

*John answered them,
"... but there is one among
you whom you do not
recognize, the one who is
coming after me, whose sandal
strap I am not worthy to untie."*

John 1:26, 27 (NAB)

Saint Mary Parish

796 BOSTON ROAD
Billerica, MA 01821

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF BILLERICA

You are invited, welcomed, accepted, loved and respected at St. Mary Parish and the Catholic Community of BillERICA. No matter what your present status in the Catholic Church, no matter what your current family or marital situation, no matter your personal history, age, background, race, or color, no matter what your own self-image or esteem. If you are new to our parish, please introduce yourself after Mass, or call our Parish Office to register. We want to know and serve you.

PASTORAL TEAM

Very Rev. Shawn W. Allen, *Pastor*

Rev. Martin Dzengeleski, *Parochial Vicar*

Rev. Gerald Souza, *Parochial Vicar*

Rev. Hal Obayashi, *Parochial Vicar*

Rev. John J. McCormick, *Senior Priest in*

Residence

Rev. Robert Caprio O.F.M., *Weekend Assistant*

Deacon Phillip DiBello, *Permanent Deacon and*

Director of Ministry and Faith Formation

Deacon Allan Shanahan, *Permanent Deacon*

Adrienne Cullen, *Pastoral Associate*

MASSES

Saturday Mass

4:00PM

Sunday Masses

9:00AM, 12:00 NOON

Weekday Mass

Monday, Wednesday, Saturday 9:00AM

Confessions—Saturday 3:15-3:45PM

OFFICES

Rectory

Rectory Phone: 978-663-2215

Rectory Fax: 978-663-0127

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 8:00AM - 1:00 PM

Email: parish@stmarybillerica.com

WWW.BILLERICACATHOLIC.ORG

OFFICE STAFF

Christine Kilburn, Office Manager

parish@stmarybillerica.com

Angela Nice Director of Music Ministry

Karen Dubbs, Coordinator of Religious

Education Grades 1-6

Jim Spinale, Asst. Director of Religious

Education Grades 7-10

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 14TH, 2014

A MESSAGE FROM FATHER GERALD

Dear friends,

Recently, I had the pleasure of reading Dr. Angela Franks' *Contraception and Catholicism: What the Church Teaches and Why*. Dr. Franks succinctly lays out God's vision for relations between husbands and wives as well as for sexuality in general. The goal of the conjugal embrace of husband and wife is love *and* life, babies *and* bonding, unity *and* procreation; Dr. Franks points out that this is a part of "God the Father's plan of loving goodness." Indeed, God's plan for each person includes his or her greatest happiness in this life and the next—not an arbitrary list of things that say, "Don't do this..." Rather than mere moralizing or listing of rules, Dr. Franks makes Church teaching relevant to us.

Regrettably, our society is afflicted by the hookup culture and contraceptive mentality. Dr. Franks writes: "Support for contraception is usually framed in positive terms, about what we can achieve and gain from birth control. But the question that should make us think even more is the negative one: what are we fleeing from? In other words, what are we all so afraid of?" Questions such as these, and others that Dr. Franks proposes, help us to become more intentional with regards to our actions.

Much confusion and misinformation exists on what people *think* the Church teaches with regards to sexuality and family planning. Dr. Franks clearly and succinctly presents the *what* and *why* of Church teaching, but more importantly she shows *how* couples and individuals can enjoy a happier, more fulfilled life. With regards to family planning, Dr. Franks has a chapter entitled: NFP: Not Your Grandmother's Rhythm Method. In this chapter she highlights the sympto-thermal method and shows how it is scientifically based and highly reliable—not medieval and impractical. Towards the end of the book, practical actions are provided that couples and individuals can take to improve relationships.

Recognizing that people come from different places in their spiritual journey and that couples are at different places in their relationships, Dr. Franks presents her own family's story as well as the stories of two other couples. This is significant because God has a plan for every individual and couple. Regardless of what your practice is now, God wants to meet you where you are and take you where you need to go. *Contraception and Catholicism* is a great aid for us as we walk along the path God lays before us.

Part of my vocation as a priest is to make people happy—not happy in the sense of being amused or entertained, but happy as in possessing the joy which only God gives. Dr. Franks writes that, "No technology can make us happy. The only way to be really happy is to be virtuous." Chastity is a virtue which is necessary for every person, regardless of one's state in life. Chastity keeps our desires aright and opens our hearts to love. I recommend *Contraception and Catholicism* because I believe that it will help us to have happier, more fulfilled lives. In particular, I strongly recommend this short book to parents and those who are at the beginning stages of forming a family. As Dr. Franks writes, "the Church's teaching on contraception is a call to embrace a happiness that is infinitely greater than what we can piece together from the shreds of our own plans."

In Christ,
Fr. Gerald Souza



2015 CALENDARS

thank
you!

We would like to thank Susan & Fran Burns from Burns Funeral Home for donating our new parish calendars for the Billerica Catholic Community.

THANK YOU !!

Christmas Gifts for Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity

Once again, St. Mary's will be helping the Mother Teresa Missionaries of Charity this Christmas.

We ask that gifts *be returned* to the church hall ***THIS week-end (December 14 & 15th)*** so that we may deliver them to the Sisters before Christmas.

We thank you for generous donation !

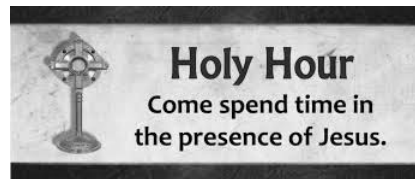


CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF BILLERICA NEWS

HOLY HOUR DURING ADVENT

Where: St. Andrew Church

When: Monday Evenings from 6:00—7:00 PM



Parishioners, family and friends are encouraged to spend an hour with the Lord from 6:00-7:00pm on Monday evenings during Advent at St. Andrew Church. The Holy Hour will include time for silent prayer, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. Take some time for yourself and come to rest before Lord. Fr. Gerald will hear confessions during this time for those who may wish to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF BILLERICA

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve

4:00 PM Saint Andrew, Saint Mary, Saint Theresa
(Church & Hall)

6:00 PM Saint Mary

10:30 PM Saint Theresa

Midnight Saint Andrew

Thursday, December 25

Christmas

8:30 AM Saint Mary

9:30 AM Saint Andrew

10:30 AM Saint Theresa



Christmas Flowers in Remembrance of Loved Ones

We will be decorating the church with beautiful Christmas flowers as we get nearer to Christmas. If you would like to make a donation so that some of these flowers will be placed in memory of loved ones, there will be a second collection for this purpose TODAY—DECEMBER 14th.

You may also put your donation in the collection in a separate envelope marked for this purpose. Please note on the envelope who you will be remembering.



ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE

The priests of the Catholic Community of Billerica will conduct a town-wide Advent Penance Service at **St. Theresa Church** on **THIS evening, December 14th at 6:30 PM**. This is wonderful opportunity for all to come to the beautiful Sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas.





Mass Schedule

Saturday December 13, 2014

9:00

4:00 *Alec Bulmer; 4th Anniversary*

Sunday December 14, 2014

9:00 *Saint Mary's Benefactor's Society*

12:00 *Terry Donovan, 15th Anniversary*
Daniel Cunningham, Memorial

Monday December 15, 2014

9:00 *Antoinette St. George, Memorial*

Tuesday December 16, 2014

No Mass Scheduled

Wednesday December 17, 2014

9:00

Thursday December 18, 2014

No Mass Scheduled

Friday December 19, 2014

No Mass Scheduled

Saturday December 20, 2014

9:00 *Theresammal, Memorial*

4:00 *Virginia Stimpson, Memorial*

Sunday December 21, 2014

9:00 *Rosemarie Caratelli,*
3rd Anniversary

12:00 *Lawrence & Frances Vereker;*
Memorial



Schedule of Events

December 14th - Collaborative Wide Penance Service
6:30 PM St. Theresa
- 2nd Collection—Christmas Flowers

December 15th - Holy Hour St. Andrew's 6-7 PM

December 17th - Footprints of God 7-9PM St. Theresa

December 21st - Baptisms 1:30 PM
- 2nd Collection - Maintenance

December 22nd - Holy Hour St. Andrew's 6-7 PM

December 24th - 4:00 PM All Churches
6:00 PM St. Mary
10:30 PM St. Theresa
Midnight St. Andrew's

Prayer Requests



Please Pray For.....Son's Safety & job security & health, MD & WD Operations, MC & Jean & Debbie recovery from cancer, Barbara & Jane R.I.P., Drew-Swimming accident, PJ—lyme disease recovery, James R.; The Billerica Collaborative;

God bless our wonderful priests; Our parents, Rob, Peter, Marc, Myron, Ann Marie & John, Peggy & Mike, Michelle, Mike, Lauren, & Giovanna, Fred Scheu, Billy Powers, Uncle Lou Cat; Judith Foppiano—Rest in peace; A. Eileen Rymill, Marie Hayes; My family, Marlyne P & Ann P.; Eternal peace for R.B., gratitude for answered prayers; Healing and comfort for Rachael, Theresa, Bill, Lila, Tony, Mary, Joe, Jean; Success with court; ; Son at college; Kathy Waters, Joe Donohue; Son to get work, sister's illness, friends daughter to get better; Mike's healing; Jenna & sick children all over the world; Family; Special Intention; Mary Giles, Richard, Ed, Joan for health; Peace on earth.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF BILLERICA DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Daily Mass at St. Mary's: 9:00 AM

Monday , Wednesday, Saturday

Daily Mass at St. Andrew's: 12:05 PM

Monday , Thursday, Friday

Daily Mass at St. Theresa's: 9:00 AM

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

BAPTISMS

Third Sunday of every month at 1:30 pm.

Instructions for parents and godparents provided the first Sunday of every month at 7:00 pm at St. Theresa Parish Hall

MARRIAGE

Please call the parish office to make arrangements six months in advance.