



# Paulist Center Boston

Attentive to the Holy Spirit and nourished by vibrant liturgy, we are a Catholic community that welcomes all, fosters healing and reconciliation, and acts for justice.



DECEMBER 23 - 24, 2023 - 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
DECEMBER 30 - 31, 2023 - FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

### WEEKEND IN-PERSON MASSES

**Saturday** 5pm  
**Sunday** 10am  
6pm

### WEEKDAY IN-PERSON MASSES

**Monday - Friday**  
12:05pm

### CONFESSIONS

**Monday and Friday**, 11:00-11:45am, and by appointment

## CHRIST IS BORN TO MARY AND JOSEPH, FOR SHEPHERDS, MAGI, AND EVERYONE IN BETWEEN



**Welcome!** Whether this is your first time or your four-thousandth time worshipping with the Paulist Center Community, we are glad that you are with us. We are an active, intentional Roman Catholic community. No matter your religious affiliation, you are most welcome to participate in any of our activities that speak to your spiritual values.

This Christmas, we celebrate a special anniversary. On Christmas night in 1223, in the small Sanctuary of Greccio in Lazio, Italy, St. Francis of Assisi created the first Nativity scene. Hoping to help the local townspeople better understand the humble circumstances of Christ's birth, Francis brought together a stable, some hay, an ox, an ass, a woman, a man, and a baby. While much of what happened in Lazio 800 years ago has been lost to history, it's clear that the townspeople connected with the Christmas story that night in new, more personal ways.

Even today, when people openly question the need for religious belief, the Nativity scenes inspired by St. Francis give us a lot to contemplate.

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## MASS SCHEDULE FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent:

- 5pm Saturday, December 23 and 10am\* Sunday, December 24
- There is no 6pm Mass on Sunday, December 24

### Solemnity of the Nativity:

- 5pm\* and 8pm Sunday, December 24
- 10am Monday, December 25

### Weekdays of the Octave of Christmas:

- Office closed Tuesday, December 26. No Mass that day.
- 12:05pm Wednesday, December 27 through Friday, December 29



### Feast of the Holy Family:

- 5pm Saturday, December 30 and 10am\* & 6pm Sunday, December 31

### Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

(no obligation in 2024):

- 10am Monday, January 1

### Weekdays of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Christmas:

- 12:05pm Tuesday, January 2 - Friday, January 5

### Solemnity of the Epiphany:

- 5pm Saturday, January 6 and 10am\* & 6pm Sunday, January 7

\*Livestreamed & recorded on [youtube.com/ThePaulistCenter](https://www.youtube.com/ThePaulistCenter).

The **order of worship** for each livestreamed Mass is available at [paulistcenter.org/order-of-worship/](https://paulistcenter.org/order-of-worship/).

*Please note that the office is closed December 25, December 26, and January 1.*

*There is no 12:05pm Mass on any of those 3 days, and there are no confessions 11:00-11:45am on either Monday.*

## RECENT VATICAN DECLARATIONS REGARDING PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQIA

The Vatican has issued a number of high-profile declarations regarding sexuality in the past three months, including a November 8 statement that transgender people are allowed to be baptized and serve as godparents/witnesses at baptisms and weddings, and a December 18 declaration that priests can offer a blessing to a same-sex couple as "a means to increase their trust in God" and "nurture openness to the transcendence, mercy, and closeness to God... which is no small thing in the world in which we live. It is a seed of the Holy Spirit that must be nurtured, not hindered." It will take time for us to discern the practical implications in parts of these declarations, but let us be absolutely clear in the meantime: the Paulist Center continues to embrace and support our beloved LGBTQIA members and their families & allies, as we have done for decades. Stay tuned. Merry Christmas!

**Welcome!** If you are considering becoming a member, please fill out a membership inquiry form that can be found on our [website](https://www.paulistcenter.org). You may also call the Reception Desk at 617-742-4460. After returning the form, a staff member will contact you.

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## LIVE-STREAMED MASS LINKS



- 10am, Sunday, December 24** 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent
- 5pm, Sunday, December 24** Solemnity of the Nativity
- 10am, Sunday, December 31** Feast of the Holy Family
- 10am, Sunday, January 7** Solemnity of the Epiphany

At the time of each livestream, the appropriate **Order of Worship** will be available at [paulistcenter.org/order-of-worship](http://paulistcenter.org/order-of-worship).

## CREATION CARE MINISTRY



In the Creation Care ministry, Paulist Center members work on:

- Spiritual transformation – finding God in all creation
- Lifestyle change - walking the talk in personal choices
- Advocacy - working toward systemic and policy change

Our next meeting will be on **Zoom, Monday, January 8 at 5pm. All are welcome.**  
For the zoom link email [paulistcentercreationcare@gmail.com](mailto:paulistcentercreationcare@gmail.com).

## RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY GROUP

The **Racial Justice Advocacy Group (RJAG)** seeks to **promote racial equity** through events and programs within our Paulist Center Community and also through involvement in racial justice work within Greater Boston. Monthly meetings take place the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm via Zoom, with actions in between. Our next meeting is January 9. **All are welcome!**



Contact **Tom Sharkey** at [sharkey.te@verizon.net](mailto:sharkey.te@verizon.net) or 978-

**886-1608** for more information.

## IMMIGRATION ADVOCACY GROUP

Immigration Advocacy Group (IAG) members volunteer to **help resettle** Afghan, Ukrainian, Haitian and other **refugees** and **asylum seekers**.



Additionally, we **advocate** for state and federal **policies** that support immigrants.

If you'd like to volunteer, or just know more, please email [paulistcenterimmigration@gmail.com](mailto:paulistcenterimmigration@gmail.com).

**All are welcome!**

## LGBTQIA MINISTRY

The Paulist Center welcomes LGBTQIA identified individuals and allies. The **LGBTQIA Ministry** hosts occasional events and social gatherings. In addition to bulletin announcements, information is shared via a confidential email listserv. If you'd like to be added to the email list, contact **Bob Bordone** at [bobbordone@gmail.com](mailto:bobbordone@gmail.com). All pastoral staff members are available as resources and support for anyone in the LGBTQIA community as well as friends and family members.



## YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Welcome to Young Adult Ministry! We are a community of young adults (18-39 years old), focused on living out our faith through community, service, and spirituality. We host events every month, and we hope you stop by! Our first event in 2024 is January 17.



**Wednesday Night Supper Club:** Come join other young adults in service of our Paulist Center Community on **Wednesday, January 17 at 5:30pm** to serve, and/or **7:00pm** for clean-up. Afterward, we'll go out for drinks together nearby! To learn more about **Wednesday Night Supper Club**, see page 4.

**Schedule a 1-on-1 Meeting with Gus:** If you're a young adult looking for community, please reach out to our Young Adult Minister, **Gus**, at [youngadults@paulistcenter.org](mailto:youngadults@paulistcenter.org) to express interest in a 1-on-1 meeting. 1-on-1's are a great way to learn more about Young Adult Ministry, to share your ideas and past experiences, and to talk about getting involved at the Paulist Center!



*(Continued from page 1.)*

In this year when war threatens all people who live in the land of Jesus' birth, no matter their religion or ethnicity, we are all too aware how much must be done to bring about peace on earth. We fervently pray that all the people who live there can find a way to flourish as God intends. We also pray for people facing violence in Ukraine and so many other places that don't make the headlines as often. We pray for the more than 100 million people — 1.2% of the world's population! — who are immigrants, nearly a third of whom are refugees. We pray for a world tottering on the edge of crises of poverty, inadequate healthcare, injustice, and climate change.

What can our prayers accomplish? We cannot achieve peace, save the planet, solve the refugee crisis, or justly solve economic imbalance without God. If we can quiet ourselves long enough, God will provide the wisdom we need... and perhaps work some miracles, too. But when we gaze upon that nativity scene, we see God, in Christ, flanked by Mary and Joseph, two people who trusted enough to allow God to work through them. God also needs us to make change happen.

We at the Paulist Center do not claim to have all the solutions to the problems facing our world. But when so many people see only hopelessness, we still see hope. In so many of the problems of our world today, we are all victims of competing narratives. We are being asked to pick between two contrasting, simplified stories, when the truth lies somewhere in the middle. Neither Israelis nor Palestinians, neither Republicans nor Democrats, neither liberals nor traditionalists, have the full grasp of truth, beauty, and dignity that God envisions.

The Nativity scene inspired by St. Francis shows us disparate people can share a common narrative. Shepherds were among the lowest of the low in Judean society. The prevailing thinking was that no one would take a job out in the elements 24/7 unless they couldn't find a better job. The magi were wealthy foreigners (probably from modern day Iran) who were not Jewish, and probably did not speak Aramaic. Mary and Joseph would soon be refugees. Yet all these people came together as part of a common narrative we tell of the adoration of Christ, the very heart of creation.

Today at the Paulist Center, we continue to come together, to journey together as we each wrestle with our questions. We search together for answers provided by God's presence among us, strengthened by our diversity. Since 1957, when people began flocking to the Paulist Center on their lunch breaks to learn about the Catholic faith, this has been a place of innovative evangelization. It was among the first places to minister to certain marginalized groups, including divorced and separated people, women yearning for larger leadership roles within the Church, and LGBTQ+ persons. Our community is filled with passionate people dedicated to issues of charity and justice, as you can read throughout the rest of this bulletin. Even today, in a Church that seems to be greying, we have a remarkable number of families and young adults who negotiate the weekly challenges of commuting and/or parking to join us.

On behalf of the entire Paulist Center staff and worshipping community, we warmly welcome you and wish you a blessed and holy Christmas season. God understands our challenges. Christmas demonstrates that even when things seem far from perfect, God can still find a way. As we transition to a new year, we recall these words of Pope Francis: "Joy adapts and changes, but it always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved" (Evangelii Gaudium, #6). We are infinitely loved by the God who comes to dwell among us.

 Rich Andre, C.S.P.

Rich Andre, C. S. P.  
Director

## **GIFTS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST: CONVERSATION AND/OR COFFEE**



**A**fter the 10am Mass on **January 7**, we are hoping to host an interfaith conversation in the chapel called "**Finding God in Times of Violence & War.**" Despite our best efforts, we still haven't secured speakers yet.

If this event does not happen, we'll celebrate the Epiphany with a Community Coffee in the auditorium instead.



## STEWARDSHIP

The Paulist Center receives no funding from outside sources. All costs to operate our ministries for both members and the wider Boston community, maintain the building, and pay our staff are supported solely by your financial donations. *We are so grateful for your financial support!*

**Two ways to give to the Paulist Center:**

1. To make a one-time or recurring donation to the Center using your bank account or credit card, click on this link <https://tinyurl.com/DonatePaulistCenter>, or scan the QR code.
2. Text a whole dollar donation to **844-899-7511**; this will be designated as your "Weekend Offering."



## COMMUNITY GIFT

The Paulist Center gives 5% of our annual offertory to 52 other charitable organizations with missions consonant with our own. These organizations receive an equal amount from our annual offertory.

The weekend of **December 23 and 24** we raise up **United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Boston**. UNCF Boston is charged with raising funds to support UNCF's mission of getting highly motivated deserving students to and through college at UNCF-member institutions and more than 1,100 colleges and universities across the country.

The weekend of **December 30 and 31** we raise up **Penelope's Place**, an emergency shelter for families and individuals fleeing domestic violence.



## FLOWERS FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON



We are still accepting donations towards our chapel Christmas decorations, including our poinsettias. Suggested donation is \$10. Contributions can be made at the front desk during the week from 10:30am-4:30pm; by using the "Flower Donation" envelopes in the pews; or go to **Donate Online**, and choose "Flower Donation" and note who it is "in honor of, or in memory of" in the space provided. All donations received by January 2 will be listed in our January 7 bulletin.



## CALENDAR YEAR-END GIFTS TO THE CENTER WARMLY WELCOMED

As you are likely aware, your financial gifts are key to the Paulist Center's financial sustainability. While we did not bombard you with Giving Tuesday requests, please know that we warmly welcome calendar year-end gifts, which are very helpful to our budget. If you wish to donate stock, remember the Paulist Center in your will, or make a qualified charitable distribution, please be in touch with **Patty Simpson**, [patty@paulistcenter.org](mailto:patty@paulistcenter.org) or 617-948-2428, for specifics on our legal name, tax ID and account information for transfers.



*Thank you for ALL you give in so many ways to the Center!*

## EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY

The Paulist Center teams up with the **Greater Boston Food Bank** to collect food for a **nominal fee**. Three **volunteer shoppers** make weekly visits. The food pantry is on the first floor, two doors down from the reception area. There, **four volunteer** on **Tuesdays from 1:00 - 2:30pm**, distribute food that **three different volunteers** have previously shelved and bagged. We give out bags of groceries that feed **over 500 people a month**.

Please contact **Raoul Vincent** at [karlenevincent@gmail.com](mailto:karlenevincent@gmail.com) for more information.



## WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER CLUB

Every Wednesday night in the Paulist Center Auditorium since 1969, at least **25 volunteers** serve a hot, delicious, dignified, sit-down meal for our neighbors who are hungry. Funding comes from a variety of individuals and groups, including Project Bread's Walk for Hunger. If you are interested in becoming a cook, contact **Emily Hankle**. To arrange for a group to volunteer, contact the **Supper Club Team**.

For more information or to volunteer with set-up, serving, or clean-up, please contact **Jeff Buckley**.



**Pastoral Staff:** Rich Andre, CSP; Normand Gouin; Gus Kellerman; Susan Rutkowski; Patricia Simpson; Rick Walsh, CSP

**Administrative Staff:** Barbara Dunay; Dorothy Messenger; Rob Smyser; Sal Whooley

**Custodial Staff:** Alvaro Enamorado; Timmy Valle

(See our [website](#) for staff contact information.)

**Pastoral Council Chair:** Deb Heimel  
[pccouncil@paulistcenter.org](mailto:pccouncil@paulistcenter.org)

**Finance Committee Chair:** Mary Lesko

**Worship Committee Chair:** Claire Byrne  
[worship@paulistcenter.org](mailto:worship@paulistcenter.org)