

**HOLY REDEEMER AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
COLLABORATIVE PARISHES**

SERVING MERRIMAC, NEWBURY, NEWBURYPORT, AND WEST NEWBURY

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2017

hricatholic.org



“John answered them, “I baptize with water; 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)

All Are Welcome



Holy Redeemer Immaculate Conception Collaborative

serving Merrimac, Newbury, Newburyport & West Newbury

"Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters..."

St. Ann

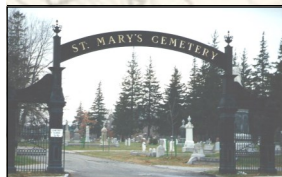
Church: 300 Main St., W. Newbury 01985
Rectory: 46 Maple St., W. Newbury 01985
Phone: 978-346-8604
Email: holyredeemer@verizon.net

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, church, rectory, and offices:
42 Green St., Newburyport 01950
Office Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
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,
Mrs. Joan Sullivan, Principal, Phone: 978-465-7780,
Fax: 978-234-7331, www.icsnewburyport.com



Collaborative Staff

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St. Vincent de Paul


Saint Vincent de Paul Society at
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St. Vincent de Paul Society at
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St Mary's Cemetery

Joseph Viel, 978-208-0266
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www.hricatholic.org

 [Holy Redeemer - Immaculate Conception Collaborative Parishes](#)

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

Collaborative Mass Schedule

Saturday (12/16)

4:00pm **IC** *Mr. & Mrs. Soon Ki Hong, Edith F. Charest* (Bishop Hennessey)
4:00pm **St. Ann** *Ann LaSelva* (Fr. Morin)

Sunday (12/17)

7:15am **IC** *Ethel Upchurch* (Fr. Broderick)
8:00am **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)
9:00am **IC** *Rita LaFlamme, Jules Julien Thelusma, Joseph Soares* (Fr. Morin)
10:15am **St. Ann** *Stephen Lynch, Irene Mullen* (Fr. Harrison)
11:30am **IC** *Patricia Doak, Stephen Quinn, Lawrence Edmands* (Fr. McLaughlin)

Monday (12/18)

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

Tuesday (12/19)

7:15am **IC** *Regina M. Stronge* (Fr. Harrison)

Wednesday (12/20)

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

Thursday (12/21)

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

Friday (12/22)

9:00am **Nativity** (Fr. Morin)
9:00am **IC School Liturgy** (Fr. Harrison)

Saturday (12/23)

10:30am **Country Rehab** (Fr. Broderick)
4:00pm **IC** *Daniel P. Bradley, Anna F. Robinson, Thomas Michael Weir* (Fr. McLaughlin)
4:00pm **St. Ann** (Fr. Christiansen)

Sunday (12/24)

8:00am **Nativity** *Lee Morphett* (Fr. Harrison)
9:00am **IC** (Fr. Broderick)
10:15am **St. Ann** *Constance Cormier* (Fr. Morin)

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

4:00pm **IC** (Fr. Morin)
4:00pm **IC School Gym** (Fr. McLaughlin)
4:00pm **St. Ann** (Fr. Christiansen)
4:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)
6:00pm **IC** (Fr. McLaughlin)
6:00pm **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)

Monday (12/25) CHRISTMAS DAY

12:00midnight **IC** (Fr. Morin)
8:00am **IC** (Fr. Broderick)
8:00am **Nativity** (Fr. Harrison)
10:00am **IC** (Fr. Morin)
10:15am **St. Ann** (Fr. Christiansen)

In your prayers, please remember Raymond Bardsley 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,

Have you ever had the experience of looking for something, maybe even undertaking an exhaustive search, only to discover that what you were looking for was right in front of you the whole time? Recently, I was looking for a box of rice in the supermarket. Not exactly a life-changing event, I know! But there is one particular brand of long-grain wild rice that I like very much that I wanted to use to go with a dinner I was preparing. So I stood and stared at the rice section for what seemed like an eternity. There must have been dozens of different brands and types. I couldn't find the one I wanted anywhere. I was about to swallow my pride and ask for help from a store clerk, when I discovered that the manufacturer must have recently changed the color of its label from brown to green. Suddenly, there it was...large as life, dead-center on the shelf. Right in front of my face. My brain had trained itself subtly over the years to look for a brown box. That worked fine for a very long time. Until now. Now, I must learn to look for green. Sometimes we only see what we condition ourselves to expect.

Pretty dumb, huh?! It's one of those simple little human moments that reminds us from time to time that we don't always see everything that can be seen, and that we must constantly learn to see our world in a new way if we are to live well. Or in this case, find rice.

The Scriptures tell of a similar, but of course, far more profound version of this story. For the longest time, God was thought to appear in particular, specific ways: thunder and lightning, earthquakes and floods, big, flashy cataclysmic drama. Think: the Noah and the Great Flood, the Pillar of Fire from the Exodus event, great rushing winds...you know, the stuff that makes for great Hollywood movies! But look for God *only* in these moments, and it is guaranteed that you will miss something. Remember the lesson from I Kings 19:11-13 when God was present in a "light, silent sound." The Bible is ripe with instances of us human beings getting it wrong every time we try and categorize, compartmentalize, or place limits on God.

Such is the warning of John the Baptist. There is one among us whom we don't recognize who is so holy that even John is not worthy to be his slave or servant. Amazing! Such greatness in our very midst, yet no bombast, no fanfare. Our eyes deceive us, all of our ways of looking for awesomeness have just crumbled. When God chose to come among us and dwell with us, He came not in the courts of royalty and privilege, but in utter poverty and



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Questions of the Week

Adult: What example do you give others to help them recognize Jesus?

Child: What will you tell others about Jesus this week?

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

This Week in Our Collaborative

See our calendar at hriccatholic.org for a complete listing of activities.

Monday, December 18

AA Meeting 10:30am & 7:30pm, IC St. Louis Hall
IC Religious Ed., Grades 1-8 6:00pm, IC Parish Center
HR Boy Scouts Troop 41 7:00pm, Nativity Hall
Pastoral Plan Discipleship Group 7:00pm, IC Charity Dining Rm

Tuesday, December 19

IC Knitting Ministry 1:00pm, IC Conference Room 209
Breaking Bread Meal 5:00pm, IC St. Louis Hall

Wednesday, December 20

HR Holy Quilters 2:30pm, Nativity Hall
IC Youth Choir Rehearsal 4:30pm, IC Church
Adoration 6:00pm, IC St. James Chapel
Centering Prayer 6:00pm, IC Nazareth Library Room 205
IC Adult Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm, IC Church

Thursday, December 21

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

Friday, December 22

Adoration 8:00am, IC St. James Chapel
AA Meeting 7:00pm, IC St. Louis Hall

Saturday, December 23

St. Ann Choir Rehearsal 3:30pm, St. Ann Church

Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve

No Religious Ed.
Nativity Choir Rehearsal 7:45am, Nativity Church
St. Ann Choir Rehearsal 9:45am, St. Ann Church

Christmas Mass Schedule for the Collaborative

Please note: There are no 7:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. Masses at IC on December 24.

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



(Continued from page 3)

the lowliness of “no room in the inn.” No one, save for a few learned “magi” and some poor, unsuspecting shepherds were there to mark the occasion. And after His humble entrance into our world and having grown in wisdom, age, and grace, Christ actually offended the people of his own hometown when He began His earthly ministry, as they thought He was only a carpenter or artisan, not someone who should be preaching to them and performing great healing signs. They nearly threw Him over the brow of a cliff, as they were so conditioned to looking for greatness in other places, in other ways and from other people...anyone other than someone they thought they “knew.” How sad it would have been for all of us if it had all ended there.

Of course, God is always bigger than our limits and shortcomings. John’s words from this weekend’s Gospel challenge us today to see the One among us, not with our eyes or pre-conceived notions of “where” God should be, but rather through forgiveness and humility to open our hearts to where God actually is. And be prepared to be surprised as we do!

With just a week to go, I’m sure there are many presents to be wrapped, food to be cooked, decorations that must go up: details, details, details...to get ready for next week’s extravaganza. All things in their time and place. But what if, just if, Christ were to come to us, not on Christmas Eve in the form a precious newborn baby; but instead in the mumbblings of a homeless person on the street, a newly-arrived immigrant who doesn’t speak English, the mentally-ill, a drug-addict desperate for their next high or, dare I suggest, a person with a political persuasion the polar-opposite of our own? Would we see our God in these people, in these awkward and sometimes painful encounters? In these moments would the Holy One of Israel walk among us unseen and unrecognized?

We have much to celebrate at Christmas...even more, if we open our eyes and hearts to the many ways the Lord comes to us every day.

Late Advent Blessings,

Fr. Timothy Harrison, Pastor

Youth Masses

Youth Masses are celebrated as a collaborative. Students take part in the ministries during the Mass. Folk music, with guitar, is featured. Youth Masses begin at 5:00pm. All ages are welcome to this lively celebration.

For each Youth Mass, a charity is chosen for donations. Please watch the bulletin for details about that month’s charity. The charity for January is Merrimack Valley Hope Mission. Donation suggestions: Winter hats, gloves, scarves, heavy socks, gently worn jackets, and travel-size toiletries.

Youth Mass Schedule

January 28 at Nativity, Merrimac
 March 4 at Immaculate Conception, Newburyport
 March 25 at Nativity, Merrimac
 May 20 at Immaculate Conception, Newburyport

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

From the Parochial Vicar

“Well done good and faithful servant.”

This week's update brings good news from some of our parishioners who have used the talent (\$5.00) I gave them. Before I do, however, I want everyone to be aware of what I am writing about. A few weeks ago the Gospel passage at Mass was taken from Matthew 25: 14–30, The Parable of the Talents. Inspired by the Gospel and the challenge that comes with it, 80 parishioners/families accepted a talent from me (\$5.00). Using creativity they were challenged to bring great increase which would be given to the St. Vincent de Paul Societies of our Collaborative. To date \$2,994.00 has been received! This is amazing! Thank you and well done.

Here are a couple of great stories. Mike wrote: “The talent you gave me was doubled two times by both a family member and then a friend. I took the \$20.00 and purchased ingredients for sauce, meatballs, sausages, and rolls. On Wednesday, colleagues I work with were offered a “free lunch” with an invitation to help complete the task assigned to me. They were informed that any donation would benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The talent was turned into \$107.50. Thank you for offering the opportunity to serve the people in our community.”

Audra and Nancy wrote: “We decided to collaborate on the talents—selling hand crafted gift tags and delicious rice crispy treats! Here is your \$5.00 back plus what we earned from our talents—\$216.00. It was a fun way to raise money for the less fortunate and made this Advent season more meaningful. We are both happy we accepted the challenge! We have included a sampling of our talents for your enjoyment.”

Several parishioners (McDougalls, Rosanne, Ed, Caroline and Ailsa, Olds, & McQuaids) invested their talents (and some participated without taking a talent) and coordinated a bake (and golf balls and bookmarks) sale at IC that yielded \$840.00.

What great stories! Such creativity and for such a good cause. Keep those talents coming and more updates to follow!

–Fr. George

Youth SNOWCAMPS

SNOWCAMPS is a high-energy, activity-filled, spiritual growth experience weekend designed specifically for 7–8 graders and is held at Camp Brookwoods, Alton, NH. Get ready for lots of fun, friendships, music, games, and faith sharing witness talks by teens and adults. Sign up soon for the best weekend of your life! Join the fun with the 100+ junior high kids from several different parishes throughout the Archdiocese. There are two SNOWCAMPS weekends: February 23–25 or March 2–4. Cost for the weekend is \$183. To learn more or to download an application, visit www.snowcampsparty.com. Contact Fr. George with questions, 978-462-2724.

Centering Prayer for Advent

As the days shorten and we enter the darkest season of the year we light Advent candles and anticipate the coming of our Savior Jesus, the light of the world. In the busyness 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.

During Advent consider joining 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 true hope. Simply 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 us as we pray in this ancient Christian tradition and together prepare this Advent to welcome the Savior into our hearts and our lives.

The Centering Prayer group meets every Wednesday evening from 6:00pm to 7:00pm in the IC Parish Center Nazareth Library. For more information please contact Elizabeth McCarthy, 978-462-7483.

Scripture for the Week

- 17 Sun** Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8,19-28
- 18 Mon** Jer 23:5-8/Mt 1:18-25
- 19 Tue** Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Lk 1:5-25
- 20 Wed** Is 7:10-14/Lk 1:26-38
- 21 Thu** Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Lk 1:39-45
- 22 Fri** 1 Sm 1:24-28/Lk 1:46-56
- 23 Sat** Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Lk 1:57-66

Scripture Study

Scripture Study will meet on January 7, 2018

Note Change in Schedule

Father Broderick's Scripture Study will **not** meet on December 17 on the regular scheduled third Sunday of the month but will resume its regular schedule on January 7, 2018 at 2:00pm in the IC Parish Center. This would be an ideal time for interested members of the Collaborative to join the study group as we begin reading St. Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*. This letter was probably written in Corinth several years prior to Paul's actual arduous voyage to Rome as a prisoner. This is Paul's longest letter and widely considered to be his masterpiece. We will read and discuss Chapters 1 through 3.

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.

COLLABORATIVE NEWS

Cursillo

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.

2017–2018 Calendar

Ultreya	Cursillo Weekend
December 29	January 4–7 (Women)
February 2	February 8–11 (Men)
February 23	March 1–4 (Women)
April 6	April 5–8 (Men)
April 27	May 3–6 (Women)
June 1	June 7–10 (Women)

Ultreya is held in the St. James Chapel in the IC Parish Center at 7:00 p.m. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Pat Forbes (978-462-1258) or Jonathan Temple (978-809-9337).

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.

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.

All Care Hospice

Looking for Ways to Give Back this Season? If so, All Care Hospice needs you! All Care Hospice is currently seeking caring, compassionate people to offer comfort and support to our patients and families through companionship. As part of the care team, volunteers serve a vital role in

affecting the quality of our patients' lives. All Care Hospice serves the North Shore, Merrimack Valley and Greater Boston. Volunteer opportunities available close to home. For more information or to enroll in a training, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Maureen Burge at 781-244-1129.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

K of C Tootsie Roll Drive



From the three churches in the Collaborative, \$1,507 was collected during the Knights of Columbus Tootsie Roll Drive to help people with Intellectual Disabilities. Thank you for your support.

The next meeting of the Knights of Columbus is **Tuesday, January 9** at 7:30pm in the IC Nazareth Library, Rm 205.

Pre-Planning/At-Need Burial Space

Immaculate Conception Parish owns and operates a private cemetery located on Storey Avenue. St. Mary Cemetery is a 35-acre cemetery with consecrated grounds that provides tranquility and peacefulness at those difficult times that we all are faced with. Please visit the parish cemetery and you will find the cemetery to be well-managed and maintained. Cemetery plots are available for full-body and cremated remains burials in any denomination. Call Joseph Viel, Superintendent at 978-208-0266 to schedule an appointment.

IC Online Giving

Immaculate Conception Parish provides Online Giving—a convenient and safe way to make a one-time or a recurring (weekly) donation. Getting started is easy—you need to be a registered member of Immaculate Conception Parish community. (At this time, Online Giving is available for only IC members.) Registration forms are available in the foyer of the church or at the parish office. Once you register, visit our website, hriccatholic.org and click the “Links” tab, then click on “Online Giving” to get to the site. There are four different funds you can choose to contribute to. If you manage your other bills online, why not give to your Church online? It is safe and secure and you get to decide exactly when and to where your gift will be made. Any questions? Contact Linda Temple, IC Administrative Assistant 978-462-2724 x7404.

IC Knitting Ministry



We meet Tuesdays at 1:00pm in the IC Parish Center, Room 209. We knit shawls, hats, mittens, and scarves and bring prayers and hope to people who are sick and to their caregivers and to celebrate happy occasions. We also distribute hats and scarves to homeless children. Our membership is open to all. Please join us for knitting, fellowship, and tea (and goodies).

If you know anyone who needs a prayer shawl or for more information please call Frances Ronan 978-462-4972 or Julia O'Connor at 978-465-3350.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

Offertory Collection

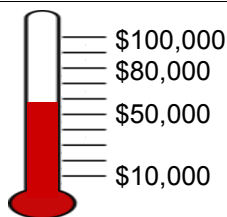
December 9–10 **\$9,039.00**
 Monthly **\$1,587.00**

This weekend's second collection is IC Haiti. **Please make checks payable to IC Haiti.**

Christmas Collection 2017

This Christmas, our parish collections once again will benefit the Clergy Health and Retirement Trust. Remember all priests who have made a meaningful difference in your life, and consider honoring them with a generous gift to the Christmas collection. This important fund ensures that our priests will be cared for and supported throughout their lives. Thank you in advance for your prayers and generous support.

**Grand Annual
 Goal \$100,000
 To Date \$57,705.00
 248 Families**



The Saint Vincent de Paul Society



Collection	\$ 10.00
Poor Box	\$ 89.00
Total	\$ 99.00

SVdP Advent Project

"Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me." Matthew 25:45

How can we respond to the lesson provided in the Gospel of Matthew? Where do we find people in need of clothes, or food, or shelter? Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul strive to be responsive to the Christian calling to seek and find the forgotten, the suffering, or the deprived so that we may bring them God's love. You can **help us help others** during Advent by donating gift cards from grocery stores, department stores, gas stations, and pharmacies.

The donated cards can be placed in the collection basket during any of the Masses during Advent. Donors of the gift cards can be assured that their generosity provides a meaningful, helpful response for a local neighbor during a time of need.

What we do for the poor is not something we do for God; our work is what we allow God to do through us.

Adoration

Join us for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in IC's St. James Chapel on Fridays from 8:00am–12:00noon.

Immaculate Conception School

In the spirit of giving, IC students are donating mittens and gently used coats to area residents who need a little warmth this Christmas. Organized by the Junior High Leadership Team, these annual drives are an important way for our students to learn how to make a difference. Service to others is a continuous focus for students of all ages at the IC. Cultivating empathetic and compassionate youngsters, who have the skills to organize and act to lessen life's burdens for others, compliments our rigorous academic program to develop well-rounded individuals.



IC-Haiti Update/Collection

The Fr. Marc Piché Memorial School in Puit Chacha Haiti has dealt with many challenges over the past two years. Hurricane Matthew in 2016 decimated much of the area, causing terrible damage to homes and infrastructure. Only 11 months later, Hurricane Irma plowed through the region. While Haiti was spared another direct hit, the crops were destroyed for a second year in a row due to the Category 5 storm. Amidst these challenges, the Fr. Marc Piché School has been a safe and reliable institution for the families of Puit Chacha. The school has not only been able to maintain its service level, but has improved and grown to meet the needs of the community.

Roof repairs performed last summer held well through the latest storm, providing shelter for any who needed it. In addition to repairs and maintenance to the structure, IC parishioners provided funding for a solar power water filter installation. The importance of access to clean water can't be overstated—it's a vital improvement to infrastructure that can benefit the whole community.

Educational opportunities have improved too. In an effort to raise the level of teaching in the school, our administrative partners added a teacher training session in October for the continuing education of the Fr. Marc Piché School faculty. The training was a great success—teachers are eager to improve their own education and to pass on additional skills to the students. A scholarship fund has allowed for all 15 6th grade graduates from our school to go on to attend the 7th grade in the town of Fond des Blanc—an opportunity that few students were able to take advantage of before.

The Immaculate Conception Father Marc Piché Memorial School is a major component of the community in Puit Chacha. It represents not only the security of a sound structure and a daily meal for children without security of food or shelter at home but also the hope of education and better opportunities. We at Immaculate Conception are the sole support of the school. We must continue to sustain these critical programs, which with the church provide a constant in the life of this community. Over 200 children and their families rely upon your support for education, shelter, and food. Please give generously at the IC-Haiti second collection December 16 and 17.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

IC Religious Education

Amoris Laetitia...Pope Francis

Pope Francis released the Exhortation on the Family. We continue to review the various statements from the Holy Father.

Dialogue: In #136: Dialogue is essential for experiencing, expressing, and fostering love in marriage and family life. Yet it can only be the fruit of a long and demanding apprenticeship. Men and women, young people and adults, communicate differently. They speak different languages and they act in different ways. Our way of asking and responding to questions, the tone we use, our timing and any number of other factors condition how well we communicate. We need to develop certain attitudes that express love and encourage authentic dialogue.

School Year IC Religious Education Classes

Registration for the School Year Religious Education Class is ongoing. Registration form:

<http://www.hricatholic.org/IC-Children-s-Religious-Education>

Classes: December: Sunday 17 and Monday 18.

Assembly: A Celebration of Christmas through Sacred Scripture & Song by our Religious Education students. Please join us Sunday 10:30am and Monday 6:45pm in the hall.

Next Classes:

- Gr. K–8 Sunday, January 7 10:05–11:05am.
- Gr. 1–8 Monday, January 8 6:00–7:10pm.

Baptism

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

Please pre-register for the class.

Jan. 7 Parent Class—Charity Dining Room 1:00pm
Jan. 14 Group Baptism—Church 1:00pm

Confirmation

Confirmation monthly session is Sunday, December 17 at 1:00–3:00pm in the IC church. Reminder: candidate and adult (sponsor, parent, or another adult) to attend each session. **Catholic School candidates and adults**—next session Sunday, February 4 at 1:00pm in the Charity Dining Room, Room 114. For information and registration go online: <http://www.hricatholic.org/Confirmation--Immaculate-Conception-Parish>.

First Eucharist

Information/registration for 2017–2018 First Reconciliation and Eucharist is posted on our website: <http://www.hricatholic.org/First-Eucharist-First-Reconciliation--Immaculate-Conception-Parish>. Our next 1st Eucharist session for candidates and parents is Sunday, January 7 1:00–3:00pm Tour of the Church. (Snow date: Sunday January 21, same time and place.)

Landings

Landings for Returning Catholics will begin a new session on Tuesdays 7:30–9:15pm at Church of the Nativity, Merrimac beginning Tuesday, January 30. If you know of anyone interested, please contact Dr. Mag McKinnon for more information 978-462-2724.

Youth Mass—January 28, 2018

Our next Youth Mass is Sunday, January 28 at Church of the Nativity, Merrimac at 5:00pm.

Charity: Merrimack Valley Hope Mission

Donations: Winter hats, gloves, scarves, heavy socks, gently worn jackets, and travel-size toiletries.

Mardi Gras Celebration

Save the Date

Our Mardi Gras Celebration and Dinner will be held on Monday, February 12, 2018. Tickets will be on sale at the end of January and early February.



Raffle Items

We are looking for donations for our Raffle. If you have any items, gift cards, services, etc. that you would like to donate to the raffle, it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Dr. Mag McKinnon, DRE, mmckinnon@newburyportcatholic.org or Melinda Burrell burrell@newburyportcatholic.org 978-462-2724.

Proceeds for the dinner and raffle to benefit IC Haiti and IC Religious Education. Come join us for the fun, food, and fellowship.

Boy Scout Blood Drive



Boy Scout Troop 21 of Newburyport and the American Red Cross are teaming up to boost blood supply. The uncertainties of the times in which we live require a new commitment to maintain a constant community blood supply. That's why Boy Scout Troop 21 of Newburyport and the American Red Cross this holiday season are teaming up to help ensure that a safe and adequate blood supply is available when needed. Please continue supporting your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers by donating blood on Wednesday, December 27, 2017 at the Newburyport Elks Club Function Hall, 25 Low Street, Newburyport. Donor hours are 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

It only takes about an hour of time—and one small pinch—to become a hero to someone in need. Giving the “Gift of Life” is one way to help those in need. Every blood donation is an opportunity to help an accident victim, a surgical patient, or a child battling leukemia, to name a few.

Anyone 17 years of age or older, weighing 110 pounds or more and feeling in good health may be eligible to donate blood. To make an appointment to donate blood call 1-800-733-2767 or visit www.redcrossblood.org.

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends of Greater Newburyport provides support for bereaved families after the loss of a child, grandchild, or sibling—any age, any cause.

Our monthly support meetings are held in Room 209 of the IC Parish Center at 7:30 to 9:00pm on the fourth Monday of the month. Barbara J. Hopkinson is founder and chapter leader. **Our next meeting is January 22.**

Contact Barbara for questions on either TCF or ABJ at (617) 410-6309 or info@abutterflysjourney.org.

HOLY REDEEMER PARISH

Offertory Collection

December 2–3	\$2,995.00
Monthly	\$2,129.00

Christmas Collection 2017

This Christmas, our parish collections once again will benefit the Clergy Health and Retirement Trust. Remember all priests who have made a meaningful difference in your life, and consider honoring them with a generous gift to the Christmas collection. This important fund ensures that our priests will be cared for and supported throughout their lives. Thank you in advance for your prayers and generous support.

2017 Grand Annual

If you did not bring your pledge card to Mass with you this weekend please bring it next weekend or mail it to the parish office this week. Your participation in the Grand Annual Collection is sincerely appreciated. Thank you.

HR St. Vincent de Paul Society



Our conference recently purchased a bed for a client who has just moved into his own apartment after several years in a halfway house. The conference also provided sheets, blankets, and pillows. Thank you for making these purchases possible and supporting a client on his new and independent life journey.

Sanctuary Candle



For the week of December 24, the Sanctuary Candle at Nativity Church, Merrimac is donated for a Special Intention.

HR Christmas Decorating

All are welcome to assist with decorating and preparing our churches for Christmas. Join us at St. Ann on Sunday, December 17 after the 10:15 Mass and at **Church of the Nativity** on Friday, December 22 after the 9:00 Mass.

HR Prayer Shawl

Do you know of any woman, man, or child who needs comfort and could use a Blessed Prayer Shawl or Lap Blanket? Please call Helen Kelley 978-771-4673 or Terry Duhamel 978-384-8099 for a shawl or more information.

Come join us. Don't know how? We will teach you to knit or crochet and give you yarn. We meet on the first Thursday of every month at Nativity Hall, Merrimac at 1:00pm. Our next meeting is **Thursday, January 4.**

HR Religious Education

Sunday, Dec 17 Grades 3–6 classes at Nativity Hall, 9:00–10:00 a.m.

Youth Mass

Our next Youth Mass is **Sunday, January 28** at 5:00 p.m. at Nativity.

Contact info: Office of Religious Education

Doreen O'Leary (Rel. Ed. email: reledhrp@gmail.com)

Activities Committee Meeting

The Activities Committee will meet on Thursday, January 4 at 7:00 p.m. in Nativity Hall. We will be meeting to plan HR parish events for 2018. Please come join us. We would love to hear your ideas.

2017 Holiday Fair Roundup

Our 2017 Holiday Fair was wonderful! We deposited \$11,740.50.

Our money raffle earned \$3256. Thank you to all who returned the raffle tickets that were mailed to every registered parishioner. (If you are aware of any wrong addresses or wrong names, please contact the parish office to update our Parish census). Our silent auction earned \$2,741.00. Thanks to the wonderful donations—especially the artwork. The paintings really excited our bidders! Perhaps next year, **you** could make a donation to the silent auction. Start thinking....

We would also like to extend a thank you to Dr. St. Germain, North Shore Bank, Haverhill Bank, Journey Insurance, and Dr. Chow who graciously donated to help fund our supplies.

The basket table made \$1,927.00. Thank you to everyone who donated beautifully decorated baskets. Perhaps next year, **you** could reserve some time, the week before the Fair, to come down to the hall and help our volunteers create new baskets.



Our nearly new table made \$1,846.50. We always need donated items. Plan ahead, start collecting those thoughtful gifts given to you (that you probably will never use).

The bake table made \$1,156.00. Thank you to all who baked. Although, we could use more creative donations... anybody great at making pies? How about those cute cookies that look like animals? Anyone willing to organize the children in creating cookies that look like turkeys? Always a crowd favorite.

The Kitchen made \$789.00. We served over 120 people. Our specialty is homemade soups. Anyone have a family favorite recipe? Maybe next year we could serve it.

We plan on having the fair next year on Saturday, November 17. Mark your calendars.