

# METHUEN CATHOLIC

THE PARISHES OF ST. MONICA AND ST. LUCY

FEB 23  
2025



SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

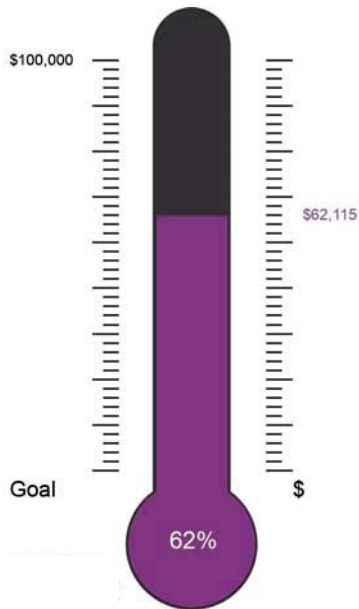
“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

Luke 6:36

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like thank you for hearing the call and answering it! An anonymous benefactor from St. Monica's has stepped forward with a matching donation challenge of \$5,000 for St. Monica's Grand Annual. I invite parishioners from St. Monica's and St. Lucy's who are able, to consider adding their own matching challenge donation of \$5,000. Please reach out to me at the office or at [frmarcosmethuen@gmail.com](mailto:frmarcosmethuen@gmail.com). Once again, I want to thank you for your faith and generosity in the time, talent, and treasure you have poured into our parish family, and thank you for your support of our Grand Annual appeal.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Marcos T. Pena Portillo



# YOUR DONATION IS DOUBLED

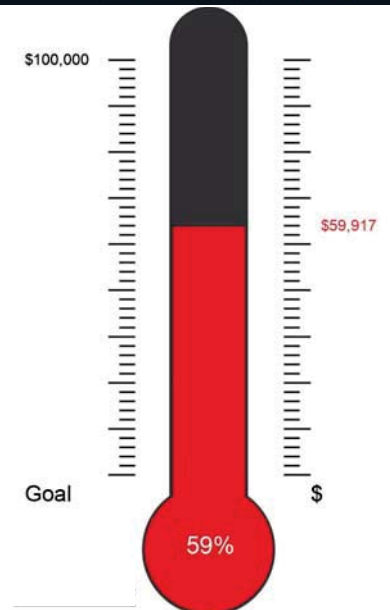
A generous donor has offered to match every gift made to the Grand Annual at St. Monica's, up to \$5,000 from today until March 9th, 2025. If you have been considering making a gift or making another gift, now is the time. For every \$1 you give, we receive \$2. **Give now and Double your impact.**



**GRAND ANNUAL**  
St. Monica Parish

*St. Lucy Parish*





We love ourselves. That love is natural and good. The ancient Greek Philosopher Aristotle notes that the love we have for ourselves lies at the root of our desire for goodness (*Nicomachean Ethics*). The Scriptures agree. The principle *love your neighbor as (you love) yourself* makes our love for ourselves the rule and measure for our treatment of others. In this case love means to do good. "Since you only do good to yourself; you should only do good to others." This is crucial for human life and challenging. Ever since Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit this self-love can 'get out of hand.' We can love ourselves too much (or even too little, though that seems rarer) and at the expense of others. Furthermore, we can be completely wrong in our judgment about what is good for us or others. This inordinate self-love and our tendency to get things wrong puts us out of joint with objective reality and causes conflict with others, the world, and God. It even leads to conflict within ourselves. We call the condition of inordinate self-love and tendency to error the State of Original Sin.

Why bring this up? Lent is coming soon. Lent is a gift that the Church gives us to practice loving rightly. It is not easy. To love rightly means we love the right things for the right reasons, in the right amount, and in the right way.

**RIGHT THING.** What should we love? We should love every good thing. However, not every good thing deserves all our love. We need to acknowledge that objectively speaking some things have a greater intrinsic value than others. A person is more valuable than a car. If we examine all the good things that exist into categories, we observe that there are two major categories: (1) created goods and (2) uncreated goods. The created goods are all those things which have a beginning. Anything in the universe like a human person, a dog, a piece of art, an athletic event, an accomplishment, a job, a hobby, etc. The uncreated goods, well really that was kind of a trick. There is only one uncreated good, namely God himself. If we put everything in the universe on one side of a scale and God on the other, all of the things of creation are like smoke that a soft breeze blows away. God is the highest good, the One who makes all things Good. Furthermore, he is the only being that can sustain the weight of a person's whole heart. If we give our whole heart to anything else, that created good and the person who offers it collapses under the weight of our great dignity.

**RIGHT REASON.** Why should I love God? We're talking about our intention here. Some might answer like this: *because I want to go to heaven*. Some might say: *I need God to be happy; he makes me feel at peace*. Those are good reasons, but are they the best reasons? And does it matter why I love him so long as I do? You tell me. Does it change your relationship with your friend if they're friendly only because you invite them to Florida every February or if they make you laugh? Doesn't our friendship change if I remain friends when they lose that house in Florida or can't tell jokes anymore? Hasn't my friendship move from something transactional to something personal? So also with God, the best reason is what we mentioned above: he is the highest good. He is truth, goodness, beauty, and love itself. All of us have to start somewhere so if we love God because we want to go to heaven, that's okay. If we love him because it makes us feel good and happy, that's okay too. But we want to get to know him better and grow in our friendship with him. Lent calls us to invite the Lord to reveal the awesomeness of his mystery to us so that even if heaven feels far away and ill-feelings overwhelm us in this vale of tears, we can acclaim with the saints "You, O God, are worthy of all my love. Teach me to love you more!"

**RIGHT AMOUNT.** We can love God too little. We can love ourselves too much. The right amount is not a question of an exact quantity. The "amount" is measured in choices. I manifest what I love when I choose what I will do or not do. If I choose to talk to this person and avoid that person then I love the person I chose. If I choose to pray rather than sleep in, I am choosing to love God. When I choose to attend Mass even though I'll miss a football game or a sporting event, I'm loving God over that game or event. In other words, a simple way to "measure" the amount is the ten commandments. The first three teach us how to love God. We love God when we (a) make him first in our lives by fidelity to prayer. By adoring him more than ourselves. (b) By keeping his name holy. (c) By keeping his day holy through attending Mass on Sundays. (The remaining seven teach us how to love our neighbor.)

**RIGHT WAY.** According to St. Augustine, we can love God according to God or according to man. What is he talking about? Because of the State of Original Sin we can be duped into loving God the wrong way. This, in fact, is what Jesus condemns the Pharisees for in the Gospels. He calls them whitewashed tombs and hypocrites because they choose to love God through the rules they established rather than the Commandments he gave them. This led to great evil for the people, for the reasons I mentioned above. We can do the same thing. We give him everything except what he asks for. And what does he ask for? If the Scriptures teach us anything, it's that we love God by *trusting obedience*. Full stop. Because of Original Sin, we don't always trust that keeping God's commandments will be good for us. We can be suspicious about the teachings of our faith. So we throw everything at God but *trusting obedience*. I choose the people I treat well, I choose the good works I like to do. I go to Mass when I decide to do it. But what has God asked you to do? Keep the Commandments, all of them. Live the Beatitudes, all of them. Love your Neighbor, all of them.

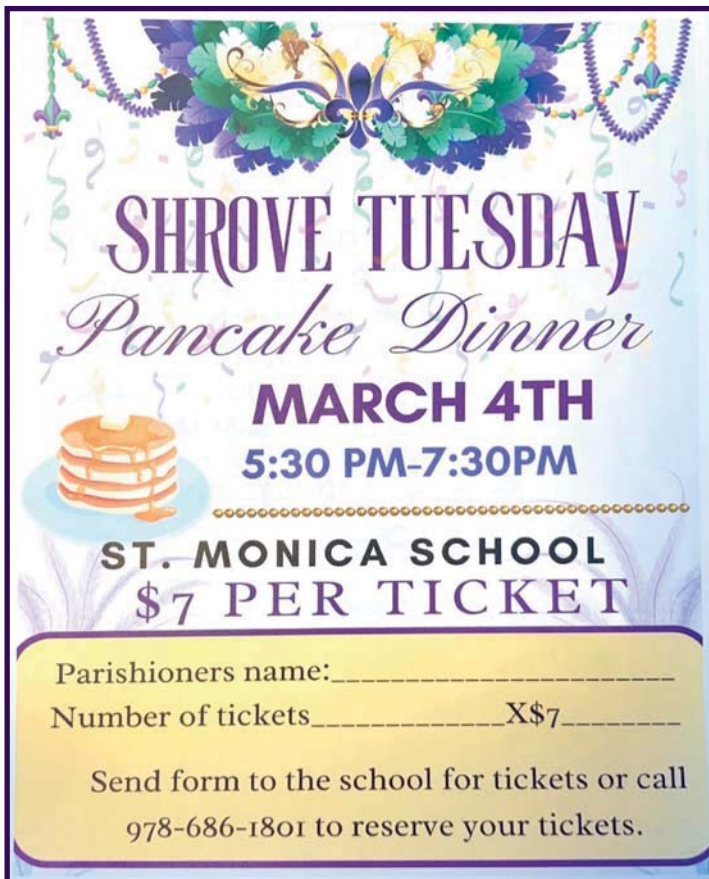
Final point, and this may be what Lent is most often about. It's not easy to love God (or our neighbor). We will fail. The key is not to quit. St. Gregory of Nissa says (referring to learning to love God): "He who climbs never stops going from beginning to beginning, through beginnings that have no end." Lent is about making a start. Start with trusting obedience. Start by trying to keep the 10 commandments. When you find you haven't accomplished it perfectly, go to confession, and then start again. And then repeat. Again. And Again. Leave the rest to God who, you will find, is trustworthy.

**SECOND COLLECTION  
SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD**

This week's second collection will support the Church in those underdeveloped areas of the world where there are insufficient resources for evangelization and formation Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the church in Africa and in Central and Eastern Europe and three important national Catholic missions: The Military Archdiocese, Home Missions, and the Black and Indian Missions.

Your generosity to this collection will help fund the spiritual, educational, and humanitarian needs of the Church around the world. For more information about each of these organizations go to their websites:

1. CRS: [www.usccb.org/catholic-relief](http://www.usccb.org/catholic-relief);
2. Church in Africa: [www.usccb.org/africa](http://www.usccb.org/africa)
3. Church in Central and Eastern Europe: [www.usccb.org/ceee](http://www.usccb.org/ceee)
4. Military Archdiocese: [www.milarch.org](http://www.milarch.org)
5. Catholic Home Missions: [www.usccb.org/home-missions](http://www.usccb.org/home-missions)
6. Black and Indian Missions:  
<https://blackandindianmission.org>



**SHROVE TUESDAY**  
*Pancake Dinner*  
**MARCH 4TH**  
**5:30 PM-7:30PM**

**ST. MONICA SCHOOL**  
**\$7 PER TICKET**

Parishioners name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X\$7 \_\_\_\_\_

Send form to the school for tickets or call  
978-686-1801 to reserve your tickets.



**St Patrick's Dinner**  
**Saturday March 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**5:30-9:00pm**  
**St Lucy's Lower Church Hall**

K of C will be selling tickets after all masses  
at St. Monica & St. Lucy on  
Feb 22/23 and Mar 1/2  
Tickets are \$35 ea. Tables of 10 can be reserved.  
Please contact Kevin Quinn at 978-618-3499



**All are welcome!**  
**Tuesday, February 25th**  
**St. Lucy Church Hall**  
**7-8:30pm**

**Ultrasign Invite!**

A Catholic gathering with prayer, music and sharing about our faith journey walking with Jesus.

**RESPECT FOR LIFE EDUCATION  
ADVOCACY FOR LIFE: A SUCCESSFUL APPROACH**

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025  
Time: 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
(includes 15 minutes of Q &A)

Register using this link: <https://forms.gle/R47a4yTdgpGLxhDV6>

The Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to the event. If you do not receive it, please email: Kathy Parsons at [Mk.Pars4@verizon.net](mailto:Mk.Pars4@verizon.net)

**STEUBENVILLE EAST**

**JULY 25-27      SPRINGFIELD, MA**

Steubenville East is a 3-Day youth conference for high school students that is held every summer. This is a great opportunity for students to grow in their Catholic faith alongside thousands of other high school students.

**\$50 deposit DUE March 1st**

To sign up or for more information please contact Sandra Freitas at 978-376-7309 or [sandrafreitas613@gmail.com](mailto:sandrafreitas613@gmail.com)

2025

**LENT****ALMSGIVING**

“If you hope for mercy, show mercy. If you look for kindness, show kindness. If you want to receive, give. If you ask for yourself what you deny to others, your asking is a mockery.” - St. Peter Chrysologus

**FAST & ABSTINENCE**

When Christians fast, we imitate Jesus, declaring with him, “Man does not live by bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

**PRAYER**

“Let us not say our prayers thoughtlessly. Think about what we say and, what’s more, to whom we say them.”

**LENTEN CALENDAR**

**MONDAYS** | Pilgrimage of Hope: Reflections on the Jubilee Year 6-7pm | St. Monica Church | Fr. Michael Harvey

**TUESDAYS** | Rosary & Meditation 6-7pm | Gethsemane Chapel | Deacons

**WEDNESDAYS** | Eucharistic Adoration & Confessions 6-7pm | St. Lucy Church | Fr. Marcos Pena

**THURSDAYS** | Evangelization & the Church Class 7-8pm | St. Lucy Schoolhouse | Fr. Marcos Pena

**FRIDAYS** | Stations of the Cross & Lenten Meal 6-7pm | St. Lucy Church

**SATURDAYS** | Eucharistic Adoration 9:30am-2:30pm | Gethsemane Chapel

**ASH WEDNESDAY | MARCH 5**

6:30am - Mass with Distribution of Ashes (St. Monica)

9:00am - Mass with Distribution of Ashes (St. Lucy)

12:00pm - Mass with Distribution of Ashes (St. Lucy)

1:00pm - School Mass with Distribution of Ashes (St. Monica)

all welcome

7:00pm - Mass with Distribution of Ashes (St. Monica)

**THE JUBILEE PRAYER**

Father in heaven, may the *faith* you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of *charity* enkindled in our hearts by the Holy spirit, reawaken in us the blessed *hope* for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.

FEBRUARY 8 & 9

**St. Monica - \$5,449.00      St. Lucy - \$3,578.00**

Weekly Offertory needed to sustain parish operations: St. Monica - \$10,000 | St. Lucy - \$6,000

*Thank you for your continued generous contribution to the mission of our parishes.*



**Yes, I CAN...** We are in need of Hamburger Helper, Canned Carrots, Canned Chicken, Canned Fruit & Canned Baked Beans. Donations can be dropped off anytime at the entrances to St. Lucy Church and the side door of Gethsemane Chapel at St. Monica Church.

**BULLETIN DEADLINE**

Mondays @ 10 am. Please email all bulletin notices to parishoffice.stlm@gmail.com.

**GETHSEMANE CHAPEL AT ST. MONICA CHURCH**  
Open 7 days per week from 6am-7pm

**CHAPEL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ST. LUCY CANDLE SHRINE**  
Open Mon-Sat from 9am-5pm

**BAPTISMS** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month, 2:00pm at St. Monica's | 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, 2:00pm at St. Lucy's  
Please call the Parish Offices at least 2 months in advance to schedule.

**MARRIAGES** Please call the Parish Offices at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date and before booking a reception hall.

**MASS SCHEDULE** SAT 4 pm (VIGIL) both parishes  
SUN 9 am & 12 pm St. Monica  
10:30 am St. Lucy  
MON/TUES/THURS/FRI 9 am St. Lucy  
SATURDAY 9 am St. Monica

**CONFESSIONS**  
SAT 3-3:45pm at both parishes

**METHUEN CATHOLIC**

THE PARISHES OF ST. MONICA AND ST. LUCY

**PARISH OFFICES**

254 Merrimack Street, Methuen, MA 01844  
978.683.1193

www.methuencatholic.org

**Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9am - 1pm  
Closed Wed**



**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY**  
978.686.9573

**PASTORAL STAFF**

Fr. Marcos Peña	Administrator
<b>frmarcosmethuen@gmail.com</b>	
Fr. Michael Harvey	Parochial Vicar
Deacon John Kobrenski	Permanent Deacon
Deacon John Pierce	Senior Deacon
Kera Mansour	Business Manager
<b>methuencatholic@gmail.com</b>	
Karl Jackson	Director of Parish Life
<b>faithformation.stlm@gmail.com</b>	
Joseph Lundin	Music Director
Christine Ryan	Administrative Assistant
<b>parishoffice.stlm@gmail.com</b>	



**ST. MONICA SCHOOL**  
212 Lawrence Street, Methuen, MA 01844  
(978) 686-1801  
www.saintmonicaschoolmethuen.org

**SCHOOL STAFF**

Donna Henderson	Principal
Ann Marie Collins	Administrative Assistant
<b>smsoffice@methuencatholic.org</b>	

ENTRANCE ANTIPHONPsalm 13:6

I trust in your mercy, Lord, and rejoice that you have saved me.  
Let me sing a song of your goodness, Lord Most High.

ENTRANCE HYMNAmazing Grace

Amazing grace!  
How sweet the sound  
That saved \*a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

PENITENTIAL ACT - GLORIARefer to pew cardFIRST READING1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

In those days, Saul went down to the desert of Ziph with three thousand picked men of Israel, to search for David in the desert of Ziph. So David and Abishai went among Saul's soldiers by night and found Saul lying asleep within the barricade, with his spear thrust into the ground at his head and Abner and his men sleeping around him. Abishai whispered to David: "God has delivered your enemy into your grasp this day. Let me nail him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I will not need a second thrust!" But David said to Abishai, "Do not harm him, for who can lay hands on the LORD's anointed and remain unpunished?" So David took the spear and the water jug from their place at Saul's head, and they got away without anyone's seeing or knowing or awakening. All remained asleep, because the LORD had put them into a deep slumber. Going across to an opposite slope, David stood on a remote hilltop at a great distance from Abner, son of Ner, and the troops. He said: "Here is the king's spear. Let an attendant come over to get it. The LORD will reward each man for his justice and faithfulness. Today, though the LORD delivered you into my grasp, I would not harm the LORD's anointed.

RESPONSORIAL PSALMPsalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13**R. The Lord is kind and merciful**

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. **R.**

He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills.  
He redeems your life from destruction, crowns you with kindness and compassion. **R.**

Merciful and gracious is the LORD, slow to anger and abounding in kindness.  
Not according to our sins does he deal with us, nor does he requite us according to our crimes. **R.**

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us.  
As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him. **R.**

**PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL**

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



SECOND READING1 Corinthians 15:45-49

Brothers and sisters: It is written, The first man, Adam, became a living being, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. But the spiritual was not first; rather the natural and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, earthly; the second man, from heaven. As was the earthly one, so also are the earthly, and as is the heavenly one, so also are the heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATIONJohn 13:34**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

I give you a new commandment, says the Lord:  
love one another as I have loved you.

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**GOSPELLuke 6:27-38

Jesus said to his disciples: "To you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic. Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount. But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. "Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give, and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.

CREEDRefer to pew cardOFFERTORY HYMNBe Not Afraid

You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst. You shall wander far in safety though you do not know the way. You shall speak your words in foreign lands and all will understand. You shall see the face of God and live.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown. If you walk amid the burning flames, you shall not be harmed. If you stand before the pow'r of hell and death is at your side, know that I am with you through it all.

**Be not afraid.****I go before you always.****Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.**

Blessed are your poor, for the kingdom shall be theirs. Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh. And if wicked tongues insult and hate you all because of me, blessed, blessed are you!

SANCTUS - MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION - AGNUS DEIRefer to pew cardCOMMUNION ANTIPHONJohn 11:27

Lord, I have learned to believe that you are the Christ, Son of the living God, who have come into the world.



COMMUNION HYMNBread of Life

1. Bread of life and cup of hope, we come as gift to  
 2. Lov-ing Lord, Cre - a - tor God, o - pen our eyes to  
 3. Liv - ing Word, O Son of God, your love shows us the

1. you.            ▽ Change our hearts; fill us with peace. Trans-form our  
 2. see       the good that lives in each of us, that called the  
 3. way       that we may live in har - mo - ny, and from you

1. lives a - new.                   O - pen our eyes so that we might see  
 2. world to be.                   And when we fail to — see the good,  
 3. nev - er stray.               Wipe all op-pres-sion \_ from our midst;

1. your pres-ence in one an - oth - er.       Your life, poured out in  
 2. when friend-ships fal - ter and crum-ble,   give us the cour - age  
 3. give us a love for all peo - ple.       Your song of jus - tice

1. love to-day,                   u - nites us all in you.  
 2. to for-give                   that we may live in peace.  
 3. sing in us,                   to live for peace to - day.

RECESSIONAL HYMNCity of God

Verses 1, 2

1. A - wake from your slum - ber!       A - rise from your  
 2. We are sons of the morn-ing;       we are daugh-ters of

1. sleep!   A new day is dawn-ing       for all those who weep.  
 2. day.   The One who has loved us       has bright-ened our way.

1. The peo - ple in dark-ness       have seen a great light.   The  
 2. The Lord of all kind-ness       has called us to be a

to Refrain

1. Lord of our long-ing                   has con-quired the night.  
 2. light for his peo-ple               to set their hearts free.

Refrain

Let us build the cit-y of God.       May our tears be

turned in - to danc - ing!       For the Lord, our light and our

love,                   has turned the night in - to day!

3

ST. MONICA PARISH

**Saturday, February 22**

9:00am Joseph Lavigne  
Yvette Moran  
Mike Milnes

4:00pm Arleen Marsan

**Sunday, February 23**

9:00am For the Parishioners of  
St. Lucy & St. Monica

12:00pm Jeanne Brown  
Gratien Michaud  
Michael E. Basile, Jr.

**Saturday, March 1**

9:00am FIRST SATURDAY MASS

4:00pm Aileen Duncan  
Valorie Duncan  
Mr. & Mrs. Hurley Duncan  
Mr. & Mrs. Mecleor Raza

**Sunday, March 2**

9:00am For the Parishioners of  
St. Lucy & St. Monica

12:00pm Donald C. MacMillan  
Ronald P. MacMillan



ST. LUCY PARISH

**Saturday, February 22**

4:00pm William & Margaret Collins  
Julie Morley

**Sunday, February 23**

10:30am Lino Brosco  
Douglas H. Knapp  
Lucille & Joseph Pappalardo

**Monday, February 24**

9:00am Stephen Bellingreri

**Tuesday, February 25**

9:00am Vincenzo Lazzara

**Wednesday, February 26**

9:00am Walter & Antoinette Gebala  
Walter Gebala, Jr.  
Ella Gebala

**Thursday, February 27**

9:00am Alice Beverley

**Friday, February 28**

9:00am Real Taschereau  
Gerard Taschereau  
Bertrand LeBlanc  
Gail Taschereau

**Saturday, March 1**

4:00pm Manuel Melo

**Sunday, March 2**

10:30am Fidele & Loretta Boudreau  
Rita & James Chiara  
Joseph Rapazzo  
Vincenzo & Isabella Dadducci  
Vincenzo, Jenny, Paul, Sr. & Anthony Meli

PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

DAY	DATE	PRIEST	SEMINARIAN
Sun	02/23/25	Fr. Robert Kennedy	Timothy Walsh SJS Boston
Mon	02/24/25	Fr. Joseph Robinson	Joseph Beale SJS Portland, ME
Tues	02/25/25	Fr. Mark Storey	Paolo Carvalho SJS Boston
Wed	02/26/25	Fr. Stephen Madden	Nick Colon SJS Boston
Thurs	02/27/25	Fr. Matthew Norwood	Br. Jonathan Maria Ebert OCD
Fri	02/28/25	Fr. Thomas Reilly	Adam Habershaw SJS Providence
Sat	03/01/25	Fr. Brian McMahon	Ryan Henderson SJS Boston



PRAYER CORNER

Please pray for Joy M., William T., Chris B., Kathy P., Jeff H., Brian V., Mike B., Louie C., Phyllis T. & Patrice K.

Please pray for those whose funerals we recently offered. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



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