

# HOLY REDEEMER AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION COLLABORATIVE PARISHES

SERVING MERRIMAC, NEWBURY, NEWBURYPORT, AND WEST NEWBURY

## Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2016

[hricatholic.org](http://hricatholic.org)

*All Are Welcome*



13th Century Mosaic of John the Baptist  
from Hagia Sophia church in Istanbul, Turkey

*“Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” (Mt. 11:11)*



# OUR COLLABORATIVE

## Holy Redeemer Parish



### St. Ann

Church: 300 Main St., W. Newbury 01985  
Rectory: 46 Maple St., W. Newbury 01985  
**Phone: 978-346-8604**  
Email: holyredeemer@verizon.net



### Nativity

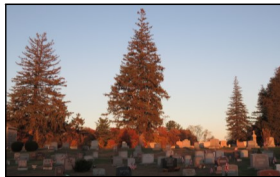
Parish offices and church:  
4 Green St., Merrimac 01860  
Office Hours: By appointment  
**Phone: 978-346-8604**  
Email: holyredeemer@verizon.net

## Immaculate Conception Parish



### Immaculate Conception

Parish, church, rectory, and offices:  
42 Green St., Newburyport 01950  
Office Hours: M-F 8:00 am-3:30 pm  
**Phone: 978-462-2724**  
Fax: 978-234-7399  
Email: info@newburyportcatholic.org



### St. Mary's Cemetery

36 Storey Avenue,  
Newburyport 01950

### Immaculate Conception School

1 Washington Street, Newburyport 01950, Pre K-grade 8,  
Mary Reardon, Principal, Phone: 978-465-7780,  
Fax: 978-234-7331, www.icsnewburyport.com



## Collaborative Staff

### Pastor

Rev. Timothy Harrison,  
978-462-2724 or 978-346-8604  
info@newburyportcatholic.org,  
holyredeemer@verizon.net

### Parochial Vicar

Rev. George E. Morin,  
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frgeorge@parishmail.com

### Weekend Assistant

Rev. James Broderick

### Senior Priest in Residence

Rev. William McLaughlin

### Office Associates

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Bob Nevins, HR Building Maintenance  
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Cliff Vandenbulcke, IC School Custodian  
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cvandenbulcke@newburyportcatholic.org

### St. Vincent de Paul

Saint Vincent de Paul Society at Holy Redeemer, 978-346-8604 x 8  
hrsudp300@gmail.com

St. Vincent de Paul Society at Immaculate Conception, 978-518-0728

### St Mary's Cemetery

Joseph Viel, 978-208-0266  
joeviel@comcast.net

**Website: hricatholic.org**

# COLLABORATIVE NEWS

## Collaborative Mass Schedule

### Saturday (12/10)

4:00pm **IC** *Katherine Sferrazza, For the intentions of the O'Connor Family—Elizabeth, John, & Ellen* (Fr. Broderick)

4:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. Morin)

### Sunday (12/11)

7:15am **IC** *Bob MacKinnon* (Fr. McLaughlin)

8:00am **Nativity** (Fr. Morin)

9:00am **IC** *Russell & Rita Osborn, Donna Morris, Liza Mataac Dodson, For the intentions of Samuel McLachlan & Family* (Fr. Broderick)

10:15am **St. Ann** *For the intentions of Dorothy & Ralph Franzese* (Fr. Morin)

11:30am **IC** *Lena Filomia, Lena Charles* (Fr. Harrison)

5:00pm **IC Youth Mass** *Mary L. Martin* (Fr. Harrison)

### Monday (12/12)

9:00am **St. Ann** (Fr. Harrison)

### Tuesday (12/13)

7:15am **IC** (Fr. Harrison)

### Wednesday (12/14)

7:15am **IC** (Fr. Morin)

### Thursday (12/15)

7:15am **IC** (Fr. Morin)

### Friday (12/16)

9:00am **Nativity** (Fr. McLaughlin)

### Saturday (12/17)

4:00pm **IC** *John & Katherine Kelley* (Fr. Morin)

4:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)

### Sunday (12/18)

7:15am **IC** (Fr. Broderick)

8:00am **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)

9:00am **IC** *Miguel Martinez, Bob O'Handley* (Fr. Morin)

10:15am **St. Ann** (Fr. Harrison)

11:30am **IC** *Lawrence Kiszka, John D'Ambrosio* (Fr. McLaughlin)

In your prayers, please remember Mary L. Martin, and all the faithful departed.

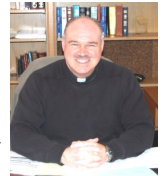
**The priests' schedule is subject to change without notice.**

**IC**—Immaculate Conception, Newburyport

**Nativity**—Merrimac

**St. Ann**—West Newbury

## From the Pastor



Dear Parishioners,

Not too long ago, I was making my way through the aisles of a store when I came upon two younger women engaged in a vibrant conversation. They both appeared to be in their mid-20's and seemed to be passionately talking about children and life. Although I was just trying to pass them and get on with my shopping, I couldn't help but overhear this line: "I wouldn't think of bringing children into the world. It is just too scary right now. It would be irresponsible." I kept moving, but my heart ached for them. Part of me wanted to jump into the conversation and challenge that notion. "The world is a good place, even if there are many things that need fixing and improving!" Or, "What if the new life you might bring into the world would be the one person to find a solution to problem 'x,' 'y,' or 'z!'" Or the religion card: "Are you sure that is God's will for you?"

Of course, none of these comments would have been welcome or necessarily appreciated in the intent with which they might have been offered. So, I kept moving...onto the next aisle. I am, after all, a celibate priest and not in the child-rearing business. But I kept thinking of them long after I left the store. Part of me had to admit that yes, the world is a scary place, and anyone with half a brain might be quite justified in hesitating to bring a new child into the chaos. And looking at the history of the world, we live in a time and place of relative peace and prosperity!

Yet, I kept chewing on the notion that we all have a collective responsibility to make our world a better place, to make it less scary, to make it a place where young couples could have confidence to welcome children into a safe and nurturing environment. Isn't this a task that we all are called to work on? Isn't it God's will that all of us embrace the joyful burden of helping to build up God's Kingdom in the here and now, with the great hope of sharing in its fullness in the hereafter? I guess we all need some convincing of this from time to time. And perhaps some signs that it is really happening around us and not just some fanciful dream.

Even the greatest prophet ever to live, John the Baptist, needed some convincing. In prison, and facing his own imminent death at the hands of a tyrant, he questioned whether Jesus was the one for whom he had done all his preaching, baptized all those people, exhausted his own life? "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" (Mt. 11:3) It was a legitimate question. After all, the Lord came not with power and glory and lightening bolts and earthquakes, but in utter poverty and simplicity, humbly and with meekness. That the Lord chose a subtle approach is an understatement!

But notice that instead of giving John's disciples a simple, "Yes. I'm the one." He offers this challenge: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Scripture for the Week

11	Sun	Is 35:1-6a, 10/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11
12	Mon	Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47 (690A)
13	Tue	Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Mt 21:28-32
14	Wed	Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25/Lk 7:18b-23
15	Thu	Is 54:1-10/Lk 7:24-30
16	Fri	Is 56:1-3a, 6-8/Jn 5:33-36
17	Sat	Gn 49:2, 8-10/Mt 1:1-17

## COLLABORATIVE NEWS

### This Week in Our Collaborative

See our website calendar for more events and details.

[www.hricatholic.org](http://www.hricatholic.org)

#### Monday, December 12

AA 10:30am & 7:30pm, IC Nazareth Library Room 205  
 IC Religious Ed., Grades 1–6 6:00pm, IC Parish Center  
 Boy Scouts Troop 41 Meeting 7:00pm, Nativity Hall  
 Merrimac Cub Scouts Den Mtg. 7:00pm, Nativity Lower Hall  
 HR PFC Meeting 7:00pm, Nativity Rectory

#### Tuesday, December 13

IC Knitting Ministry 1:00pm, IC Conference Room 209  
 Breaking Bread Meal 5:00pm, IC St. Louis Hall  
 HR Grades 7 & 8 Christmas Party 6:00pm Nativity Hall  
 IC St. Vincent de Paul Meeting 6:00pm, IC St. Louis Hall  
 Advent Vespers Service 7:00pm, IC St. James Chapel  
 BSA Troop 41 Committee Meeting 7:00pm, Nativity Lower Hall  
 Knights of Columbus 7:30pm, IC Nazareth Library, Room 205

#### Wednesday, December 14

HR Sandwich Program 9:00am, St. Ann Hall  
 Bishop Fenwick Choir 1:30pm, IC Church  
 Holy Quilters 3:00pm, Nativity Hall  
 IC Youth Choir Rehearsal 4:30pm, IC Church  
 Adoration 6:00pm, IC St. James Chapel  
 Centering Prayer 6:00pm, IC Charity Dining Room  
 IC Adult Choir Rehearsal, 7:00pm, IC Church

#### Thursday, December 15

Rosary for Life 6:30pm, IC St. James Chapel

#### Friday, December 16

Adoration 8:00am, IC St. James Chapel  
 AA 7:00pm, IC Nazareth Library Room 205

#### Saturday, December 17

Holy Quilters 8:00am, St. Ann Church  
 Nativity Choir Rehearsal 3:30pm, Nativity Church

#### Sunday, December 18

Nativity Choir Rehearsal 7:45am, Nativity Church  
 St. Ann Choir Rehearsal 9:45am, St. Ann Church  
 IC Religious Ed., Grades K–6 10:05am, IC Parish Center  
 RCIA 10:15am, IC Youth Ministry Room  
 Christmas Decorating 11:15pm, St. Ann Church  
 Scripture Study 2:00pm, IC Nazareth Library, Room 205  
 Blue Christmas Prayer Svc. 3:00pm, Star of the Sea, Salisbury  
 Troop 21 Scout Meeting 4:30pm, IC School Cafeteria

## RCIA

RCIA meets weekly at 10:15 in the Youth Ministry Room at the IC Parish Center. If you are interested in learning more about this program, contact Marin at 978-462-2724 ext. 7411 or [fortune@newburyportcatholic.org](mailto:fortune@newburyportcatholic.org).

them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.” (Mt. 11:4-6) It was all about giving witness to the signs of goodness that surrounded them, that these signs meant something. The fact was that there were terrible and scary things happening all around the disciples during Jesus’ earthly life and ministry. There were tragedies (the tower at Siloam falling and killing 18 men as told in Luke 13:4), insurrections (see all the Holy Week references to Barabbas), illness and disease (see any of the Gospel accounts that reference legions with leprosy, hemorrhages and all sorts of horrible illnesses), demonic possessions (again, many accounts in the Gospels), corrupt leaders and rulers (see Jesus’ own reference to King Herod as “that Fox!” in Luke 13:32) and the crushing poverty that the vast majority of people suffered and endured every day. Lots of things needed fixing. Lots to be scared of. Many reasons to hesitate and wonder....

But Jesus invites his disciples to focus on the good things that are happening, the signs of God’s enduring blessings, not out of naiveté, but as sons and daughters of God who believe in the ultimate power of God’s Kingdom and our hopeful, secure place in it. This isn’t meant to be just pie-in-the-sky stuff, but real in our everyday lives. Then and now. Here are three examples I witnessed just this past week: a parishioner who was facing a life-threatening illness found healing and was praising God’s goodness and kindness (how uplifting is that?!), an old friend called me clear out of the blue and invited me to dinner and catch up on life (how awesome is that!) and unexpectedly, in a chance conversation, a young man expressed his interest in becoming a priest (how wonderful is that!). A moment of healing. A moment of re-connecting and strengthening of friendship. A moment when a young person is responding selflessly and generously to God’s gentle call.

Are these not all signs of goodness and of God’s continuing work in our midst? Do these not all in their own way, point to God’s coming into our lives? Should we ignore them and look for some other sign or someone else, or can we admit that this Jesus whom we have followed, listened to, suffered with and hoped for is the Messiah and the One, the only One who will give us life, not only now, but forever? Ought we not draw tremendous strength and confidence in this saving relationship? In Christ, can we not overcome all things? Is He the One, or do we look for another? John’s words, echoing from the depths of prison, call to us even today.

What signs of God’s love do you see in your life today, and how might you answer John’s disciples if they were to ask you about Jesus?

Continued Advent Blessings for us all!

Fr. Tim Harrison, Pastor

## Confession Times in Advent

In addition to the weekly schedule, Confessions will also be offered from 6:30pm–7:30pm on the following nights prior to Christmas.

**Tuesday, December 20, St. Ann’s, West Newbury**

**Wednesday, December 21, Nativity, Merrimac**

**Thursday, December 22, IC, Newburyport**



# COLLABORATIVE NEWS

## Christmas Mass Schedule

### Christmas Eve Masses

*The 4:00pm Masses fill up quickly. Please arrive early.*

4:00pm Immaculate Conception  
 4:00pm Immaculate Conception School Gym  
 4:00pm St. Ann  
 4:00pm Nativity  
 6:00pm Immaculate Conception  
 6:00pm Nativity

### Christmas Day Masses

12:00midnight Immaculate Conception  
 8:00am Immaculate Conception  
 8:00am Nativity  
 10:00am Immaculate Conception  
 10:15am St. Ann



## Winter Weather Mass Cancellations

Due to the hazards of travel and the safety of priests and parishioners alike, this winter, Daily Mass within the Collaborative will be cancelled if either Pentucket Regional or Newburyport Public schools are cancelled because of inclement weather. Any Religious Education classes will also be cancelled on such days. WBZ Chanel 4 will have the updated school cancellation information. It is also available on their website at [boston.cbslocal.com](http://boston.cbslocal.com).

In severe situations, it may also be necessary for safety reasons to cancel weekend Masses. Please watch WBZ or consult their website for cancellation information.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. In all things, God gave us the gifts of wisdom, reason, and prudence. Let's use them wisely this winter and exercise sound judgment when considering going out in severe weather.

## Fr. Broderick's Scripture Study

### Scripture Study will meet on December 18

Father Broderick's Scripture Study will meet on its regular third Sunday of the month on December 18 at 2:00pm in the IC Parish Center. We will be reading and discussing Chapter 66, the concluding chapter in *The Book of Isaiah*. The group will then consider and decide which Book in the Bible to focus on in the New Year. We encourage parishioners in the Collaborative who may have an interest in a particular Book to attend this meeting. We are looking forward to the year ahead and beginning another study.

Our beloved teacher, Father Broderick, not only explains the meaning of the Scripture passages, but also presents rich description of the period and places cited, as well as the culture and practices of the people involved. He connects the events in the New Testament to Old Testament prophecies and events, as well as to our own time. This is a worthwhile way to spend an hour and fifteen minutes on a Sunday afternoon. All are invited to attend these sessions and grow in knowledge and faith.

## Advent Vespers Service

Experience a prayer-filled hour in the tradition of the Church at Vespers.

**Tuesday, December 13** from 7:00pm–8:00pm at IC's Parish Center. Put some quietude into your Advent while entering into a Collaborative moment of prayer.

The theme of the evening is "Waiting in Hope."

**The speaker will be John Leary.**

(Sponsored by the Adult Faith Formation Team)

## Women's Evening of Prayer

There will be a Women's Evening of Prayer on Wednesday, **December 21** from 7:00pm–8:00pm in St. Ann's Church.

Come take time with the Lord. We will have some readings, music, and quiet prayer and reflection time. All women of the collaborative parishes and friends are invited.



## Blue Christmas Prayer Service

### A Prayer Service of Comfort and Hope

The Catholic parishes of Amesbury, Merrimac, Newburyport, Salisbury, and West Newbury extend an invitation to all for whom the joy of this season does not seem to match the current reality of their lives. To those who are lonely, broken-hearted, or grieving, join us in a Blue Christmas prayer service at 3:00 p.m. on **Sunday, December 18**, at the Star of the Sea Parish Town Church, 18 Beach Road in Salisbury. Our prayer time together will help us to feel the true meaning of love and hope that this season gives to each one of us.

## Office Hours

Our Collaborative offices will close at noon on Wednesday, December 21. We will reopen on Thursday at 8:00am.

## EWTN: Catholic News

EWTN News: Your Online Catholic Resource.

<http://www.ewtnnews.com/>

Third Sunday  of Advent

## COLLABORATIVE NEWS

### Centering Prayer for Advent

In the business of preparing for Christmas we may miss the gifts of Advent. Waiting with trust in God's promise of love that saves deepens our faith and we become people of true hope who, loved by God, are able to love.

Join us weekly for Centering Prayer. As we enter the silence of God's love we assent to God's presence and action within us. We say yes to His invitation to be transformed into people of hope. Resting in God in silence, we surrender and come to know in our hearts God's unmerited, unconditional love for us and transformed by this grace we can share His love in daily life. All are welcome to join as we pray in this ancient Christian tradition and together prepare this Advent to welcome the Savior into our hearts and our lives. We meet every Wednesday from 6:00pm–7:00pm in the IC Charity Dining Room. For more information contact Elizabeth McCarthy, 978-462-7483.

### Questions of the Week

**Adult:** If Jesus were talking about you and your life, what could He say to show you are His follower?

**Child:** What are the things you do every day that show others you are a follower of Jesus?

### March for Life

The March for Life will be held in Washington, DC on Friday, January 27, 2017. If you are interested in taking part in the March, contact Steve Swochak, (978) 270-4924, [swochak@netzero.net](mailto:swochak@netzero.net). More details will follow in the weeks to come.



### Cursillo/Ultreya

Cursillo is an invitation for you to experience the love of Jesus Christ on a personal level and to bring this love and joy into your daily life. The next Cursillo weekend is January 5–8 (women).

The next Ultreya is December 30 at 6:30 at IC St. Louis Hall. If you have questions, feel free to contact either Pat Forbes (978-462-1258) or Jonathan Temple (978-809-9337). **All are welcome.**

### Youth Mass

Our next Youth Mass is **Sunday, December 11 at 5:00pm** at Immaculate Conception, Newburyport. Donations at this Mass benefit the **Pregnancy Care Center, Haverhill**. There will be a service learning experience after Mass until 7:30pm in St. Louis Hall for grades 7–12. We are making shawls for new moms with the Pregnancy Care Center.

#### Suggested Donations for the Pregnancy Care Center (Cash donations welcome also)

Onesies (sizes S, M, & L)  
Blanket sleepers (sizes NB–24 mos.)  
New outfits (sizes 0–24 mos.)  
Children's socks (infant–24 mos.)  
Stretch sleeper/PJs (sizes NB–24 mos.)  
Diapers/Pampers (sizes 1, 3, 4, 5 [no size 2 please])  
Hooded bath towels & washcloths  
Crib sheets  
Baby blankets & receiving blankets  
Baby wipes & Desitin ointment  
Toiletries: toothpaste, toothbrushes, baby bath/shampoo, lotion, adult shampoo & conditioner, bar soap (regular size)  
Formula (Similac—Powdered)  
Baby food/juices  
Baby bottles  
Infant toys & books  
XL baby gift bags

#### Office Supplies

Staples or Walmart gift cards  
Copy paper (8 1/2 x 11 size, white, asst'd.)  
White address labels (size 1/2 x 2 5/8")  
Cover/card stock  
Postage stamps (Forever and postcard)

#### Bathroom/Kitchen needs

Liquid hand soap  
Paper towels, toilet paper, tissues  
Lg. garbage bags  
Ziploc bags (gallon & quart sizes)  
Kitchen-size trash bags  
Cans of coffee (regular)  
Bottled water  
Animal crackers (large containers or snack size)  
Snack crackers (Cheez-Its & Wheat Thins, snack size pkg)  
Light bulbs (75/100 watt & 3 way)

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

*The New England Tenors recently performed at Immaculate Conception Church. The concert was sponsored by the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Immaculate Conception. Other musical guests included My Own Voice Choir and IC's adult choir.*



*Immaculate Conception School's annual North Pole Express magical adventure departed from the Newburyport train station last Saturday. Fr. Tim (pictured here with some of the elves) was aboard for some cocoa, story time, and, of course, Santa!*

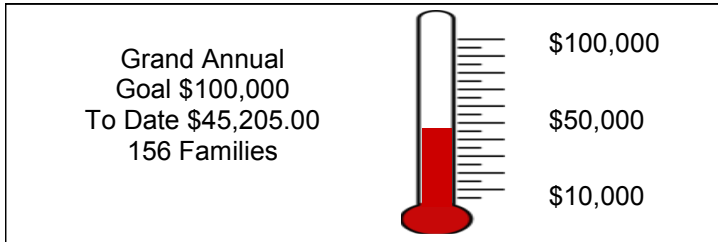


# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

## Offertory Collection

Offertory, December 3-4      \$10,571.00  
 Restoration/Renovation      \$ 2,293.00

The second collection this weekend is the Monthly. The second collection next weekend is IC Haiti. **Please make checks payable to IC Haiti.**



## IC Haiti

### IC Haiti Second Collection Next Weekend

IC Haiti's final second collection of the year will be held next weekend. We are so appreciative of the generosity that our parish showed during our drive for hurricane relief last month. As a result of your contributions, our community has contributed \$30,000 to the distribution of thousands of oral cholera vaccines and water purification kits, stemming the tide of this terrible disease in the Puit Chacha and surrounding community.

Now we must ask you again for your contributions, as we go back to the usual work of funding the Fr. Marc Piché school. We cannot fall behind on our efforts to support the school and the feeding program. As food prices rise—and the results of the destroyed crops become more severe—it is critical that we keep providing the shelter and consistency that the school and daily meal provide. This is often the only meal that children in the school receive—and it offers desperately critical support to families without secure food supplies.

The Fr. Marc Piché school has provided shelter, comfort, and hope to the families of Puit Chacha since it's opening. During the hurricane it was a primary source of security for the entire community. Our parish community is making a real difference in Haiti—and every donation counts. In the last year, IC Haiti's administrative costs amounted to less than .3%, so almost every penny of your contribution goes directly to benefit the people we serve. Thank you!

## The Saint Vincent de Paul Society



Poor Box      \$ 83.00  
 Collection      \$ 385.50  
 Total      \$ 468.50

## IC Christmas Flowers

We are taking monetary donations and memorials for the purchase of flowers for the church for the Christmas season. You can find envelopes in the IC church for your donations. It is helpful if you do not have flowers delivered to the church but allow us to purchase them. The deadline for donations is **December 12 by noon.**

## Immaculate Conception School

Dear Friends,

Christmas! What a wonderful time of year for all the students, faculty and parents at the Immaculate Conception School (IC). Christmas is two weeks away, and the children are busy and excited. The celebration of Christ's birth is everywhere throughout the school.



As I walk around, I'm embraced by the true meaning of Christmas through the joy, purpose and love of the students and faculty. Everywhere I go, the school is filled with the warmth of Christian love. People are smiling and exchanging holiday pleasantries.

In the lobby, I see a small Christmas tree decorated with mittens, which have been donated by the students for the "Mitten Tree" charity drive, an annual fundraiser at the IC. I can hear the beautiful voices of children singing "O Little Town of Bethlehem" from the stage, practicing for our upcoming Advent show.

I visit a kindergarten classroom and smile at the sight of Mrs. Connelly reading "The Legend of St. Nicholas: A Story of Christmas Giving" to children gathered around a Christmas tree. As I continue through the classrooms, I see first graders making Christmas presents for their parents, second graders creating Nativity mangers to bring home and share with their families, and third graders collaboratively building an Advent wreath and discussing its meaning. Outside of the third grade classroom are posters themed "We Can Make a Difference," advocating the students' favorite causes—books for Africa, food and clothes for the poor, and clean water—all lessons that Christ has taught us about caring for others and especially for those not as fortunate as ourselves.

The fourth graders are in the midst of "free choice" class-time. Some children are finishing up a religion lesson on the Liturgical seasons, while others are drawing or reading.

Upstairs, in the middle school, the fifth graders are finishing up the Christmas cards they are making for service men and women. The sixth graders are multi-tasking quite well in Spanish class and the seventh graders are each writing a Nativity story children's book to read to their third grade "reading buddies."

Back downstairs in the gymnasium, the eighth graders are playing games and working out with the unbridled energy they all so effortlessly possess. On the walls of the gym are pictures of Saints each grade researched for All Saints Day and one particularly dramatic picture of Jesus...looking over our children as they grow into caring, responsible and productive young men and women.

Our students are achieving academic excellence and doing it all in an environment that celebrates the importance of Christ at Christmas time. I am so blessed to be part of the wonderful adventure of helping children learn and mature in a faith-based, Catholic school.

Sincerely, Mary Reardon, Principal



# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

## San Marcos Coffee Sale

San Marcos Christmas Coffee Sale December 10–11

We will have a large order of freshly-roasted Honduran coffee available for purchase after all IC Masses December 10–11. Perhaps there is a coffee lover on your Christmas list who would enjoy this as a gift, and at the same time you will be helping to support the poor farmers of Honduras. Coffee is \$10 per pound for this specialty whole bean or ground coffee. Call Karen Finnegan with questions, 978-465-4173.



## Help Us Help Others

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul at IC invites parishioners to donate gift cards during the Season of Advent. The gift cards—for food, gasoline, household products, and medicine—are used to help local residents who call on the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for help. There is a display in the entrance of the church. Please take a tag, purchase the gift card, and return it in the offertory basket at any Mass during Advent. If you have any questions about this Advent project, please call the St. Vincent de Paul line at 978-518-0728. Thank you for helping us help others.

## The Compassionate Friends

Our Annual Memorial Candle Lighting is Sunday, December 11, 7–8:00pm, followed by refreshments and optional discussion. The event will be held at TCF chapter leader Barbara Hopkinson's home, 64 Northern Blvd, Plum Island, Newbury, 978-697-1349 or [barhop@comcast.net](mailto:barhop@comcast.net).

## Knights of Columbus

The next monthly meeting of the Knights of Columbus will be held on **Tuesday, December 13** at 7:30pm in the IC Nazareth Library, Room 205.

## IC Knitting Ministry

We meet Tuesdays from 1:00–3:00pm at the IC Parish Center, Room 209 to knit shawls, hats, mittens, and scarves for the sick and their caregivers and to celebrate happy occasions. We have made and distributed hats and scarves to the hundreds of homeless children in our area. Membership is open to all. No experience necessary. If you know anyone who needs a prayer shawl or for more information, call Frances Ronan, 978-462-4972 or Julia O'Connor, 978-465-3350.

## IC School Calendar Sale

Immaculate Conception School is selling holiday calendars after IC Masses. Calendars are \$10 each for 40 chances to win a total of \$5,000 in cash prizes. From December 24–February 1, daily winners are randomly chosen to receive cash prizes of \$100, \$200, \$300, or \$400. You can win as often as your number is drawn. Winners will be announced in the Communicator and the bulletin. The school will also contact each winner directly.

## IC Religious Education

*Amoris Laetitia*...Pope Francis

Pope Francis released the Exhortation on the Family. In the weeks to come, you will be introduced to various statements from the Holy Father.

Jesus Restores and Fulfills God's Plan—In #68—"Bl. Paul VI, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, further developed the Church's teaching on marriage and the family. In a particular way, with the Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, he brought out the intrinsic bond between conjugal love and the generation of life: 'Married love requires of husband and wife the full awareness of their obligations in the matter of responsible parenthood, which today, rightly enough, is much insisted upon, but which at the same time must be right understood... The exercise of responsible parenthood requires that husband and wife, keeping a right order of priorities, recognize their own duties towards God, themselves, their families and human society (#10). In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI highlighted the relationship between the family and the Church."

### Religious Education Classes

Registration is ongoing. Class: 12/11 and 12/12.

Grades K–6: Next classes: 12/18 and 12/19.

Grades 7–8: Next class 1/8.

### Baptism

Baptism info: <http://www.hricatholic.org/Baptism>

Jan. 8 Parent Class—Charity Dining Room 1:00pm

Dec. 11 Group Baptism—Church 1:00pm

### Confirmation

The next Confirmation sessions are:

- Sunday, December 11 following the 5:00pm Youth Mass in the hall—making shawls for new moms with Pregnancy Care Center.
- Sunday, January 29 from 3:00–5:00pm in the Church for Years 1 and 2. The candidate and his/her sponsor, parent, or another adult are to attend the session.

## Newburyport App/VIP Card



The Newburyport App/VIP Card is the perfect Christmas Gift, and a great way to save on your Christmas shopping expenses. What is the Newburyport VIP Card & Mobile App? It's a local loyalty program that gives you discounts **every time** you visit the 180 Greater Newburyport participating local businesses, it helps raise money for Immaculate Conception Church, and it drives business to our local small business owners. The Newburyport App allows users to view discounts and display their VIP Card on Apple and Android devices.

Purchase a VIP Card for \$25 and \$10 of your purchase is donated to Immaculate Conception Church. View discounts at <https://www.newburyport.com/newburyport-vip/> or by downloading the "Newburyport" App. You can purchase the VIP Card/Newburyport App directly through the "Newburyport" App, online at <https://www.newburyport.com/immaculate-conception-church/>

If you have questions or would like help downloading the App, contact [VIPcard@Newburyport.com](mailto:VIPcard@Newburyport.com).



# HOLY REDEEMER PARISH

## Offertory Collection

Offertory December 3–4                      \$ 4,405.00  
 Monthly, November 26–27                 \$ 2,425.00

## HR Parish Planning Study

We have been conducting a Parish-wide Planning Study to formulate a strategy for addressing some needed improvements to our parish facilities. Both St. Ann's and Nativity have a number of deferred maintenance issues and other possible projects that need our attention.

Careful consideration and thoughtful planning is required for us to move forward. **Input from our parishioners is of the utmost importance.** Your opinions and suggestions will enable us to formulate a final plan that will help meet the needs of our entire parish.

Every registered household has already been mailed a questionnaire so this study can include your valued input. The survey is strictly confidential and no names will be attributed to any direct or indirect quotes. Please complete and return the questionnaire within 10 days. Mail it: Holy Redeemer Parish, 4 Green Street, Merrimac, 01860; place it in the collection at Mass; drop it at the parish office in Merrimac; or fill it out online at [www.hriccatholic.org](http://www.hriccatholic.org). Please make every effort to participate in the survey so that we may complete this study with your open and honest input.

## HR Christmas Decorating

All are welcome to assist with decorating and preparing our Churches for Christmas.

**St. Ann:** Sunday, December 18 directly after 10:15 Mass. *Religious Ed.* .students: this is an excellent way to fulfill your service requirements. Call Sue Coppinger with questions: 978-465-4078.

**Nativity:** Friday, December 23 at 10:00am. Call Cindy Quinn if you know you are able to help: 978-346-0072.

## Holy Redeemer Giving Trees

The Giving Trees help area programs help people in need during the Christmas season. We are currently giving to five programs: Emmaus, Inc., Haverhill, The Holiday Helper Program for the Pentucket Area, Pregnancy Care Center, Haverhill and Newburyport areas, Lazarus House Ministries, Lawrence, and our St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Some of the tags on the trees are for specific items that the groups are requesting, including toys, clothing, and food pantry items. Please return the **unwrapped** gifts with the tags to the churches by this weekend, **December 10–11**. This allows time for us to deliver them to the programs to be distributed in time for Christmas.

If you take a tag and can't find the specific item, please either return the tag to the tree as soon as possible or consider a gift card. Thank you for all your generosity in the past, present, and future. Call Dottie Carr 978-363-2909 with questions.

## HR Religious Education

*Sunday, 12/11, Youth Mass* at IC, Newburyport 5:00pm with a Service Project to follow (Prayer Shawls for new moms) to benefit the Pregnancy Care Center. All of our Religious Ed. families are invited to this Mass and to help make shawls following the Mass. See you there.

*Tuesday, 12/13, Christmas Party* for our 7th and 8th Grade students, Merrimac Hall, 6–7:30pm. Bring a snack. Good times....

*Merrimac Valley Hope Mission:* Thanks to everyone who donated items and/or wrote notes of encouragement to the young women in recovery at two area transitional houses.

*New HR Religious Ed. Email:* [reledhrp@gmail.com](mailto:reledhrp@gmail.com).

## HR St. Vincent de Paul

The SVdP received donations of \$182.81 over the last three weeks. Thank you for being generous and for your willingness to assist others. If you are writing a check for us, please write the check to HR Saint Vincent de Paul. That will help expedite our banking.



## HR Sandwich Program

The Holy Redeemer Sandwich Program delivers soup/salad and sandwiches to the Lazarus House Ministry twice a month, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month. The sandwiches go to the Good Shepherd Center on Park Street in Lawrence. 200 sandwiches are needed each day to feed the hungry. We are always in need of more sandwich donations. To help, please make sandwiches by using 1 loaf of bread and sandwich meat (**No condiments added**), individually wrap the sandwiches and place them back into the bread bag. Deliver the bread bag to St. Ann's Church, West Newbury, by **9:00am on Wednesday, December 14**. Contact Dotty Carr at 978-363-2909 with questions or delivery date schedule.

## Coffee After Mass



Coffee will be served after the 8:00 Mass at Nativity on Sunday, December 18. Plan on coming, and if possible, bring your favorite treat to share.

## HR Prayer Shawl

Would you like to help those in need this winter without it costing you anything? Join us at 1:00pm on **Thursday, January 5**, at Nativity Hall, Merrimac. We knit/crochet hats, scarves, and mittens for Merrimac Valley Hope Mission, the group supported by our Parish youth. We'll provide yarn, knitting needles and crochet hooks, and patterns. We can even teach you to knit/crochet. Or, gather your own group at a time convenient for you, give us a call, and we'll supply everything you need. If you need information or a blessed prayer shawl, they are free, call Helen Kelley, 978-771-4673, Connie Cormier, 978-363-2020, Terry Duhamel 978-384-8099.

