



St. Sylvester R. C. Church

68 Ohio Avenue, Medford, NY 11763

A community praying, growing, serving & welcoming in Jesus Christ.

*Make straight
the way of the Lord.*



December 17, 2017
Third Sunday of Advent

We Celebrate!

Eucharist:

Weekends: Sat: 5pm Sunday: 7:30am, 9:00am & 11am Holy Days as announced

Weekdays: M, Tu, Th and Fr: Mass in the Parish Center @ 8:30am

Baptisms: Celebrated on pre-determined Sunday afternoons. ***Prior to making plans***, call the Parish Center for Baptism dates, for preparation class dates, and important information regarding Godparents.

Reconciliation: Saturday at 12 noon or by appointment.

Confirmation: In the Fall for the youth of the parish. Adults and young adults can also be confirmed at Pentecost. Please call the Faith Formation Office.

Marriage: Friday @ 3, 4:30, 6pm, Saturday @ 10:30am & 2:30pm. Arrangements must be made one year prior to the requested date. Please be aware that all the Sacraments of Initiation should have been celebrated prior to the requested wedding date and Pre-Cana preparation is required. No plans should be made prior to meeting with a priest or deacon.

Anointing of the Sick: Every second Friday of the month @ 8:30am Mass for those needing surgery, or serious medical treatment, or seeking spiritual healing.

We are here for you!

Pastoral Leadership Team

Rev. Thomas W. Coby, Pastor

Deacon Joseph Mystkowski

Deacon George Riegger, Retired

Deacon Frank Rivera

Theresa Ellner, Business Manager

Michael Lofaro, Faith Formation Administrator

Frances McMahan, Faith Formation Director

Justin McMahan, Parish Social Ministry Director

Lori Zito, Stewardship Director

Office Information

Parish Office: (631)475-4506 ext 101; Fax (631)475-1057 email: parishoffice@stsyvesterli.org
M, Tu, W ~ 9am - 12 & 1 - 8:30pm; Th, Fri ~ 9am - 12 & 1 - 5pm; Su ~ 9:30am - 12:30pm

Faith Formation Office: (631)475-4506 ext. 118 email: faithformation@stsyvesterli.org
Please call (631)475-4506 ext. 118 to make an appointment and we will be happy to serve you!

Clare House: (631)475-4506; Fax (631)475-6058

M & W ~ 9:30am-12pm, 1pm-3:30pm Wed Night ~ 5:30pm-7:30pm Fr ~ 9:30am-11:30am

Thrift Shop: (631)475-4506

Tu, Wed & Th ~ 10am - 3pm; Sat ~ 10am - 1pm

HELP PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

TO REPORT SEXUAL ABUSE involving diocesan personnel, priests, deacons, teachers, employees or volunteers at schools or churches in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, please call our confidential hotline number at 1-516-594-9063 and speak with Mary McMahan, LCSW, Director.

IF YOU SUSPECT a child or vulnerable adult is being—or has been abused, call the New York State Hotline phone number: 1-800-342-3720

If you suspect someone is in immediate danger, call 911.

Visit our website at: www.stsyvesterli.org

We Pray

Saturday, December 16, 2017

5:00pm William Hawkins (3rd Anniversary)
 Nicholas & Olga Veneroso
 Pietro Sgroi
 Sean Patrick Dixon
 Michael P. Kelly, Jr.
 Donald Keegan

Sunday, December 17, 2017

7:30am Camille Lepik
 9:00am John Pavacic
 11:00am Brian DePierro

Monday, December 18, 2017

8:30am Jacqueline London (1st Anniversary)

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

8:30am For the People of St. Sylvester

Thursday, December 21, 2017

8:30am John Pannell

Friday, December 22, 2017

8:30am Special Intention

Saturday, December 23, 2017

5:00pm McGarvey and Gryzmala Families
 Rocco & Ernestine Mangino
 Lenny & Nancy Rich
 Larry Youngberg
 Margherita Giaquinto

Sunday, December 24, 2017

9:00am Sal, Carmela & Robert Toscano
 Luigi Russo & Family
 Cesarino Family
 11:00am Edward Zatwarnicki
 Gloria & Edward Vannucci
 Betty Zatwarnicki
 Carl Garbarino

We pray for all who are sick, especially . . .

Eva D'Amato, Marguerite Orlowski, Robert Orlowski, Tom Stephens, Melina Grosso Bischoff, Nina Caravana, Martha Lee, Winnie Mulderig, Catherine Hines, Bob Prentiss, Jose Nunez, Jessica Deck, Laurie Saper, Rose Masucci, Baby Bryanna Spencer, Pam Hinton, Pam Filasky, Ken Terry, Brian Podlesny, Diane Rockowitz, Patricia Nochese, Roger Chin-Sang, Jenna Knoblauch, Sasha Medile, Theresa O'Connor, Baby Charlotte Steele, Elliot Garay, Virginia Guaiana, Olivia Bazirgan, Michael Goode, William F. Swope, Nef Nieves, Genevieve Cannarili, Vito Scaglione, Louis Donisi, Joanne Clarke, Michael Dolan, Richard Gross, Ann Pifko, Christopher Gebrig, Angelina Pagano, Ricky Langborn, Edward Rafferty, Michelle Clark, Joe Caracciolo, Barbara Bruzzo, Ann Vidal, Kristin Danielski, Laura Mockler, Diane Ruiz, Margaret DiMasso

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

12/18:	Jer 23:5-8	Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19
	Mt 1:18-25	
12/19:	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25	Ps 71:3-6, 16-17
	Lk 1:5-25	
12/20:	Is 7:10-14	Ps 24:1-6
	Lk 1:26-38	
12/21:	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18	Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21
	Lk 1:39-45	
12/22:	1 Sm 1:24-28	Sm 2:1, 4-8
	Lk 1:46-56	
12/23:	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24	Ps 25:4-5, 8-10, 14
	Lk 1:57-66	
12/24:	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16	Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29
	Rom 16:25-27	Lk 1:26-38

Weekend Memorials

The Bread & Wine and Candles

used at this weekend's liturgies
 are the gifts of the
 Giaquinto & Valente Families
 in loving memory of
Pietro Sgroi



Communion for the Homebound

Do you know someone who is no longer able to attend Mass but would like to receive the Eucharist? Please have them or their family member call Parish Outreach at 475-4506 ext 122 to arrange for a visit from an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.



Women's Prayer Group

Please note that the December 19th meeting will begin at **5pm** in the East Wing.

We pray for all who have died, especially . . .
Debi Farnsworth, Camille H. Muller

Christmas 2017

Worship Schedule

~SACRAMENT OF PENANCE~

Saturdays

12:00 Noon

(Except Saturday, December 23rd)

Monday, December 18th

12:00 Noon ~ Individual Penance

7:00pm ~ Communal Penance Service

~FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT MASSES~

Saturday Evening, December 23rd

5:00pm

Sunday Morning, December 24th

9:00am & 11:00am

(NO 7:30AM MASS)

~CHRISTMAS MASSES~

Sunday Evening, December 24th

4:00pm, 6:00pm and 10:00pm

Monday Morning, December 25th

9:00am & 11:00am

Since New Year's Day falls on a Monday it is not observed as a Holy Day of Obligation and there will be no Masses celebrated that day.

Merry Christmas

from

Fr. Tom, the Pastoral Leadership Team
& Support Staff of St. Sylvester's

So that all staff may enjoy this special time with their families. . .

The Parish Center hours through the New Year are:

Mon, Tues, Wed ~ December 18, 19, 20 ~ 9am—Noon & 1pm—8:30pm

Thursday, Friday ~ December 21 & 22 ~ 9am—Noon & 1pm—5pm

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday ~ December 24, 25 & 26 ~ Closed

Wed, Thurs & Fri ~ December 27, 28 & 29 ~ 9am—12Noon

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday ~ December 31, January 1 & 2 ~ Closed

Faith Formation



The Children's Choir will rehearse in the Worship Room next Sunday, December 24th at 9:45am and sing at the 11am Mass and the 4pm Mass. If you have any questions, please call Teresa Balducci at (516) 662-2831.

Adults Seeking Confirmation



Were you baptized Catholic, received First Holy Communion, but for some reason never celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation? Coming to St. Sylvester on Tuesdays, beginning February 20, 2018, is a process for adults who would like to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. For details, call Fran McMahon at 475-4506 ext 107.

RCIA is for those who. . .

- Have never been baptized and are interested in becoming Catholic.
- Are baptized non-Catholic but would like to become a member of the Catholic community.
- Are baptized Catholic but never received Communion and/or Confirmation.
- Are struggling with questions about life, death, suffering, hope, forgiveness, love, God . . .
- Are Catholic and would like to be a member of the Team and help by sharing your faith, being a sponsor, or setting up hospitality.

If you would like more information, please speak with Fran at 475-4506 ext 107.

Altar Servers



If you are a boy or girl in Fourth Grade or older and if you are interested in helping at Mass, consider becoming an Altar Server. Altar Servers serve one or two times a month, at the Mass your family usually attends. Altar Servers serve in pairs or sometimes three at a Mass. Duties of an Altar Server include carrying the Cross in the opening and closing Processions and leading the gifts to the Altar, holding the book for the Priest, assisting with Communion and other items that may come up seasonally. You will receive training. If you are interested in joining this Ministry, please call the Parish Office at 631-475-4506 ext. 118 and leave your name and phone number and you will be contacted.

Parish Social Ministry



The goal of Parish Social Ministry is to engage parishioners in social justice and outreach activities that allow us to live out the Gospel call to serve others and to build the Kingdom of God. Clare House is a community space where we exchange resources, offer assistance, and build relationships.

The Outreach Ministry at Clare House offers direct service to community members facing difficulties of all kinds. We strive to build authentic relationships with every individual who walks through the door and commit to journey in solidarity with them. We offer assistance to alleviate immediate needs. Clients receive access to: food pantry, thrift shop, case management, advocacy, information and referral, and other resources.

The Social Justice Ministry at Clare House works to expand our understanding and application of Catholic Social Justice through the use of praxis. We employ the "See, Judge, Act" Method to examine pressing social problems. By utilizing education, advocacy, and community organizing we put our faith in action to address structural issues and eliminate systemic injustice. We feed the hungry and ask why they are hungry. The Social Justice Committee normally meets first Thursdays at 7pm in Clare House. ALL ARE WELCOME! RSVP.

I welcome your calls, emails, and letters to express feedback - positive or negative - on any aspect of our PSM program. Dialogue is essential for clarification of thought. Thank you to those of you who have contacted me. I look forward to continuing the conversation!

Constructive Feedback?

Justin McMahon, Director of Parish Social Ministry
631-475-4506 x121 jmcmahon@stsylvesterli.org

Contact Outreach Ministry:

631-475-4506 x122
clarehouse@stsylvesterli.org

Contact Social Justice Ministry:

631-475-4506 press 5+2
jmcmahon@stsylvesterli.org

Clare House Market - Wishlist

We have updated our food pantry with the addition of a glass front refrigerator and freezer—acquired through a grant! Our new Clare House Market aims to enhance the dignity of those we serve by empowering them to make choices for themselves, including the food they accept.

We are in need of perishable and non-perishable food donations to stock our Clare House Market. Please continue to place **ONLY NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS** in the donation bin in church on Sundays. In addition, we are requesting perishable items be brought directly to Clare House on Wednesdays 5:30-7:30pm – please call ahead to ensure our ability to receive your donation 631-475-4506 x122

Thank You for supporting our community!

PERISHABLE—BRING TO CLARE HOUSE ON WED 5:30-7:30pm

Eggs
Butter

NON-PERISHABLE—BRING TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY:

Ketchup
Pancake Mix & Syrup
Toothbrushes
Diapers (size 5 and 6)
Canned Tuna



Thank You to Victoria, Donna, Michelle, and the girls of Troop 2264 who collected donations for our Holiday Free Market and then stopped by to organize and decorate! Thanks for helping to light up the holidays for so many families in our community!

Parish Social Ministry

Did you know...

Jesus was born in poverty to a young, unwed mother?



As we prepare for the birth of Jesus Christ in this Advent season, we are reminded of the precious gift of the Holy Family. Many of today's young mothers face some of the same challenges as the Holy Family and are in need of shelter, basic amenities, love and prayer. Their choice for life enables another child of God to be born. Please support these young mother's choice for life.

WE NEED YOU!

Please support the Maternity Advent Project providing pregnancy care to women and families across L.I.

- (1) *Christmas cards and greetings are welcome!*
- (2) METRO, PHONE, and GIFT CARDS are graciously welcomed.
- (3) Please make your donation online at <http://respectlife.drvc.org/make-a-donation>
- (4) Please make checks payable to "Diocese of Rockville Centre"

Mail to: Respect Life Office 50 North Park Ave.,
P.O. Box 9023, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-9023

Your generous donation will help maternity homes on Long Island:

Regina Maternity Services
Mother of Good Counsel Home
Momma's House
Bethany house

Please send your donations prior to December 25, 2017 to ensure timely distribution to our Maternity Residences.

Thank you for your support!



Catholic Relief Services is an international humanitarian organization working to end poverty and promote the well-being of people around the world – including refugee families forced from their homes by violence and persecution. CRS provides food, shelter, social services—and hope for their journey. CRS joined the global SHARE THE JOURNEY campaign launched by Pope Francis to inspire communities to build relationships with refugees and migrants, and care for their neighbors in the United States and around the world. You can learn more about how to participate at loveyourneighbbor.us

20% of the sales of every pair of Share the Journey socks will be donated to Catholic Relief Services' work with refugees and migrants. So, each step you take in these fair trade organic cotton socks is a step toward dignity, safety, and love for refugees and migrants around the world. <https://maggiesorganics.com/organic-cotton-socks-share-the-journey/>

Did you know...

Jesus was born in poverty to an immigrant, refugee family?



For Christians around the world, Advent means anticipation. It's when we prepare for the coming of Jesus and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. This year, we celebrate Advent during the SHARE THE JOURNEY campaign led by Pope Francis, which calls the Church around the world to reach out to our immigrant and refugee neighbors. Advent reminds us of the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem, and what Pope Francis says is our journey to "the horizon of hope." But for the millions of refugees and displaced people around the world, it can be difficult to find the hope in their journey. They need our help along the way.

"A lot of work goes into being ready to respond to this kind of crisis," says Bill O'Keefe, vice president of government relations and advocacy for Catholic Relief Services. "We live in some ways in a state of constant anticipation, in constant preparation for the refugee. We wait for God's people on the move who, like the Holy Family, find themselves forced to flee to a place where there's no room in the inn."

For the Holy Family, the search for a safe place did not end with the birth of Jesus. Just days later, Joseph was warned in a dream to take Jesus and Mary to Egypt because of King Herod's threat to kill the newborn King.

"They were migrants and spent years living in a foreign land. They fled the political and social conditions in their country," says Richard Coll, director of Catholic Home Missions, the division of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops that provides basic pastoral services such as sacraments and baptisms to transient or remote Catholic communities, including migrants. "Jesus himself experienced the same concerns and the same fears that migrants today fear," Coll says. "It's really in our DNA as Catholics to serve these members in very troubled communities."

Every day, families leave their homes in places like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, driven by conflict, violence or poverty, and desperately seeking safety. Some spend their life savings or take on massive debt to pay for the journey. Many risk their lives for a new start. Since 2014, more than 15,000 refugees and asylum seekers drowned in the Mediterranean Sea attempting to reach European shores.

"All of us are called by God, by the Holy Father, by our consciences to be that inn, to provide that room, to share that journey, that every day millions of innocent people just like us are forced to take," O'Keefe says. "Refugees know they have a long way to go. They know it's going to be a difficult journey—but at least they know there's someone on their side now."

Stewardship

Gifts of Treasure

December 10, 2017

Regular Contributions ~ \$8,298

Renovation ~ \$297 Solar ~ \$20

Faith Direct December Contributions

Regular Contributions ~ \$11,053

Renovation ~ \$561 Solar ~ \$117

To learn about or enroll in this automated giving program, just log onto www.faithdirect.net and use our Church code **NY285**.

Sign-up forms are available in the Parish Office.

Reflection

All of the people in today's readings—the prophet Isaiah, the Virgin Mary, St. Paul, St. John the Baptist—seemed to understand clearly and rejoice in what God was calling them to do. Do I?

Living Stewardship

We are grateful for all stewards who announce the coming of Christ by increasing their acts of charity during this season of giving.

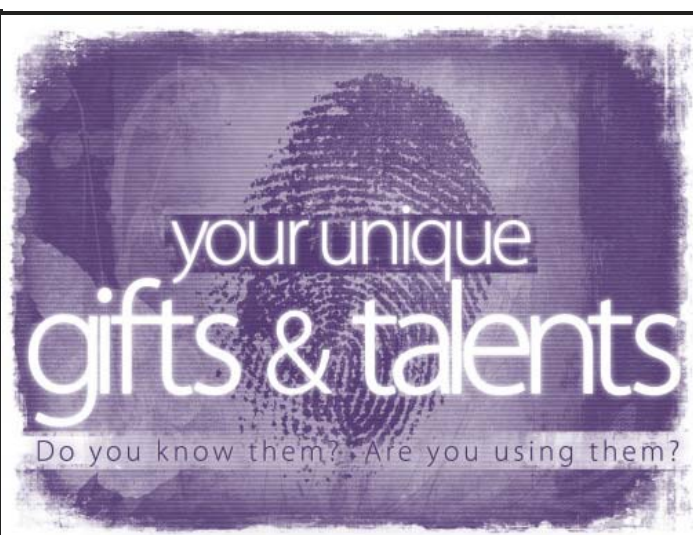
Ministry of Prayer Connects Parish

Have you ever noticed the small, wooden boxes on the back pew in the church and on the ledge in the parish center atrium and wonder what they are for?

They are prayer petition boxes, which are there for all parishioners to place special prayers in that they would like God to answer. What many do not realize is that the prayers do not just remain in the boxes as a silent communication with God -- they are typed up and sent out every month by our Ministry of Prayer Coordinator, Joanna Bellizzi, to all those who are completely homebound, as well as to those who find leaving their homes or committing to a certain day and/or time difficult. All of them pray devoutly for the petitions sent to them. Any parishioners who feel called to pray for others are also welcome to join this important ministry which creates a bridge between members of our faith community – praying for one another in faith and hope.

As Catholics, we believe strongly in the power of prayer. If you would like to add a personal prayer into the box, you may do so at any time. There are paper and pencils next to each box for your use. Please know that only first names of those being prayed for are used in order to protect their anonymity. Members of our Ministry of Prayer feel blessed to add their voices to your own petitions.

Please contact Lori Zito in the Stewardship Office if you have any questions or would like to become a part of this most important and rewarding ministry.



“God gave you your particular mix of talents and abilities because they match up with the mission he has in mind for you.”

Taken from *Resisting Happiness*
by Matthew Kelly

Stewardship

MANY THANKS TO OUR MISSAL CHANGERS!

Did you ever wonder how the appropriate missals and prayers end up in neatly in the pews? Here at St. Sylvester we have a very dedicated group of people who work diligently behind the scenes to change the missals in the church at year's end. This is a big job and one that must be timed exactly right between the end of Ordinary Time and the beginning of Advent. This ministry also comes together in the spring and the fall to place the appropriate Stewardship Prayer in the missals for our renewal periods. Thanks to all who give of their time for these important tasks! If you are interested in lending your hands, please contact Lori Zito in the Stewardship Office.



Parish Life



Congratulations to the
Holiday Raffle winners!

Maureen O'Grady Ednie ~ \$5000

Carol Dubin ~ \$3000

Christine Mullins ~ \$2000

MaryAnn Treutle ~ \$1000

Thank you to all who participated in this
very important fundraiser.

We Are Making Progress!!

The walls are repaired & painted and now
the floors are being installed!



Parish Life

The Week Ahead

Sunday, December 17, 2017

Monday ~ December 18, 2017

Drawing Class ~ 10am ~ East Wing

Individual Penance ~ 12pm ~ Church

Spanish Legion of Mary ~ 5:45pm ~ Room 4

Parish Penance Service ~ 7pm ~ Church

Tuesday ~ December 19, 2017

Art Class ~ 9am ~ East Wing

Legion of Mary ~ 1:30pm ~ Room 8

Women's Prayer Group ~ 5pm ~ East Wing

Wednesday ~ December 20, 2017

RCIA Inquiry ~ 7pm ~ EW

Thursday ~ December 21, 2017

Al-Anon ~ 9:45am ~ Room 2

Moving On Peer Support Group ~ 2:30pm ~ EW

Friday ~ December 22, 2017

Saturday, December 23, 2017

Heading towards warmer weather for the next few months? Please notify the Parish Office so we can stop your envelopes during your time away.



"Moving On" Peer Support Group

Losing a lifetime partner can have you feeling lost and without purpose. "Moving On" is a group of widows and widowers who come together once a month to help each other find that purpose. Their next meeting is this Thursday, December 21st at 2:30pm in the East Wing.

Community News

Women's Cursillo Weekend ~ January 25-28, 2018 in Glen Cove. The Cursillo is a structured weekend, consisting of a series of talks and discussions. It offers you the opportunity to work at getting to know yourself, discover your strengths, figure out what place God plays in your life, and get closer to Him. The weekend offers you the guidance to blend your love of God with your environment when you reenter your everyday world. You will be giving yourself a precious gift. For more information call Cathy at 631-617-7971.

Join Fr. Mickey Bancroft Sunday, June 3rd—Sunday, June 10th, 2018 sailing along Alaska's Glaciers. Stunning inside passage, southward on Holland America's Westerdam. Depart from Anchorage & sail to Vancouver, Canada. Cabin with picture window ~ \$2,639 and cabin with balcony ~ \$3,059. All food, port taxes, transfers & roundtrip airfare included. For more information or a brochure call Lucille at 1-800-228-4654, ext 208.

The Columbiettes are having a *Bunco Night* Friday, January 12 at the VFW Hall on Long Island Avenue in Medford. Doors open at 6:30pm. Bunco is a fun dice game in which you move from table to table, change partners and keep moving the whole game. You can't get bored! Tickets are \$10 if purchased in advance, \$12 at the door. Special pricing: \$30 for a group of 4. Prices include coffee, tea and snacks. Prizes for rolling the most "buncos", winning the most rounds and even losing the most rounds! Also 50/50 and raffles. For tickets, contact Karen Rollo at 631-289-2493 or Mary Ann Rosen at 631-289-5669.

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