck an idea.

"I had put an ad in the bulletin, but what I did was go where the volunteers are," she says. "I'm in the St. Vincent de Paul Ministry and I asked for help. And there's one guy who always helps — Bernard Peloquin."

As a result of her appeal to St. Vincent de Paul and additional volunteers from the 2017 commitment weekend, Mary Anne now has about 15 willing workers, along with Bernard and his wife, Judi.

Mary Anne's love of gardening was planted in her from childhood.

"I grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y., and my mother had a garden even being in the city," she says. "I got interested in it, and I've been gardening all my life."

When Mary Anne moved to this area, she found St. Catherine Parish and felt right at home. However, when she would walk into the church — being the gardener she is — she'd see weeds and fight the instinct to reach down and pull them. She was saddened to see some of the plants struggling.

"So, I asked Fr. Peter if I could help," she says. "Somehow I got asked to head the Garden Ministry."

Mary Anne had found our parish to be warm and loving, with the feeling of welcome extended the moment one walks into the church.

"I wanted the outside to look as welcoming as when

Garden Ministry and Memorial Garden of Life

you step in the door," she says. "I wanted the people to have that feeling before they got into the church."

The group meets once a week or so, depending on the weather. Since the gardening skills of the volunteers vary, the tasks are assigned accordingly. With the larger group now working, a rotating schedule is utilized.

Meanwhile, at St. Anne, the parish Men's Group, Biagioni Landscaping and additional volunteers have been working to renovate the Memorial Garden of Life.

The Garden has become overgrown in years past and requires some restoration.

Although she is no longer actively involved in the Garden, Audrey Sampson recalls that the Memorial Garden was the vision of Mary Kaye, a longtime member of the parish.

"It's a very special area," Audrey says. "It's a place of tranquility and peace. It's quite beautiful, with meandering paths of perennials, a lily pond with a focal point being a statue of the Holy Family. It really is quite inviting."

The Memorial Garden is unusual in that very few parishes in New England offer such a feature.

"It is almost a place of calling," Audrey says. "It draws you in. There are places to stay and enjoy the flowers, bird baths, and that beautiful statue of the Holy Family."

Audrey is thankful that the Men's Group and Biagioni Landscaping are working to bring the garden back to meet Mary Kaye's vision.

"She was the one who had the vision for the garden," Audrey says. "She was behind it and I knew her — I grew up with her children — and I had a sense of what she may have wanted it to look like in the present and the future. It is so beautiful with the white flowers in front of the statue, and just having something of the sense of simplicity, beauty and tranquility. These were the attributes she wanted."

Audrey herself enjoys spending time in the Garden.

"I spend time there," she says. "It really does draw you in. For me, it's a time of refreshment and contemplation. It's really a special place."



The Holy Family at St. Anne Memorial Garden of Life.

Additional hands are always welcome to help with the Garden Ministry at St. Catherine or the Memorial Garden at St. Anne. Please call Mary Anne Jordy at 845-702-4842 for more information.

“Transformed by the Sacred Liturgy”

The Celebration of the Paschal Mystery

In a limited way, the liturgy can be compared to a story or a film – upon a first reading or viewing, we might understand the basic outline of the narrative, yet through every subsequent encounter, the story further unfolds before us, becoming richer and more complex.

Often, children through their questions, cause us to re-examine our understanding of the Mass. As a child inquires about the priest’s red vestments, the presence of palm branches, or the sprinkling of holy water, we might pause to recall the symbolism undergirding the rich rituals of the liturgy.

There is a sense of the sacred in the liturgy, but its rituals can appear as empty pantomimes when divorced from their meaning. Far from empty actions, the liturgy is the celebration of the Paschal mystery, of Christ’s passion, death, resurrection and glorification by which He “accomplished the work of our salvation” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1067).

From the Greek *leitourgia*, originally meaning “public work” or a “service in the name of the people,” liturgy in the Christian tradition refers to the communal participation of the People of God in “the work of God” (CCC 1069). In the New Testament, the word “liturgy” refers not only to the celebration of divine worship but also to the proclamation of the Gospel and to active charity (CCC 1070).

Annually, the Church’s liturgical year is structured around the Paschal mystery, which we observe every Sunday. We begin each year with a season of anticipating Christ’s birth (Advent), followed by a celebration of Christ’s Incarnation (Christmas). Then, after approximately six weeks of Ordinary Time, we enter Lent, a period of preparation, followed by Palm Sunday and the Easter Triduum, when we remember His passion, death and resurrection. The year closes with a second, longer period of Ordinary Time (28 weeks) — a time to grow in our faith and in living out the Gospel.

Daily, the Liturgy of the Hours unifies the whole body of living Christian believers in prayers said by the clergy and increasingly by the laity. As the liturgi-



cal calendar structures our year, the Liturgy of the Hours structures our day, offering us an opportunity to offer each moment to Christ.

Ultimately, the liturgical life of the Church “revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments” (CCC 1113), through which we receive God’s grace to fortify us in our spiritual lives.

The Mass nurtures us spiritually, inviting us to reflect on the Paschal mystery and to lift our hearts to God as indi-

viduals and a community through spoken and sung prayer.

The Mass moves us bodily, drawing us to sit as we listen to the first and second readings, to stand for the Gospel and as we unanimously profess our faith, and to kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer when the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Mass inspires us to act as modern apostles, being sent out to proclaim the Gospel and to share Christ with our brothers and sisters.

Though the “source and center” of all prayer, the liturgy and a sense of the sacred has, in some ways, become marginalized in the American Church. Once robust parishes are seeking to rebuild, but they frequently overlook the connection between the empty pews and the decentralization of the liturgy, which was underscored by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

“I am convinced that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is, to a large extent, due to the disintegration of the liturgy,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote in his autobiography *Milestones*.

Something in the simplicity of the child’s experience of the liturgy teaches us to return to what we might call the basics of the faith — meaning a love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacraments and the traditions of the Church. Through the liturgy are we nurtured on our stewardship journey and inspired to proclaim the Gospel and to serve one another.

As Archbishop Alexander Sample from the Diocese of Portland, Ore., writes, “If we are transformed by the sacred liturgy, then we, as believers, can help transform the culture.”

Drawing Hearts to Our Lady Through the Sodality

For the past 63 years, our parish community has been abundantly blessed by the presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality of St. Anne's and St. Catherine's. By drawing hearts to the Blessed Mother in seemingly quiet but extraordinary ways, they have exemplified the stewardship vision, and continue to do so, time and time again.

"I have belonged to the Sodality since 1977," Jonell Boroski says. "Over the years, it has really helped me grow in my faith and in my devotion to Mary. The main mission of the Sodality is to help individuals grow in their relationship with the Blessed Mother."

The Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. from September through May. Traditionally, meetings were held only at St. Anne Parish, but since this is now a collaborative ministry, some meetings will also take place at St. Catherine's. Currently, the Sodality's Board Members include: Prefect Jonell Boroski, Vice Prefect Susan Butterfield, Recording Secretary Karen Duggen McNamara, Corresponding Secretary Margaret Kalin, and Treasurer Kathy Coughlin. At their meetings, members nurture their friendship with the Blessed Mother by praying the Rosary, and doing various beautiful, inspiring activities together.

"The Sodality is a long-lasting, Catholic group in America," Jonell says. "Various parishes through-

out the country have Sodality groups. It is a great means of fellowship, and we have members of all ages. I have a lot of good friends that belong to the Sodality."

Last September, they enjoyed a quiche breakfast, and in October, they had a potluck supper honoring the installation of new Sodality members. In November, they attended a retreat that helped them reflect on the power of gratitude.

"It was comprised of music, prayer, scripture and various discussion topics," Jonell says. "We talked about gratitude, and what it means to us. We were asked to share about a time in our lives when we realized what gratitude meant to us. I really enjoyed hearing the stories of the other women."

In December, they hosted a beautiful program called "Mary's Advent Journey," which featured

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Presenting the scholarship check in the Welcome Room.

Saint Anne - Saint Catherine Collaborative
75 King St. • Littleton, MA 01460
978-486-4100 (St. Anne) • 978-692-6353 (St. Catherine)
www.LittletonCatholic.org • www.StCatherineParish.org

MASS SCHEDULE:

St. Anne Parish:

75 King St., Littleton, MA 01460

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

St. Catherine of Alexandria Parish:

107 North Main St., Westford, MA 01886

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Collaborative Weekday Schedule:

Monday: 8:00 a.m. Mass - St. Anne

Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. Mass - St. Anne

Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. Prayer Service - St. Anne

Thursday: 8:00 a.m. Mass - St. Catherine

Friday: 8:00 a.m. Mass - St. Catherine

Confessions:

Saturdays: 3:00-3:45 p.m. at both parishes

(or as requested)

Drawing Hearts to Our Lady Through the Sodality

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songs, Eucharistic Adoration and scripture readings that helped them prepare their souls to celebrate Christ's birth. Furthermore, Sodalists sell items such as baked goods and raffle tickets at the Town of Littleton's holiday bazaar each December, and use the proceeds to give a scholarship to a parishioner who is graduating from Littleton High School.

"We give the scholarship based on how the student contributed to our parish community, enhanced their own lives, and contributed to the well-being of others," Jonell says. "This past year, we gave a \$600 scholarship. In March, students may fill out an application, and the winner is chosen in April."

In February, the Sodality coordinates a St. Valentine's Day project, through which they give out cookies, fruit and sugarless candies to homebound parishioners. They involve seventh and eighth-grade students, Confirmation students and local Boy Scouts in the effort.

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— Jonell Boroski

If you would like more information about the Sodality and their wonderful ministry, please contact Jonell Boroski at 978-486-8306 or St. Anne parish office at 978-486-4100.