

Mary Immaculate of Lourdes

(Formerly St. Mary's Parish, 1870-1910)

Newton/Needham, Massachusetts

Newton & Needham's Oldest Roman Catholic Parish



October 14th, 2012 in the Year of Grace
The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost and
the Twenty-Eighth Sunday of the Year

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Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish

270 Elliot Street Newton, MA 02464

617 244 0558

Parish Staff

PASTOR: FATHER CHARLES JEREMIAH HIGGINS
VISITING ASSISTANT PRIESTS: FATHER ALVARO SILVA
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: JEAN JOHNSON (DIRECTOR)
PATTI STROM (LATIN MASS CHILDREN'S CATECHISM)
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: MRS. BOBBIE HOFFMANN
PARISH SECRETARY: MARGIE BIBBO
FIRST SACRISTAN: MANNY GOGUEN
SACRISTANS: FRANCIS GALLAGHER, CAMERON MACKENZIE,
TOM GOGUEN, PETER GOGUEN
SEXTON: SEAN WARD (RET. CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT)
RECTORY HOUSEKEEPER: LAURIE SPINELLI

Telephones

Parish Office: 617-244-0558 / FAX 617-965-4815

Email: miol@parishmail.com

Website: www.maryimmaculatenewton.org

Parish Cemetery of Saint Mary's, Needham
GUARDIAN ESTATE MANAGEMENT INC.

Mr. Ron Goguen, Superintendent

Guardian Staff on-site for service hours Mon.-Fri.,

9a.m.-3 p.m., April through November

For all Cemetery business, please call Margie

Bibbo at the Parish Office: 617-244-0558

SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS FOR THE SUPPORT OF OUR PARISH

*"What return can I make to the Lord for all His
kindness to Me?"*



**OFFERTORY FOR SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 7th: \$4,418.00 +
\$578.00 (OTHER OFFERINGS) =
\$4,996.00**

**PARISH AIR-CONDITIONING APPEAL:
\$4,318.00**

**SECOND COLLECTION FOR NEXT SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 20th: WORLD MISSIONS**

Mass Schedule

Sunday: 4:00 PM (Saturday Vigil), 7:30 AM
9:00 AM, 10:30 AM (Traditional Latin), 5:30 PM

Weekdays: Monday—Friday 7:30 AM

Traditional Latin Low Mass:

Mon., Wed. & Fri., 12:30 PM; Tues. & Thurs.,
5:30 PM, Sat. 9:00 AM.

Holy Days: if Mon-Fri., 7:30 AM., 12:30, 5:30 &
7:30 PM.; if on Saturday, 9 AM & 12:30 PM

SACRAMENTS

Baptism: Upon request. Please contact Father Higgins.

Penance (Confession):

Saturday 8:30-9:00 A.M. and 3:30-4:00 PM
Sunday, before and after the 10:30 a.m. AM Mass,
First Fridays (before the 12:30 p.m. Mass)

Matrimony:

Engaged couples should make arrangements with the
parish church so as to allow for adequate sacramental
preparation (six months), including a Pre-Cana program.

Pastoral Care of the Sick

Anointing of the Sick (for those who are gravely ill or
facing serious surgery); **Communion of the Sick for
the Homebound:** Please contact Father Higgins.

OCTOBER IS THE MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY



(Front Cover: Mass of Confirmation, Mary Immaculate of Lourdes, September 30th, A.D. 2012. The lighted candles carried by the Confirmandi represent the light of their baptismal grace. Just before they received the Sacrament of Confirmation, the candidates renewed their baptismal vows, answering 'I do' to the 3-fold renunciation of sin and the 3-fold Profession of Faith. Photo by Paul Eldridge.)

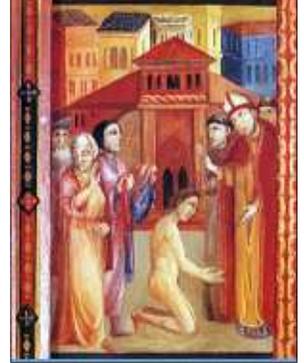
PREACHING THE WORD OUT OF SEASON

In his Second Epistle to Timothy, Chapter 4, St. Paul the Apostle gives this command to his younger disciple: *“Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke, in all patience and doctrine.”*

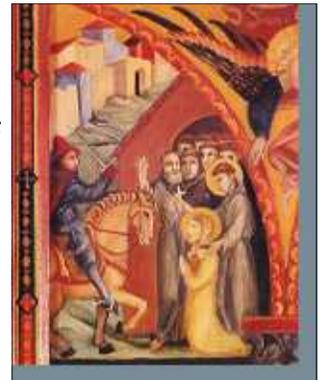
In A.D. 1209 St. Francis of Assisi (Feast-day, October 4th) began to preach the Christian Gospel to people of his home region of Umbria with such energy and freshness that it ignited a popular religious renewal to the rest of Europe and beyond. Francis, three years before, had dramatically renounced all his inheritance rights as the only son of a rich merchant in the presence of the Bishop of Assisi, going so far as

surrender even his clothes back to his father. Shortly after, he went to live among the lepers, who had been cast out into the forest for their frightful disease.

Coming out of his obscurity, Francis preached repentance from sin and peace and reconciliation among his neighbors. He preached with great power, however, and was not cowed by any human respect. As one of his early biographers, St. Bonaventure, describes it:



And because he had first impressed upon his own mind by his works what he endeavored to impress upon others by his words, fearing reproof from no man, he preached the truth with great confidence. He was not accustomed to handle the sins of man delicately, but pierced them with the sword of the Spirit, nor did he spare their sinful lives, but rebuked them sharply and boldly. He spoke to great and small with equal constancy of mind, and with a like joyfulness of spirit, whether to many or to few; people of every age and sex came forth to see this man, newly given to the world by God, to look upon him and listen to his words.



St. Francis of Assisi's unction was of a high degree which no preacher should presume to imitate as a style. Nonetheless, it is much to be wondered at, with all of the market-style strategizing on how to “get people back to Church”, is there any thought given to the solemn charge: *“be instant in season, out of season...”* *(Fr. Higgins)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark Your
Calendar



Mary Immaculate of
Lourdes Parish welcomes
FR. GEORGE W. RUTLER

Convert, Priest, and Scholar
as a guest speaker

**“Crisis of Saints—Holiness in the Year of
Faith”**

Wednesday, October 17th, A.D. 2012, 6:00 p.m.,
Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish Church,
lower church hall



*“As each Mass is an offering of the one
perfect Sacrifice of Calvary and is not a
New Passion, so the gifts of the Holy
Spirit need not be added to; there must
be rather new souls confirmed in them as
history grandly cuts its grueling way in
time. Pentecost is for all time, and the
time to come will be renewed by the Holy
Spirit when human spirits learn to
distinguish things innocent from things
naïve.”—A Crisis of Saints*

Professor O. Carter
Snead, Professor of Law
at the University of
Notre Dame, will give a
talk entitled:
**PHYSICIAN ASSISTED
SUICIDE:
OBJECTIONS IN
PRINCIPLE AND IN
PRUDENCE**



Monday, October 15th, 2012 at 7 o'clock p.m.
MONTROSE SCHOOL, 29 North St., Medfield, MA,
02052

This event is open to the public and free of charge.
Contact: Ellen Baker, Director of Advising & Parent
Enrichment, 508.359.2423, ext. 319.
ebaker@montroseschool.org



**“BLESSED ARE THEY WHO GIVE THE FLOWER OF
THEIR DAYS, AND THEIR STRENGTH OF SOUL
AND BODY TO HIM: BLESSED ARE THEY WHO IN
THEIR YOUTH TURN TO HIM WHO GAVE HIS
LIFE FOR THEM, AND WOULD FAIN GIVE IT TO
THEM, AND IMPLANT IT IN THEM, THAT THEY
MAY LIVE FOREVER”**

—BLESSED JOHN HENRY CARDINAL NEWMAN



Recently two of
our parishioners,
Brian O’Hanlon
and Theresa
Benoit, visited Fr.
Blazek in his new
parish of the Gesù
in Cleveland,
Ohio.

Father displays
one of the new
vestments
especially made
for him, made in
Australia, thanks
to the
generosity of so

many Mary Immaculate parishioners who
contributed to the joint gift we presented him from
the whole parish at his first Mass of Thanksgiving.

**THE PARISH HOLY NAME MEN’S GROUP
WILL MEET IN THE LOWER RECTORY
CONFERENCE ROOM AT 12:15 P.M. TODAY.
NEW MEMBERS AND INQUIRERS WELCOME
TO ATTEND.**

The Holy Name Men will lead us in the Litany of the
Holy Name before the 10:30 a.m. Mass today.

INVITATION TO SODALITY RETREAT

All ladies of the parish are invited to join the Sodality for its annual retreat. The retreat will be on Saturday, October 20th, from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at St. Anne's convent, Still River, MA. A simple lunch will be provided. The Salesian spirituality of St. Francis de Sales will be specifically addressed to Catholic ladies. The Retreat Master will be Canon Jean-Marie Moreau, rector of St. Anthony of Padua Oratory in West Orange, NJ, and member of the

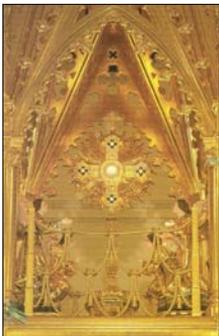


Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest. Please call or e-mail Jeanette Pappin for further information: RSVP by October 16th.

jeanette.pappin@gmail.com 781-964-4448

Each Mass has an infinite, immense value that we can never fully understand.

—St. John Marie Baptiste Vianney, Curé d'Ars



“WINGS” (Women in God's Spirit) All women of Mary Immaculate of Lourdes ate warmly invited to attend.

Wednesday, October 17th: “The Eucharist”. Fr. Dermot Roache, S.M.A., a frequent celebrant at St. Bartholomew's Parish, is director of the House of Studies of the Society of African

Missions in Dedham. The S.M.A. is a community of Catholic missionaries who come from around the world with a commitment to serve the people of Africa. Fr. Roache will speak about the Eucharist: Sacrament Most Holy.

WINGS meets Wednesday mornings from 9:45-11:30 a.m. in the Linse Room at Saint Joseph's Parish, Needham.

For more details, please visit the parish website at www.saintjoes.com (Ministries and Prayer Ministries).



Requiescant in Pace

Theodore Fenton, aged 79

Dr. Ralph Sozio, aged 75



CONGRATULATIONS...

To Mr. and Mrs. Matthew and Valerie Buckley on the christening of their son SEAN MATTHEW BUCKLEY at Mary Immaculate of Lourdes on Sunday, October 7th, A.D. 2012. His godparents are Michael Buckley and Patricia O'Brien.



CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. and Mrs. Paul and Betsy Eldridge who celebrated their 46th Wedding Anniversary on October 13th, 2012.



CONGRATULATIONS to parishioner Phil Savage on marking his 94th birthday on October 11th, 2012. A decorated WWII combat veteran, Phil was one of the first lay ministers of the altar at Mary Immaculate of Lourdes following the reforms of Vatican II.



Congratulations to one of our sacristans PETER GOGUEN (center) on his 1st place finish in the Juniors division at the Providence Cyclo-cross Festival on October 6th, 2012.

Calendar of Masses

(Intention of the Mass—Special Remarks—Requested by)

SATURDAY October 13th	4:00 p.m.	Joyce Higgins	Special Intention	Susan Goeller
SUNDAY October 14th The 20th Sunday after Pentecost and the 28th Sunday of the Year	7:30 a.m.	Pro Populo		
	9:00 a.m.	Marilyn Sabroski	Memorial	Walter Sabroski
	10:30 a.m.	Mike Procopio Te-deum Esther Bradley Mary Cafarella Mr. & Mrs. Paul Eldridge Dominic Gundrum Barbara Nyhen Mary Provencher	Special Intention Memorial Special Intention 46th Wedding Anniversary Special Intention Special Intention Special Birthday Intention	Annie Procopio Richard Fell Paul & Betsy Eldridge Paul Eldridge Juhasz Family Maureen Nyhen Provencher Family
		5:30 p.m.	Magda Limanowska	Memorial Marie Schroeter
MONDAY October 15th St. Teresa of Avila, Virgin and Doctor of the Church	7:30 a.m.	Purgatorial Society of Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish	Memorial	
	12:30 p.m.	Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed	Memorial	
TUESDAY October 16th	7:30 a.m. (Ferial)	<i>Intention of the Celebrant</i>		
	5:30 p.m. St. Hedwig, Widow	Barbara Nyhen	Health of the Sick	Maria Centofanti
WEDNESDAY October 17th	7:30 a.m. (Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Martyr 12:30 p.m. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Virgin	<i>Intention of the Celebrant</i> <i>Intention of the Celebrant</i>		
THURSDAY October 18th St. Luke, Evangelist and Martyr	7:30 a.m.	Dr. Missy Ochsner	Health of the Sick	Shawn Adams
	5:30 p.m.	<i>Intention of the Celebrant</i>		
FRIDAY October 19th (<i>Health of the Sick</i>)	7:30 a.m.	<i>Intention of the Celebrant</i> The North American Martyrs SS. John de Brebeuf, Isaac Jogues & Companions		
	12:30 p.m.	Earl Smith		Shawn Adams
		St. Peter of Alcantara, Confessor		
SATURDAY October 20th	9:00 a.m.	Members of the third order of Mary		Gerald MacEachern
	4:00 p.m.	Alec Jones	Special Intention	

HEALTH OF THE SICK

“In every man there is Jesus, but in the sick we see Jesus twice.”

—Padre Pio

For all those on our parish prayer list, especially for... Barbara Nyen, Rev. Walter Cuenin, Ronald Orlando, Dominic Gundrum, Louis Komuves, Sr. Catherine Grandfield, Mary Adams, Hugh Doyle, Lorraine Orlando, Rob

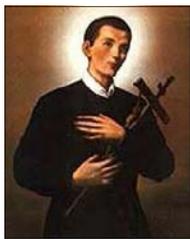


Quagan, Paul Wenger, Nathan Johnston, Frank Downey, Janet Pino, Fr. Carney Gavin, Irene Campana, Gerry Mazzarella, Maureen Nyhen, Francis McNary, Warren Yee, Betty Chrishi, Marie Rappazzini, Mary Trombetta, Helen Reid, Brenda Winegarner, Jean Johnson, Lois Ludwig, Paula Apothacary, Jeanne Ciocca, Sam Adams III, Altair da Silva, Christina Kwash, Kitty Ward, Missy Ochsner, Spagnuolo Family, Katie O’Connell, Janet Bourgeois, Judy Sartell, Lana Tomchik, Matthew Banks, Patrick Rainey, Judy Pederson, Ed Donovan, Danny O’Brien, Evelyn Donovan, Helen Donnelly, Priscilla Brossard, Mary Sims, Billy Hickey, Lee-Anne Ketchum, Arthur Nauss, Rod MacLeod, Monica Wellenstein, Teresa Tambunan, Mary Platt, Sean Monaghan, Bill McIlheny, Sheila Whittle, Michelle Fay, Bobbie Hoffmann, Beverly Balconi, Martial Rainey, Dennis McCarthy, Edward Crestitelli, Sharon Kopchik, Erin Marie Fell, Dominic Cantillo, Theresa Higgins, Lita

Uilaoghaire, Norman Alibrandi, Joyce Higgins, Karen Starbird, Jack Buckley, Edward Fahey, Nancy Daly, Mary Hoffmann, Marie Schroter, Dorothy Alibrandi, Annie Procopio, Marie Danca, David Kase, Thaddeus Davulis, Andrew McCloskey, Barbara Sullivan, Wanda Lempitski, Thomas Corcoran, Tony Palladino, Joe Bellino, Lucia LoPresti, Polly Sullivan, Fred Strom.



“I do not promise to make you happy in this life, but in the next”—Our Lady of Lourdes to St. Bernadette, February 18th, 1858



SPECIAL INTENTION: For all the expectant mothers of our parish family.

“St. Gerard Majella, pray for us”

Prayer for Motherhood:

O good St. Gerard, powerful intercessor before God and Wonderworker of our day, I call upon thee and seek thy aid. Thou who on this earth didst always fulfil God’s designs, help me to do the Holy Will of God. Beseech the Master of Life, from Whom all paternity proceedeth, to render me fruitful in offspring, that I may raise up children to God in this life and heirs to the Kingdom of His Glory in the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER LINE OF THE POOR CLARE COLLETTINE SISTERS



Hawarden, Wales
www.poorclarestmd.org

MILITARY SERVICE PRAYER LIST:

We remember all of our military servicemen and women, especially ... *Matthew Simard, 1st Lt., USMC (Afghanistan), Michael Simard, PFC, USMC, Christopher Raymond, 82nd Airborne (Afghanistan), Lance Cpl. Alex Tomchik, USMC, Brian Rainey, US Army (Afghanistan), Joseph Rainey, US Army, Sgt. Kevin James Howard, USMC (Afghanistan), Sgt. Brian Joseph Howard, USMC Afghanistan), Sgt. William J. Duggan, U.S. Army, 342nd Military Police Detachment, deployed to Afghanistan March, 2010; 2nd Lt. Richard S. Pluta, deployed to Iraq; Sgt. 1st Class David Garduque; ;Sgt. Jeffrey R. Quinn, USMC; (Please let us know if you would like someone on active duty prayed for by name.)*

Pray for Tommy Holcum, severely wounded in a Taliban ambush in Afghanistan.

Pray for Pfc Bowe Bergdahl, captured by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

IN THANKSGIVING: Sgt. Dennis Geary and his unit have returned safely from Afghanistan.



LATIN MASS TEXTS

Traditional Propers

Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

Vestments: Green

INTROIT: Daniel 3: 31. 29. 35. All that Thou hast done to us, O Lord, Thou hast done in true judgment; because we have sinned against Thee and we have not obeyed Thy commandments: but give glory to Thy name, and deal with us according to the multitude of Thy mercy. *Psalm 118:1* Blessed are the undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord. V. Glory be to the Father...

COLLECT: Grant unto Thy faithful people pardon and peace, we beseech Thee, merciful Lord, that they may be both cleansed from all their sins and serve Thee with a quiet mind. Through our Lord.

EPISTLE: Ephesians 5:15-21 Brethren: See how you walk circumspectly, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore, become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury: but be ye filled with the Holy Spirit speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord: giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God and the Father; being subject one to another in the fear of Christ.

GRADUAL: Psalm 144:15-16 The eyes of all hope in Thee, O Lord; and Thou givest them meat in due season. V. Thou openest Thy hand, and fillest every living creature with Thy blessing.

ALLELUIA: Alleluia, alleluia. V. My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready: I will sing, and will give praise to Thee, my glory. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 4:46-53 At that time, there was a certain ruler whose son was sick at Capernaum. He having heard that Jesus was come from Judea into

Galilee, went to Him, and prayed Him to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. Jesus therefore said to him: Unless you see signs and wonders you believe not. The ruler saith to Him: Lord, come down before my son die. Jesus saith to him: Go thy way, thy son liveth. The man believeth the word which Jesus said to him, and went his way. And as he was going down his servants met him, and they brought word, saying, that his son lived. He asked therefore of them the hour wherein he grew better. And they said to him: Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. The father therefore knew that it was at that same hour that Jesus said to him: Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house.

OFFERTORY: Psalm 136:1 Upon the rivers of Babylon there we sat and wept; when we remembered Thee, O Sion.

SECRET May these mysteries, we beseech Thee, O Lord, bring us a heavenly remedy and root out all vice from our hearts. Through our Lord.

Preface of the Holy Trinity

COMMUNION: Psalm 118:49-50 Be Thou mindful of Thy word to Thy servant, O Lord, in which Thou hast given me hope: this hath comforted me in my humiliation.

POSTCOMMUNION That we may become worthy, O Lord, to receive Thy holy gifts, make us ever obedient to Thy commandments. Through our Lord.

Music Programs for this Sunday's Masses

Mass of Pope Paul VI (1970 Missal)

October 14th, A.D. 2012, Saturday vigil, 4 p.m.
Sunday 7:30 and 9:00 a.m.

Twenty Eighth Sunday of the Year

Introit: Ps 130(129) 3,4 **Si iniquitates**

"O Lord, if You were to take into account our iniquities, who would withstand the test? But forgiveness abides with You, O God of Israel."

Kyrie – Chant

Gloria – Missa De Angelis (English)

Responsorial Psalm

Gospel Acclamation

Credo I: (extra sheet)

Offertory: Esther 14:12, 13 **Recordare mei**

"Remember me, O Lord, You who dominate all authority; put the right words on my lips, so that my speech may be convincing in the presence of the King."

Mass Setting: Mass VIII Missa De Angelis

Sanctus(English)

"Mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine, et tuam resurrectionem confitemur, donec venias"

Lord's Prayer

Agnus Dei

Communion: Ps 119(118): 22,24 **Aufer a me**

"Remove from me all scorn and contempt, for I have kept Your commandments; for Your law is the object of my meditations."

Post Communion Hymn

Ave Maris Stella (Gregorian Chant)

Recessional Hymn:

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
(Parish Hymnal No.122)

Mass of St. Gregory the Great (1962 Missal)

October 14th, A.D. 2012, Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude: Ave Maria

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Processional Hymn: Sicut Cervus

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Asperges: Chant

Introit: Dan. 3:31,29,35; Ps. 188:1

"Omnia, quæ fecisti nobis, Dómine, in vero iudicio fecisti, quia peccávimus tibi, et mandátis tuis non obedívimus: sed da glóriam nómini tuo, et fac nobíscum secúndum multitudínem misericórdiæ tuæ. (Psalm) Beáti immaculáti in via: qui ámbulant in lege Dómini."

Ordinary Prayers: Missa O Rex Gloriæ

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Gradual: Ps. 144:15,16

*"Oculi ómnium in te sperant, Dómine: et tu das illis escam in tẽpore opportúno. Aperis tu manum tuam, et imples omni ánimam benedictióne." **Alleluia:** Ps. 107:2
*"Allelúja, allelúja. Parátum cor meum, Deus, parátum cor meum, cantábo, et psallum tibi, glória mea. Allelúja."**

Offertory Verse: Ps. 136:1

"Super flumina Babylónis illic sédimus, et flevimus, dum recordémur tui, Sion."

Offertory Hymn: Ave Maris Stella

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Communion Hymn: Jesu Dulcis Memoria

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Communion Verse: Ps. 118:49-50

"Meménto verbi tui servo tuo, Dómine, in quo mihi spem dedísti: hæc me consoláta est in humilitáte mea."

Recessional Hymn

Cantate Domino

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Noon Angelus (Chant)

The Pilot

Friday, September 28, 2012 • Vol. 183, No. 37 • \$1.00 • www.thebostonpilot.com • America's Oldest Catholic Newspaper

Suicide is always a tragedy

Most people I know have lost a friend, a family member or loved one to suicide. Sometimes the depression and anxiety had been apparent for a long time; other times people are taken completely off guard, not even suspecting the deep torment that a loved one endured secretly.

We have come to appreciate how dangerous depression can be. It is like quicksand that devours a person in the unstoppable urge to self-destruction. Sometimes we experience a rash of suicides in a community, as one depressed person — upon hearing of a friend, acquaintance or even a stranger, who takes his own life — repeats that action. The copycat syndrome is a very real danger. The suffering of a suicide reverberates in the psyche of friends, relatives and co-workers and also in people who have attempted or considered suicide in the past.

Suicide always affects other people; it is never an act that only affects the individual involved. Family members, friends and neighbors often are filled with lingering sadness, guilt and confusion. Sometimes those who are closest to the deceased never completely recover, never forgive themselves and are haunted for the rest of their lives by the loss.

There are dedicated suicide prevention organizations like the Samaritans that stand ready to help people in the throes of depression and suicidal thoughts. Many volunteers stand ready on their hotlines, always prepared to try to bring solace and help to those suffering from suicidal impulses. There are also heroic first responders who often risk their lives to help stop someone from taking one's own life. All of us are called upon to be Good Samaritans and to work to prevent suicides in our community.

The World Health Organization (WHO) studies suicides throughout the world. One of their pleas to governments is to avoid presenting suicide as a solution to peoples' problems. In a way, that is what physician-assisted suicide is doing for one group of people — those with terminal diagnoses of six months or less. Oregon, the first state to legalize physician-assisted suicide, has one of the highest rates of suicide (not including deaths from PAS) of any state in the nation. It begs a logical question: how can a state effectively both try to minimize suicide in some situations and promote it as a legal alternative in other situations? There is no doubt that efforts to prevent suicides will be undermined by legalizing suicide for those with

terminal diagnoses and presenting it as normal and acceptable. Suicide, in any form, is always a tragedy — a tragedy that all people of good will should work to prevent.

Suicide has increased dramatically over the last few decades. Suicide is among the three leading causes of death among those aged 15-24 years according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Physician-assisted suicide will usually involve, in addition to the physician who writes the prescription, the family, nurses and pharmacists who become accomplices in the suicide.

We need to reflect also on the difficulty of making terminal diagnoses and physician error. These prognoses are just estimates. We should also consider the troubles for human relationships within families and between doctors and patients, as well as the risks to the whole social order from the weakening of our legal prohibition against the participation in assisted suicide.

Fear of tremendous pain is advanced as a reason to support physician-assisted suicide. However, even proponents of PAS readily acknowledge that modern medicine can manage the pain in almost every case. Very few Oregon residents that request PAS indicate unbearable pain as the reason that they requested the lethal prescription.

Another justification that proponents for the proposed law in Massachusetts advance is that PAS provides the patient greater autonomy — the ability to be in absolute control until the very end, and to avoid the fear of humiliations and indignities that catastrophic illness can entail. Disability advocacy groups, who are part of the broad-based coalition against PAS, rebut this argument forcefully. One of these groups, called "Second Thoughts" insists that the "autonomy" offered by physician-assisted suicide may sound like a good idea at first for people who are terminally ill, but on second thought and a deeper review PAS presents several major concerns. They state that the proposed law's principal aim isn't about creating new "rights" for patients, but rather to provide immunity from prosecution to doctors who assist with suicide. This immunity likely will increase the possibilities for mistakes, coercion and abuse for those who are seriously or terminally ill. They also state that PAS advances the idea that people with certain illnesses, disabilities or other conditions are "better off dead."

People with disabilities know what it is to live with the severe limitations brought on by disease or injury. They understand the permanency of conditions that involve paralysis, incontinence, pain and dependence on others. They do not, however, offer suicide as a good option to rescue people from disabilities or other difficult situations. Helen Keller,

born blind and deaf, would never agree with suicide as a solution for those like herself.

In almost every instance palliative care can suppress pain. People already have the right to refuse burdensome, life-extending treatments. They also have the option of leaving advance directives to determine their care when they are no longer able to express their wishes. The death that results from withholding or withdrawing of life-sustaining treatment has always been separated by a bright line from active measures to cause death. Assisted suicide proponents seek to blur this line.

I am happy that the Massachusetts Medical Society and the Massachusetts Hospice and Palliative Care Foundation recently testified against the physician-assisted suicide initiative on Beacon Hill and that so many doctors and nurses are speaking out against Question 2 and encouraging a "No" vote.

Last month, a letter appeared in the Ottawa Citizen and in some Florida newspapers. The letter was written by Jeannette Hall from King City, Oregon. In her very poignant testimony she stated that she lives in Oregon and voted for the legalization of physician-assisted suicide in the late 1990s. She was diagnosed with cancer in 2000 and told she had six months to live. She first appealed to her doctor to help to end her life. He refused and urged her to try new treatments. Twelve years later she is happy to be alive. She said "If my doctor had believed in assisted suicide, I would be dead. Thank him and all my doctors for helping me choose 'life with dignity.'" She ends with the plea: "Assisted suicide should not be legal. Don't make Oregon's mistake."

All of us should be committed to suicide prevention, to helping those who might consider committing suicide because of fear and depression. As a community we must send a message that suicide is always a tragedy, a bad choice, and an act of abandonment and despair. It never enhances, and always undermines, human dignity. Legalizing physician-assisted suicide falsely presents suicide as a good solution to one's problems. I ask you to join me and work to stop assisted suicide here in the commonwealth by voting no on Question 2 and encouraging others to join us.

The Archdiocese of Boston has developed an educational website on the Church's teachings on end of life issues, www.SuicideIsAlwaysATragedy.org. The archdiocese is also part of a large coalition of groups from other faiths, from the medical community, and from disabilities rights groups that are advocating a no vote on Question 2. The coalition's website is www.StopAssistedSuicide.org.



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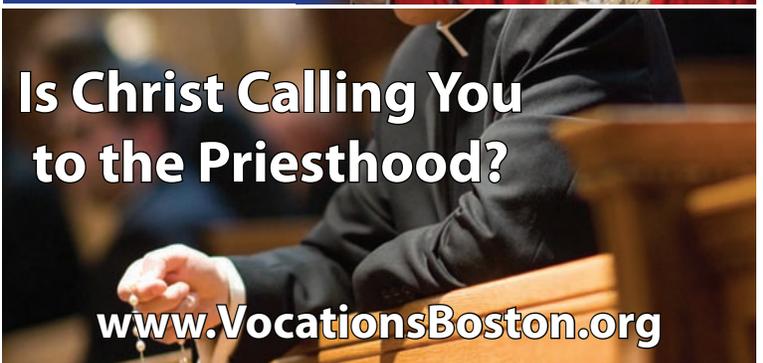
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