



# St. Sylvester R. C. Church

68 Ohio Avenue, Medford, NY 11763

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



***“They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother.***

***They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”***

**January 7, 2018**

**The Epiphany of the Lord**

## 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@stsylvesterli.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@stsylvesterli.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.stsylvesterli.org](http://www.stsylvesterli.org)**

# We Pray

## **Saturday, January 6, 2018**

5:00pm Caravana, Matteo & Castriota Families  
(Living & Deceased)  
Mildred Barthelson  
Tom Stephens  
Michael Tifford

## **Sunday, January 7, 2018**

7:30am Kathleen Malone  
9:00am Joseph Venezia  
11:00am Ronald Rosen

## **Monday, January 8, 2018**

8:30am For the People of St. Sylvester

## **Tuesday, January 9, 2018**

8:30am Brian McDonald (7th Anniversary)

## **Thursday, January 11, 2018**

8:30am John Panell

## **Friday, January 12, 2018**

8:30am Dr. Marcela Gatti

## **Saturday, January 13, 2018**

5:00pm Owen Pabon  
Rachele Pugliese  
Tom Stephens

## **Sunday, January 14, 2018**

7:30am Toscano Family  
Robert Fontana  
9:00am Maureen Smith  
11:00am Drew Natoli

## **READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

1/8: Is 55:1-11 OR 1 Jn 5:1-9 Is 12:2-6  
Mk 1:7-11  
1/9: 1 Sm 1:9-20 OR 1:1-20 Sm 2:1, 4-8  
Mk 1:21-28 OR 1:14-28  
1/10: 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20 Ps 40:2, 5, 7-10  
Mk 1:29-39  
1/11: 1 Sm 4:1-11 Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 25-26  
Mk 1:40-45  
1/12: 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22 Ps 89:16-19  
Mk 2:1-12  
1/13: 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1 Ps 21:2-7  
Mk 2:13-17  
1/14: 1 Sm 3:3-10, 19 Ps 40:2, 4, 7-10  
1 Cor 6:13-15, 17-20 Jn 1:35-42

## ***The Bread & Wine***

used at this weekend's liturgies

are the gifts of

Mr. & Mrs. William Sisco

in loving memory of

***Tom Stephens***



## ***Holy Hour***

Time spent with our

Beloved Savior in Adoration

can become the most profound, meaningful,  
joyful, peaceful and healing experience we  
could ever encounter.

*Please join us this Friday, January 12  
from 8pm — 9pm in the Worship Room.*

***"I Am With You Always"***

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

*Eva D'Amato, Marguerite Orlowski, Robert Orlowski,  
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, Baby Elliot  
Garay, Virginia Guaiana, Olivia Bazirgan, Michael  
Goode, Iris DeValle, Nef Nieves, Genevieve Cannarili,  
Vito Scaglione, Louis Donisi, Joanne Clarke,  
Michael Dolan, Richard Gross, Christopher Gebrig,  
Angelina Pagano, Ricky Langhorn, Edward Rafferty,  
Michelle Clark, Barbara Bruzzone, Ann Vidal, Kristin  
Danielski, Laura Mockler, Diane Ruiz, Margaret  
DiMasso, Martha Benvenuto, Olivia Grace DeFeo*

## ***We pray for all who have died, especially . . .***

*Samantha Catello, Vincent Courtney,  
Angelo J. Cataldo, Thomas J. Clark,  
Cristino Gomez II*

*May that holy star grow every year more bright,  
and send its glorious beams afar to fill the world with light.*

# Faith Formation

## *Children's Liturgy Of the Word*

We are happy to announce that we will be having Children's Liturgy of the Word at the 11am Mass on **January 14th and 28th**.



### *What is Children's Liturgy of the Word?*

Children's Liturgy of the Word is when right after the opening prayer, but before the readings, children are called up by the priest and accompanied by Catechists to the Worship Room in the Parish Center. There, they hear and reflect on the readings at an age appropriate level, sing the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation and recite a simple Creed before returning to the church to join the rest of the community for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This will take approximately 20 minutes. During this time the adults and anyone else in the church will be hearing the readings as they usually do.

### *How can my child participate in the Children's Liturgy of the Word?*

When you come to the 11:00 am Mass on the Sundays listed above, follow the directions of the priest when he calls the children forward to be sent to the Worship Room in the Parish Center. Any child in Level 1 or above is invited to participate.

For more information or if you have questions, please call the Faith Formation Office at 631-475-4506 ext. 118 or email us at [FaithFormation@stsyvesterli.org](mailto:FaithFormation@stsyvesterli.org)



The Children's Choir will rehearse in the Worship Room Sunday, January 14th AND January 28th at 9:45am and sing at the 11am 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.

# Stewardship

## *Gifts of Treasure*

**December 24, 2017**

*Regular ~ \$7,176*

*Renovation ~ \$155      Solar ~ \$45*

## **Christmas Contributions**

*\$31,144 (to date)*

*(all the Faith Direct Christmas Contributions were not available at publishing time)*

*Due to publishing deadlines, the contributions for Sunday, December 31, 2017 will be in the January 14, 2018 bulletin.*

## **Faith Direct**

**It's Easy**

**It's Safe**

**It's the Way to Give!**

To learn about or enroll in this automated giving program, just log onto [www.faithdirect.net](http://www.faithdirect.net) and use our Church code **NY285**.

*Sign-up forms are available in the Parish Office.*

## **Reflection**

The three wise men who came from the East to pay homage to the infant Jesus brought Him rich gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh as part of their worship. What gifts have I brought to this celebration to offer to the newborn Savior?

## **Living Stewardship**

We are grateful for all stewards who develop their talents and use them to care for the poor, console the sorrowful and teach the young.

## **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.

# 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@stsyvesterli.org](mailto:jmcmahon@stsyvesterli.org)

#### Contact Outreach Ministry:

631-475-4506 x122  
[clarehouse@stsyvesterli.org](mailto:clarehouse@stsyvesterli.org)

#### Contact Social Justice Ministry:

631-475-4506 press 5+2  
[jmcmahon@stsyvesterli.org](mailto:jmcmahon@stsyvesterli.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  
Mayo  
Juice



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.

### ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS DAILY REFLECTIONS

The joyous celebration of the birth of Jesus now fully occupies our thoughts. Matthew's vivid Gospel account of Herod's massacre reminds us of the evil that was present at that time. Unfortunately, the bad news is "Herod" still lives. The massacre of children continues today all over our world.

Jesus and His parents crossed borders and escaped into Egypt. Victims now are confronted with walls, imaginary or real. Children are shot in schools and churches. One's skin color may simply endanger a child. Others are threatened with deportation to their parent's home countries, lands which these children have never known. Refugee children in the arms of their mothers are turned back to a cruel sea. Too often, innocent lives are lost.

Do we not hear the voice of the Angel calling out to us in our dreams, "Protect these children from danger!" We know that our brothers and sisters are made in the image and likeness of God. Nonetheless they are often referred to as "illegals", as if they just arrived from another planet. Was Jesus "illegal" in Bethlehem, or in Egypt? Is any human person "illegal?"

We should remind ourselves that we are the "Magi", the wise ones. We must see the tragedies of "innocents" with the eyes of our heart. We need to act as Joseph did. We are obliged to protect our brothers and sisters, and speak out on their behalf. Our newborn brother - Jesus - expects this from us. What greater gift can we give Jesus today than to let Him know that His brothers and sisters are safe! Alleluia!

Stan Fitzgerald is a parishioner at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Community in San Jose, CA. He is active in social ministry at the parish and at his Diocese, and in other outreach initiatives.

## Why Christmas Is Radical

By John Gehring 12-22-2016

Via Religion News Service.

Source URL: <https://sojo.net/articles/why-christmas-radical>

Image via RNS/Tommy Lee Kreger via Creative Commons



You probably don't think of Christmas as a revolutionary holiday. Twinkling lights on trees, Starbucks gift cards, and sweet carols are not exactly the stuff of subversion. A domesticated Christmas is comforting, but considering our fraught political landscape today, we might find better lessons by reflecting on the disruption caused by Jesus' birth, and the radical implications of his life.

When Magi from the East came to pay homage to the baby Jesus, King Herod ordered the execution of all young male children in the region. Mary, Joseph, and their newborn fled to Egypt, refugees in search of sanctuary. It's hard not to think of the terrorized children of Aleppo, and the families drowning in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe, without recalling that Jesus was a dark-skinned refugee born under the threat of violence.

The Christian belief in the Incarnation, God taking on human flesh, is, from the beginning, filled with hope for the downtrodden and warnings to the powerful. "He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly," Mary proclaims when told she will bear the Son of God. "He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty." The infant the Magi come to venerate with gold, frankincense, and myrrh is not born in a gilded palace. God enters the world in a lowly, dirty place, and reveals himself to a people seeking liberation.

Jesus grows up to discomfort the political and religious elite, overturns cultural norms, and challenges theological certainties. Eating with prostitutes and befriending tax collectors, this strange man from Nazareth is a menace and a mystery to many. He is a holy disturber of the peace. A revolutionary without a gun or a political platform, Jesus still continues to teach us that our neighbor isn't defined by physical proximity, language, or religion, but the radical idea that we are all made in the image of God.

What is the Christmas message for our uncertain times? Peace and unity seem as elusive today as they did a millennium ago. Terrorists pervert religion to kill in the name of the holy. Political leaders fund billions for weapons of war, while targeting safety nets for the poor. What Pope Francis calls a "globalization of indifference" anesthetizes us to pain and despair. If Christ showed up on Capitol Hill, or Wall Street, we can easily imagine his lamentations.

It's tempting to turn Christmas into a safe holiday that asks little of us. But that would ignore the prophetic, subversive life of Jesus. Christians honor him on this holiday — and the rest of the year — only if we risk the scorn of the powerful to stand with the undocumented immigrant, the Muslim family viewed with suspicion, the refugee fleeing injustice. Jesus brought the margins to the center and welcomed outcasts to the table.

Have we set a place for them?

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THE NEXT SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING IS FEBRUARY 1, at 7pm, in Clare House.

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## Parish Life

### *The Week Ahead*

*Sunday, January 7, 2018*

*Monday ~ January 8, 2018*

Drawing Class ~ 10am ~ East Wing

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

Carmelite Council Meeting ~7pm~ Clare House

Baptism Class ~ 7pm ~ East Wing

*Tuesday ~ January 9, 2018*

Art Class ~ 9am ~ East Wing

Legion of Mary ~ 1:30pm ~ Room 8

*Wednesday ~ January 10, 2018*

Stewardship Meeting ~ 7pm ~ Room 3

RCIA Inquiry ~ 7pm ~ Worship Room

*Thursday ~ January 11, 2018*

Al-Anon ~ 9:45am ~ Room 2

*Friday ~ January 12, 2018*

Senior Circle of Friends ~ 12:30pm ~ East Wing

Compassionate Friends ~ 7:30pm ~ East Wing

Holy Hour ~ 8pm ~ WR

*Saturday, January 13, 2018*

Art Class ~ 9am ~ East Wing

## Senior Circle of Friends

The Senior Circle of Friends meet

on the 2nd and 4th

Fridays of the month.

Their next meeting is

January 12 at 12:30pm in **East Wing**. Come join us for fun and games. Bring a friend and meet some new ones!



*Fun for Seniors*

### *Thrift Shop News*

**The Thrift Shop is in need of both girls and boys clothing in sizes 3—6x.**

**Please bring your donations into the Thrift Shop during their regular hours.**

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE DONATIONS OUTSIDE THE BUILDING!**

### *Gift Cards*

An everyday fundraiser here at St. Sylvester is our Scrip program, where **gift cards** can be purchased for grocery and retail stores as well as restaurants. Every time you purchase a gift card, our parish receives a percentage of the sale, at no extra cost to you! Gift cards can be given as a present or can be used by you! Please consider purchasing gift cards after Mass or during the week in the Parish Office to:

**Cheesecake Factory ~ \$25**

**King Kullen ~ \$25 & \$50**

**Meat Farms ~ \$20**

**Olive Garden ~ \$25**

**Red Lobster ~ \$25**

**ShopRite ~ \$25 & \$100**

**Starbucks ~ \$10**

**Stop & Shop ~ \$10, \$20, \$25, \$50 & \$100**



The Legion of Mary invites you to take part in their Fatima Home Visitation Program. There they teach interested family members how to pray the rosary in English or Spanish. They

also provide rosaries at no cost to all those who want them. Our Lady's statue remains in the home for one week.

For information call the Office at 475-4506 ext. 101 and a Legion of Mary member will contact you.

Please arrange Masses as well as Bread & Wine and Candle Memorials through the Parish Office.

**The 2019 Mass Book will open in June.**



# Blood Drive

**EMERGENCY  
BLOOD  
SHORTAGE**

## Winter **BLOOD DRIVE**

### Church of Saint Sylvester



**Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**

**8am ~ 2pm**

**Parish Center: 68 Ohio Avenue, Medford**

**Give the gift of life and donate blood!**

**This is a Milestone Blood Drive!!  
The 3000th Donor will receive a gift basket!**

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

Bring **Donor Card or ID.**

Minimum Weight: 110lbs. Age 16 – 75.

(16 year olds must have parental permission)

No New Tattoos for past 12 months.

For questions concerning medical eligibility:

[www.nybc.org](http://www.nybc.org) | **1-800-933-2566**

**Long Island Blood Services**

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact:

**Tony Spellman @ 631-236-6327**



## Community News

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. Tickets are available in the Parish Office or by contacting Karen Rollo at 631-289-2493 or Mary Ann Rosen at 631-289-5669.

*Preparing for Marriage? Engaged Encounter* is an effective PreCana program designed to provide you with the tools for a successful marriage. Couples are given the opportunity to explore many aspects of their relationship through a series of presentations, writings and dialog. There are no group discussions. Our next weekend will be held at the Montfort Spirituality Center in Bay Shore, January 26-28, 2018. For information/registration please call Lenny & Pat Walker at 631-563-1032 or visit [www.engagedencounterli.org](http://www.engagedencounterli.org)

*Cub Scout Fun and Faith Day* ~ Saturday, January 20, 2018. Sacred Heart Church in Merrick from 8:30am—12noon and St. Patrick's Church in Smithtown from 10:30am—3pm. A special day of prayer, handicrafts and games. For information, contact the Catholic Scouting Office: [scouting@drvc.org](mailto:scouting@drvc.org) or call 516-678-5800 ext 245.

*Worldwide Marriage Encounter* ~ help make a good marriage a great marriage! The next weekend is February 9-11, 2018 in Huntington. Call John & Toni at 718-344-3700 or visit: [www.wwmeli.org](http://www.wwmeli.org)

*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.

*Creative Ministries' Journey, Cross and Crucifixion* ~ Looking for an incredible way to pray throughout the Lenten Season? Are you able to sing, act, dance or play an instrument? We are looking for new troupe members. We would love for you to join us in this ministry. Adults and teens of all ages are welcome! To learn more, call or e-mail Barbara at 631-317-9415 or [journey@cmpac.com](mailto:journey@cmpac.com)

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