

# The Goodnewsletter

A Newsletter for Members of St. Ann, St. Vincent de Paul & St. Patrick Parishes

[Stannlenox.org](http://Stannlenox.org)/[Stannlenox@verizon.net](mailto:Stannlenox@verizon.net)

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**Editor's Note**  
by Deb Kuni

Hello December. Goodbye to November and to 2019. In some ways I want to hang on to 2019 a while longer but really, it has been a year full of changes, loss of family and friends and not so much fun! I guess I'm ready to let it go. One of the big changes this year around here is the implementation of a new tri-parish website with a public calendar coming very soon. We have been working very hard behind the scenes to get it up and running, with the guidance of our host company, LPI's WeCreate, helping us customize and learn the software. We are just about ready to present it to you. One aspect we are very happy about is the public calendar I mentioned, that you will be able to access. This will help you keep informed of tri-parish events, Mass times, special news and endless other things. No more having to wait for office hours or bulletins!

In this issue you can read interesting articles about the origin of Saint Nicholas - a very good read!; a history of the Catholic tradition of candles; you will learn a lot about the reasons we light candles; St. Ann's Finance Council and St. Ann's Religious Education Department have both provided interesting updates; some important health reminders from our parish nurse, an update on my cemetery project and a nice Thanksgiving article that is still very timely, from Deacon Dan, and a few other others. All in all, this is a full issue with a bit of everything. So enjoy the read, and I hope you enjoy the rest of the Advent season and ultimately, Christmas! See you in 2020!

**Important Dates**

**Monday, Dec. 9**

Immaculate Conception

**Sunday, Dec. 15**

St. Ann's Christmas Pageant - 9:45 Mass,

**Tuesday, Dec. 24**

Christmas Vigil Mass at St. Ann - 4 p.m

Christmas Vigil Mass at St. Vincent de Paul - 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Vigil Mass at St. Patrick - 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Mass at St. Ann - 10 p.m.

**Wednesday, Dec. 25**

Christmas Day Mass at St. Ann - 10 a.m.

**Dec. 31**

St. Patrick Church - 5:30 p.m.

**Jan. 1**

St. Ann - 10 a.m.

St. Vincent de Paul - 5:30 p.m.m

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## From Our Parish Nurse

I feel like I am beginning to sound like a mother but wherever one turns there is a sound bite or an article talking about the importance of exercise. Recently The Eagle featured an article that solely addressed the theme of excuses that we all make and that YOU can find the time to fit in exercise.

So after the holidays let's find a way to get off our duff and move a bit. Our community center offers many programs as does other local Senior Centers. The high school allows people to walk the halls after school. Our church has two different programs a week. If none of these interests you take a walk in your neighborhood or dance in your kitchen. Just move! You'll feel better for it.

In November a panel presentation on getting our affairs in order gave us much useful information. From that panel discussion, I have put a packet together and intend to place it in the back of the church for you to pick up and take home.

January will see the return of Game Day on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. Please join us and bring a friend.

May your holiday be filled with much joy and peace.

*-Dianne*

## Saint Nicholas of Myra, Bishop

Born March 15, 270

Died December 6, 342

Feast Day December 6

Saint Nicholas, the historical person upon whom Santa Claus was based, is the best known Christmas figure behind Jesus and the Three Kings. His mysterious nocturnal visits to bring gifts to children at Christmas are today a global tradition rooted firmly in Christianity.

Nicolas is believed to have been born in the Greek seaport of Patara, Lycia in Asia Minor to wealthy Christian parents. Very few other biographical details about his early life are known. It is certain, however, that he was the Catholic Bishop of Myra (today Demre, Turkey) in the early fourth century. It also is likely that he was martyred for the faith under the persecution of Roman emperor Diocletian.

Nicolas attended the Council of Nicea in 325, the first synod in the history of the Christian church convened to address the entire body of believers. It was ordered by the emperor Constantine to resolve the controversy of Arianism, a heretical doctrine put forth by Arius that held that Christ was not divine but rather a created being. Legend states that Nicholas was punished by superiors for accosting and slapping Arius at the council in reaction to his espoused heresy. Upon his death, he was buried in Myra, the episcopal seat of his see.

Less than a century later, a church was built there in his honor and became a noted destination for pilgrims. In the mid-500s, the emperor Justinian renovated a long existing church dedicated to Saint Nicholas in Constantinople. In Rome, a Greek community was worshipping in a basilica.

### St. Nicholas, continued from page 3

ca dedicated to him around 600 that can still be visited today. These churches, as well as hundreds of others named for him, indicate that devotion to Nicholas was widespread not long after his death.

When Myra was overrun by Muslim Turks in the 1000s, there was a risk that the saint's remains would be stolen. As a result, sailors from Bari, Italy moved Nicholas' body relics to their own hometown in 1087. In 1089, Pope Urban II traveled to Bari to dedicate a new church to him.

Enduring legend states that Nicholas rescued three sisters from lives of prostitution by secretly depositing small sacks of gold through their family's window at night, thus giving each of the girls a marriage dowry. Other legends recount how Nicholas covertly put coins in shoes left out for him. His legacy of gift giving became a central European and Anglo-Saxon expression of the actions formerly thought to be exclusive to the Three Kings. Christmas night gift giving in northern lands thus slowly replaced the more biblically solid tradition of gift giving on the Feast of the Epiphany more popular in Southern Europe and lands that inherited its traditions.

Interestingly, the antiquity of the Church has enabled it to play a central role in the creation and formation of Western culture. As a result, Santa Claus has roots. He wears red for the martyrs; dons a hat resembling a bishop's miter; and often is depicted holding a scepter similar to a bishop's crozier. Further, this saint distributes gifts to children in humble anonymity on the night of Christ's birth.

Old Saint Nick, Father Christmas or Santa Claus is real in at least one sense for in all likelihood he signed the Nicene Creed. Our "Santa" in reality was an orthodox Catholic bishop who argued in favor of correct teaching about God as a Trinity – his first and most lasting gift to mankind.

Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, repentant thieves, prostitutes, children, brewers and students in various cities and countries around Europe.

Deacon Dan Romanello

### CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

By Carol Kirby

The Circle of Friends is a ministry under the arm of the Parish Council's Community outreach commission. This is a group of caring volunteers from St. Ann and St. Vincent De Paul parish that have offered their assistance to grieving families when the family has requested the use of Family Center for a funeral reception. We contact the family and offer our assistance. We offer a list of caterers, which they may contact and order the food, after they have ordered the food that is all they have to do with the reception. The Circle of Friends does the rest, we set up the room, arrange the food. Our volunteers assist the family throughout the whole reception. After the reception is over we package up the food for the family and clean up the room.

The Circle of Friends is growing all the time with parishioners volunteering to join. If you would like to join this worthwhile ministry please call Carol Kirby at 637-2188.

May God bless all our members.



**St. Ann & St. Vincent de Paul**  
**Religious Education Program**  
**Fall 2019**

I must start by extending a very sincere and heartfelt, "Thank you!" to the many parishioners, who responded so enthusiastically when I asked for volunteers in The Religious Education Program. Teachers, substitute teachers, student assistants and various activity directors have not only made all these events possible, but have also been shining examples of faith to our younger parishioners. We are truly grateful for all the support!

The following are highlights of some of the fall 2019 Religious Education activities:

**September**- Grades 6-8 started the school year off with a very enlightening New Spirit retreat, from 4:30-8:30 on Monday; September 30th. The 25 students enjoyed an evening of songs, prayer, meditation and reflection in small and large group discussions, guided by the New Spirit team members, which also included several of our St. Ann 2018 Confirmation class members. Many parents also joined us in the kitchen that evening, to make delicious pizzas for the group. The freshly baked pizza was a real treat! Thank you to all who attended and made this a very fun and meaningful evening!

**October**- On October 6th, students in grades K-4 started their weekly gospel lessons during the 9:45 a.m. Mass on Sunday mornings. We enjoyed seeing the smiling faces of our enthusiastic students returning from last year, as well as welcoming many new students to our classes! Some of our K-1 students were a little reluctant to join us in October but have adjusted beautifully and are participating fully during our class time! Thank you to parents that have encouraged them to join us. We are so happy to have them!

**November**- On Sunday, November 10th, Maxime Léger conducted an altar server training session and although only two of our students could attend that day, several other students have now expressed an interest in joining this very important ministry. Maxime had offered to continue to schedule time to train new students in the future. Please let me know if your child would be interested in scheduling time to learn more about becoming an altar server.

**Thank you Maxime!**

**December**- Sunday evening classes will begin for grades 5-10 on Sunday, Dec 1st.

For grades 5-8, classes will be held from 6-7 p.m. in the Parish Family Center.

For grades 9-10 classes will be held from 6-7:30 p.m. in the church.

Our annual Children's Christmas Pageant will be presented during the 9:45 a.m. Mass on Sunday, December 15th. Any child grades k-5 is welcome to participate! Once again, we look forward to this special part of the Christmas Season with all of our little angels and shepherds giving us the true meaning of Christmas. **Please contact me if your child would like to participate in this very special Christmas tradition.**

In closing, I would like to thank all of our amazing and dedicated Religious Education teachers and assistants who put aside time each week to share their faith with the youth of our parish. Without these wonderful volunteers there would not be a religious education program.

Thank you, also, to all the parents and students for the enthusiastic participation in the programs that have been scheduled this past year. Please share your thoughts and ideas by emailing me at [stannccd2@gmail.com](mailto:stannccd2@gmail.com).

*-Joan Hymanson*

## CANDLES

*22nd in a series of articles from the Spiritual Life Commission regarding traditions of our faith*



In the first centuries of the Christian faith- it was necessary for the followers of Christ to worship in secrecy, at night and in the catacombs to avoid persecution, so candles were a necessity. So why now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century does the Catholic Church still use so many candles in its churches and as parts of the worship services?

One needs only to read scripture, especially John, to see why the use of candles is in the churches and why they have not been replaced by live voltage in parts of its services.

Candle is the Latin verb for - to shine, glow or burn. Since the beginning of church history, the candle has represented Christ, the perfect candle, “The Light of the World”, “... a light shines in darkness and darkness could not over power it.” What has come into being in Christ was life, life that was the light of men, “...came as witness, to bear witness to the light.”The Word was the real light that gives light to everyone...”, “Walk always as children of the light and keep the flame alive in your hearts...”, “...a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for your glory to your people of Israel.”

The flame alludes to the burnt sacrifice of the Old Testament made in petition, adoration and reparation for sin.

The form of the candle is different for the different intention for which it serves. The Advent Candle marks the time of Adam to the birth of Christ, usually placed in a circle or wheel each Light represents a thousand years.

The votive candle, usually found before statues of Christ or saints, stems from the Old Testament offering of a burnt sacrifice for petition or thanksgiving. They may also be found in many home prayer corners. The candle is not necessary for adoration or petition but the act of lighting a candle and making a small monetary offering gives an opportunity for engaging our entire self into the act of praying.

The Easter Candle, usually several feet in height and from which, on Holy Saturday Night, the new light is blessed, represents the new life brought about by Christ’s resurrection and from which taper candles are lit by all the faithful present. Luke tells us to be like people waiting for the masters’ return. The Easter Candle on Holy Saturday Night symbolizes the return of Christ from the darkness of the tomb to the light of resurrection; thus the Easter Candle also burns at funerals and baptisms symbolizing new life.

The Altar or Chancel Lamp burns perpetually before the Tabernacle in a red globe showing the real presence of Christ. It may be placed adjacent to, or hanging over the tabernacle or from a chain or rope before the entrance to the sanctuary. It may also be affixed to a wall. Olive oil may be used for the Altar Lamp. God commanded the Israelites to crush pure oil from olives to burn perpetually before the Tabernacle of The Testimony where the Ark of the Covenant and sacred vessels used for worship were kept. Thus, the traditional location and significant placement of the Altar Candle to the Catholic tabernacle.

The Feast of the Presentation of Mary and her Purification on February 2<sup>nd</sup> is known as Candlemas Day and is the day of many processions as well as the blessing of candles.

## **A Brief Catholic Perspective on Thanksgiving**

Now that the Thanksgiving holiday is behind us, we will have begun the liturgical season of Advent on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. This period, which can vary from 22 to 28 days, is a time of great joy and anticipation in our church calendar as we prepare for the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Advent marks the beginning of a new church year filled with fresh opportunities for deepening our faith and doing the Lord's work.

But what about Thanksgiving - what does it really mean for us as Christian Catholics? As schoolchildren we all learned about the origins of this prominent American holiday, a feast that celebrated the first successful harvest of our forebears in this land. Impoverished pilgrims and farmers, along with the neighboring Wampanoag Indians, gave thanks to God for the abundant yield of the earth. They celebrated their good fortune with camaraderie, food and recreation.

Historical tradition tells us that this first Thanksgiving took place in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621. But the fact is that the initial thanksgiving meal in the United States was organized by Spanish settlers in what today is Saint Augustine, Florida. And the primary focus of the gathering was Mass and celebration of the Eucharist.

According to the late Dr. Michael Gannon, a prominent historian and Catholic priest:

“When the first Spanish settlers landed in what is now St. Augustine on September 8, 1565 to build a settlement, their first act was to hold a religious service to thank God for the safe arrival of the Spanish fleet... After the Mass, Father Francisco Lopez, the Chaplain of the Spanish ships and the first pastor of St. Augustine, stipulated that the natives from the Timucua tribe be fed along with the Spanish settlers, including Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles, the leader of the expedition. It was the very first Thanksgiving and the first Thanksgiving meal in the United States.”

Thus the real beginning of the feast that we celebrate on the last Thursday of every November originated in our Roman Catholic tradition. It is a special day set aside to spend with family and friends in offering thanks for our many blessings.

Yet if we truly know and honor our church tradition and teachings, everyday should be thanksgiving for us. As Catholics, we are called to give thanks on a daily basis, worshipping and praising the Heavenly Father who created mankind, redeemed it and now sustains it. Clearly, all that we have comes from God and is entirely gratuitous – unearned gift - offered to us as a result of his unfathomable love and mercy.

The Blessed Sacrament – the Eucharist – is defined as the very source and summit of our Catholic faith. Derived from the Greek “eucharistia”, the word Eucharist means thanksgiving. In scripture we witness Jesus regularly expressing gratitude to his heavenly Father in a humble and profoundly-felt manner. Recall, for example, the raising of Lazarus from the dead – Christ praises His Father for this miracle in St. Matthew's account. Or at the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, Jesus first gives thanks and then blesses the food before distributing it to the hungry.

In summation, thanksgiving should be an instinctive, interior disposition of the heart actively evidenced in our daily faith lives. Worshipping together at Mass on the national holiday is a wonderful way to begin since Jesus wholly embodies the living and substantial act of thanksgiving. But giving thanks for the many blessings that God bestows upon each of us can indeed take place seven days a week.

***Deacon Dan Romanello***

Candles continued from page 6

The blessing of the throats, takes place the next day, February 3<sup>rd</sup> with candles blessed on Candlemas Day. Tradition holds that the use of candles in the throat blessing stems from the woman, whose pig was miraculously rescued by St. Blaise. She not only brought food for the imprisoned Blaise but candles as well to light his dark cave cell.

Liturgical candles are made of pure bees wax, following the nature of worker bees that gather pure nectar of flowers in order to feed the baby bees. The worker bee is not involved with reproduction as that is the role of the queen bee and the drones. The pure bees wax represents the pure flesh of Christ and the worker bee represents the Virgin Mary who gives birth to the pure flesh of Christ. The light produced by the pure bees wax represents the pure word of Christ feeding His people.

Altar candles are of white bleached wax whereas the candles for funerals and Good Friday are unbleached yellow wax. Mass may not be begun or said without the presence of lit candles, nor be continued if they go out before the Consecration.



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## **St. Ann's Parish**

**Lenox, MA**

### **Finance Council Report**

The St. Ann's Finance Council is pleased to report that our parish finances for the first four months of the fiscal year are sound and we are beginning to make plans to address some long-term needs of the church building. As you can see from the weekly updates in the parish bulletin, weekly collections are running below budget by about \$16,000, but, with operating expenses also below budget by about \$18,000, St Ann's is able to pay its bills. Furthermore, thanks to your support for the Summer Festival and a generous one-time gift this fall, the parish has been able to save some money for roof repairs and upcoming winter expenses with the result that the parish's financial condition is good.

Two areas of the parish that may require more funding in the near future are maintenance of the stonework on the church exterior and the cost of operating St. Ann's Cemetery. With a 100 year-old stone church, there is always work to be done restoring and preserving the beautiful building we enjoy each Sunday and providing perpetual care for our cemetery often requires more resources than are available to it. The Council is gathering information on both these matters and planning long-term solutions which we hope to bring to the parish soon.

Once again, we ask you, as you consider your gifts to St. Ann's, please consider using WeShare, our automated giving tool, to make your donation electronically WeShare is easy to use and, once set-up, provides the parish with a regular, predictable cash flow and you never have to worry about missed weekends or lost envelopes. For help signing up for WeShare, please see the enrollment form under "Bulletins/News" on the St. Ann's website or else call the parish office.

And thank you, again, for your support to St. Ann's.

Sean Wilson

Chair, St Ann's Parish Finance Council



## PARISH REGISTRATION

### Question:

Why is it so important that we register in a parish? Isn't it good enough that we go to Mass?

### Answer:

Registration is the official way we join a parish community. Many people think that because they attend a particular parish they automatically belong. At times, young adults who have moved away for years think they are still signed up under their parents. But membership requires signing up, formally enrolling yourself in a parish. Registration is a commitment to a community, a way to be included in the religious, social, and ministerial activities of your parish.

Your registration affects the parish in many ways. Census numbers can determine how many priests are assigned to a church, what benefits and obligations the community has to the diocese, and how Masses, Confessions, and devotions are planned and scheduled.

Registration shows you belong. It is also necessary for certain benefits, like scheduling sacraments, obtaining sponsor certificates, and getting donation statements for taxes. Most importantly, it lets the parish count on you, to call on you to assist in its mission. Registering in your parish is a statement of faith and confidence in the life and work of your parish.

At St. Ann's you can call the Rectory office for a registration form, or go on-line to our website, [stannlenox.org](http://stannlenox.org) and download a registration form. Fill out a form, return it to the office and that's it! You can use weekly envelopes, if you'd like, use cash or checks, or St. Ann offers electronic giving through the very user friendly WeShare. Debbie in the office can help you set that up or you can simply go to <https://stannlenox.churchgiving.com/> and sign up from the comfort of your own home. Very soon all three parishes will be offering this service. Watch our weekly bulletin for updates about this exciting new opportunity.

If you are already a registered member of one of our three parishes, please keep in mind it is very important that you keep the office informed of any changes in your mailing address or phone number.

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### St. Ann Cemetery Project:


It has been a very long time coming. You have read about it for many years in between these pages and many who have stopped into my office have chatted with me about my plans for updating our cemetery records once and for all. Well, I have finally begun the next step in that project. This is where the forms you filled out for me will come in *VERY* handy.

I purchased a software program called Grave Discover and have been slowly chipping away at entering each cemetery card's information, each burial name on those cards, into the program. I have really only just started, given the quantity of people buried here and realistically still have a long way to go. But I'm an optimist. The really cool thing about this program is that it is on the cloud, and virtually is our cemetery in real time. They took a satellite picture of our cemetery then superimposed a picture of my office cemetery map over it, so owner names are lined up with existing headstones, and voila! You can see our cemetery with all the headstones and names. As I enter each decedent's name and "pin" it to the burial location, anyone searching for someone by last name, will be able to find that burial location within our cemetery. This program offers GPS coordinates also. (As long as I remember to click on that option as I enter people in!!)

I am having so much fun working on this and I can't wait until it's all done! For right now, I only have 2 of the smaller sections entered. (L & C) But every week I get closer to done. If you want to take a peek, go to Grave Discover, select Massachusetts, Lenox, St. Ann, and put in the last name of someone you know who is laid to rest in our cemetery. As I said, I'm just beginning to enter people so don't be discouraged if you don't get a hit. If you do, a small green bubble will pop up with the name of the person you are looking for and their location within the cemetery. If there are two or more people with the same last name you will have a choice. Burial information will be available to help you decide. I can even attach their obituary and a photo of their headstone, if I want. That will have to wait to be the next phase!

# Advertisers

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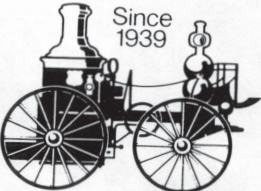


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Piretti Real Estate, 22 Walker St., Lenox 637-1696  
Dennis Welch, 48 Main St., Lenox 637-1709

# **Our Changing Communities**

April 2019 ~ December 2019

## **St. Ann Parish**

### **New Members**

Marie E. Condry  
Kalley Moore  
Donna Pignatelli  
James & Patrice Whaling  
James and Erika Shepardson  
Pellegrino Vona & Catherine Lampiasi  
Norma Gardino  
Stanley & Sandra Kleiner  
Leigha Garnder & Bishir Ali  
Ben Pigott and Heather Baumert

### **Baptisms**

Fernando J. Jerez  
Dennis J. Pelletier  
Anthony C. Gonzalez  
Valeria J. Carreno  
Jackson P. Prew  
Mia Casalinas Berrocal

### **Deaths - R.I.P.**

Richard Prout  
MaryAnn Ploss  
Dr. Roger Connor  
Raymond LeBeau  
Joan Coddling  
Donald Rochelo  
John Fraser  
Kathryn Quattrochi  
Lisa Couig  
Margaret O'Brien  
John Loga  
Margaret Wheeler  
Marguerite Wodarski

## **St. Vincent de Paul**

### **New Members**

### **Baptisms**

### **Deaths - R.I.P.**

John Duby  
Matthew Kostyun

## **St. Patrick Parish**

### **New Members**

Wayne M. Spence

### **Baptisms**

Eden Laura Ogle

### **Deaths - R.I.P.**

Jacqueline J. Lynch  
Adelia Ferarri Placido  
Joseph DelSoldato  
Mary Panzeri  
Thomas Carey  
Rita Agnes Errichetto