

# St. Irene Church NEWS



Fall 2018

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Guiding principles for St. Irene's e-newsletters include:

- We respect your time -- Only one newsletter hit to your inbox every three months.
- We respect your attention -- Only information provided that is important to your family and your choices within the parish. You can skim to find what you need.
- We want your input. Email [feedback@stirenes.org](mailto:feedback@stirenes.org) with your suggestions.
- We respect your choices. You can unsubscribe at any point, but we hope you'll keep subscribing instead.

## Join the mailing list

If you're a registered parishioner and would like to include additional, or newer, e-mail addresses in our Newsletter distribution list, or perhaps add more family members' e-mail addresses to the list, please send a request to [info@stirenes.org](mailto:info@stirenes.org). If you think a friend isn't receiving the Newsletter, consider forwarding so they can decide to join the distribution list. Thank you.

## Religious Education & Confirmation start

As a reminder for parents of children in the Religious Education or Confirmation programs, class start dates are:

- Religious Education for grades K-5 starts Sunday Sep 16<sup>th</sup> 9 am and 10 am.
- Religious Education for grades 6-8 starts Monday Sept 17<sup>th</sup> (special start time 6:30 pm 9/17 only)
- Confirmation Level 1 starts Sunday Sept 9<sup>th</sup> with 5 pm Mass (incl mandatory parent meeting 7 pm)
- Confirmation Level 2 starts Sunday Sept 9<sup>th</sup> with 5 pm Mass (incl mandatory parent meeting 7 pm)

For late registration, contact [RelEd@stirenes.org](mailto:RelEd@stirenes.org) or [Confirmation@stirenes.org](mailto:Confirmation@stirenes.org) - See you soon!

## Adult Faith Formation

The [Adult Faith Formation program at St. Irene's](#) presents a number of programs throughout the year, which we hope you will find fulfilling and informative. Gatherings are scheduled at various times - some on

mornings after the 9 o'clock Mass; others on Friday evenings - with the aim of reaching many parishioners at times available to them. All sessions take place in the Parish Hall.



This year's faith formation program will use multiple media—videos from the Boston College School of Theology, articles from the popular and Catholic press, plus an on-site presentation by a Catholic theologian. We give time to encourage discussion among attendees. Refreshments will be served at each session.

All are welcome, young and old, parishioners and non-parishioners, with the hope that we can learn more about our faith, learn more about how our faith “works” in our busy lives, and learn more about those on the journey with us.

The 2018-2019 Program includes:

- Sunday October 14<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1:30 pm (light luncheon), “Palliative Care/Advance Care Planning” by Diane McCarthy, Coordinator for the Archdiocesan *Initiative for Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning*
- Sunday October 28<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1:30 pm (light luncheon), “Preparing a Catholic Funeral”, by Fr Tom, Ann Nicholson, Cypriana Coelho, and John Arena from Dee Funeral Home.
- Monday March 11<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:30 am (light breakfast): “Topic to be announced”
- Monday March 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:30 am (light breakfast): “Topic to be announced”
- Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm: “Liturgy on Tap”. A local craft beer store will provide tastings, and a presentation on current religious topics with discussion will follow.

The schedule will be updated as planning progresses, see [St Irene's Adult Faith Formation web page](#). Please mark your calendars for these inspiring and informative events.

### **Peer Leadership Voices**

[St Irene Peer Leaders](#) meet on the first Sunday on every month in the parish library at 3:30 pm. We are always looking for new members. Contact us at [peerleaders@stirene.org](mailto:peerleaders@stirene.org) about the coming year.



The Peer Leaders are a small but active group of post Confirmation Youth in the Parish. To sustain the life of the group, we are always looking for new members, who are in their Junior or Senior year of high school.

If you are a parent with children in this age group, please encourage them to attend our meeting. I am in no doubt that you will probably hear from your kids that this is “so boring” and means getting out of the house on Sunday afternoon. I can assure you that this is not the case. It is a lively and engaging hour. The objective is to enhance our faith through discussions, games and quizzes. We also do Community Service projects and fundraisers.

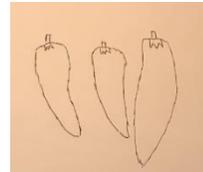
Our major commitment this year was to compile a recipe book to raise money for the Catholic Charities food pantry. This has covered a variety of organizational, writing, publishing, public relation experience and the most elusive of all, deadlines. All these attributes help develop life skills for our teenagers who will eventually leave home.

## Food for Thought

Recipes and Reflections from [St Irene Peer Leaders](#).

Our cookbook includes recipes from parishioners, essays and illustrations. We are having a launch party on Thursday October 25th at 7:00 pm in the parish hall to celebrate our work on the book. A barbecue will be served including ribs, cornbread, corn and desserts. Donations will be happily accepted to cover our costs.

Cookbooks are available for sale for \$12 at the launch, can be purchased after certain masses, or can be ordered by emailing [peerleaders@stirenes.org](mailto:peerleaders@stirenes.org). All the proceeds will be donated to the food pantry at the Catholic Charities in Lowell.



Some of the illustrations in the cookbook.

We look forward to another great year and plan on wrapping up the cookbook, apple picking for charity, cooking for the Transitional Living Center in Lowell, and many other activities.

## Parish Collaborative

As previously announced [St Irene Parish](#) will become a collaborative with [Holy Family Parish](#) in Concord on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2019. We are committed to communicating with transparency how we prepare, though there are no news over the summer as both Councils have been in 'summer' mode. The two web site committees are working on a joint page for communicating preparations to parishioners of both parishes. The Archdiocesan "[Countdown](#)" page can help you understand the general time table. More important than the time table is the fact that we must focus the new collaborative on evangelizing. The Archdiocese makes that focus clear in their [General Questions page for the Disciples in Mission](#) program.

## Ministry Report: Social Justice

Each Newsletter looks to highlight one of our ministries. This time, focus is on our Social Justice (SJ) effort. St Irene's is proud to sponsor a wide variety of Social Justice efforts, making the parish *a force for good*. We take care of our own with the [Caring Friends](#) program. We take care of prisoners through the [Prison Ministry](#) program. We collect [Thanksgiving baskets](#) and [Christmas gifts](#) for the needy. Through our chapter of the Knights of Columbus, we collect baby supplies for expecting mothers, and funds for special needs youth programs. We [cook dinners regularly at Lazarus House](#) Emergency Shelter in Lawrence. And we even undertake overseas construction projects to create [wells](#) in Malawi, a [biogas](#) facility in Rwanda, and class rooms in [Malawi](#) and [Cameroon](#).

How do we choose what we engage in? – SJ Committee Chair Ken Mostello explains that we have a well-developed set of criteria to help us decide. The most important criterion is the likelihood of successful completion. Multiple factors influence the probability of success, from having dependable local contacts to absence of unrest, ability to control disbursements, and complexity of the project itself. Another important criterion is to have a lasting impact. This criterion is what has led us to engage in several construction projects in African countries. A team of experienced volunteers help evaluate projects and recommend which to engage with.

How can a small parish in suburban Boston have such impact half a world away? – Most of our African projects have been in the home regions of African priests, who have come to our parish. This is true of Malawi (Fr Wineko), Cameroon (Fr Augustin), and Rwanda (Fr Romain). Their networks of contacts have

been instrumental in arranging for successful projects. The distant projects help reinforce our connectedness as a worldwide church working together toward human advancement.

How can parishioners get involved? – Contact [SocialJustice@stirenes.org](mailto:SocialJustice@stirenes.org) and tell us what you'd like to do. Raise funds for overseas projects? Or get involved hands-on with cooking, or with collections for the needy in our own country? Social Justice works with other committees, such as Web & Digital Communications, so if that's your interest, you can help Social Justice tell our story, either to the world, or to our own catechism youth. Tell us your talents and interest, and we'll suggest where to engage.

### **Thunga Primary School, Malawi**

St Irene's parish earlier this year helped raise the funds for construction of three new classrooms at [Thunga Primary School](#) in Malawi by parishioner Kelsey Bradley's non-profit organization, Design Cause Inc, using sustainable methods adapted to local materials. The following is a brief update on the project received Sept 4<sup>th</sup> from Kelsey in Malawi.

The Thunga Primary School Project is well underway after a slow start. The planning is done, the foundation is built, the walls are up, and the roof is being installed over the next few days. Although we have a very tight timeline, things are looking like they could be finished by September 20<sup>th</sup>, provided there are no big problems that arise. The new classrooms have become the talk of the village, as they are much more impressive than anything they currently have on site. Beyond the four new classrooms we also have four new latrines being built and extensive landscaping being done to address drainage and reduce rain water flooding of the older classrooms on site. There is also a small budget for needed school supplies and female emergency kits. The final project will be a highly functional, beautiful building that provides students and teachers with a great place to learn and makes villagers proud.



Brickmaking



July 28<sup>th</sup>, one week into construction.  
School Building Project in Malawi (2018)



Roof taking form in Malawi (early Sept 2018)

St Irene Parish looks forward to welcoming Kelsey home, when the building project is completed. You can follow the project on her Non-profit organization "Design Cause Inc" [Facebook page](#) and [Web site](#) as well.

### **Minor Seminary, Butare, Rwanda**

St Irene has received a sincere thank you from Fr Jean Baptiste Ndahimana at the Minor Seminary of Butare, Rwanda, which happens to be the school Fr Romain attended. Fr Jean Baptiste writes *"With pleasure, we confirm a receipt of your aid to Minor Seminary of Butare on 4 June 2018. We'll send you the report. Many thanks for your support to our school."*

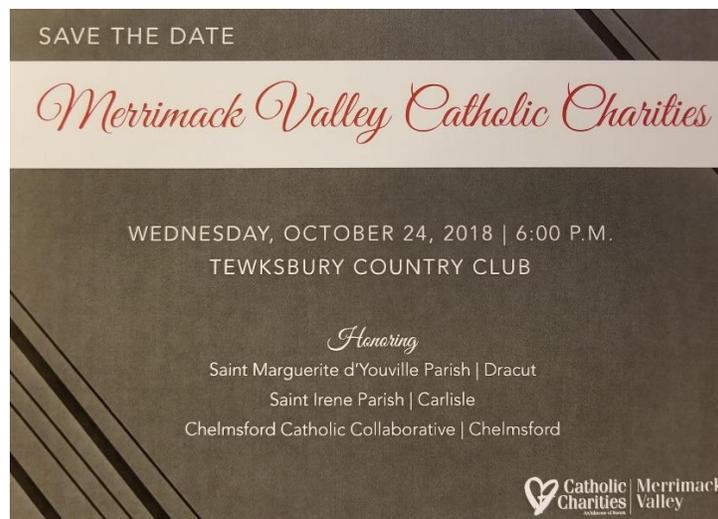


Banner: "Mariya Nyina wa Jambo (Yezu), Udusabire"  
English: Mary Mother of the Word (Jesus), Pray for us.  
Minor Seminary, Butare, Rwanda

Fund raising at St Irene's allowed us to send \$3,380 to the school in Rwanda. The money helps pay tuition for seminarians, who could otherwise not attend. Thank you for your generosity.

### Catholic Charities honor St Irene

Catholic Charities of Merrimack Valley is recognizing St Irene Parish as a long-term effective supporter, in large part owing to programs like the Thanksgiving food baskets, which have collected hundreds of baskets per year, and the Giving Tree Program, which collects Christmas gifts for the needy. A recognition dinner will take place on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm, at Tewksbury Country Club. For more information, please visit <https://www.ccab.org>



### Women's Club

[St Irene Women's Club](http://StIreneWomen'sClub) organizes multiple parish events including Ham & Bean dinners, Soup & Bread during lent, a fashion show, and more. Contact [WomensClub@stirenes.org](mailto:WomensClub@stirenes.org) to learn more or join.

## Knights of Columbus

[St Irene's chapter of the Knights of Columbus](#) puts faith into action by engaging in outreach, like Lazarus House dinners, and assisting around the Parish with events like the Parish picnic, the children's Christmas party, and more. Membership is open to male parishioners at least 18 years of age and in good standing with the Catholic Church. Contact [kofc@stirenes.org](mailto:kofc@stirenes.org) to learn more or join.

## Calendar of Events

You can always find upcoming Masses and events in [St Irene's online calendar](#). Special events coming up soon, all at the Church and/or Parish Hall, include:

- Sep 16<sup>th</sup>, After 11-12 Mass, Parish Picnic
- Oct 14<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1:30 pm (light luncheon), Adult Faith Formation, "Palliative Care / Advance Planning"
- Oct 20<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 pm, Women's Club Ham & Bean Dinner
- Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm, Parish Hall, Peer Leaders introduce their parish cookbook. Please join.
- Oct 28<sup>th</sup>, 9 am and 10 am, Mandatory 2<sup>nd</sup> grade parent meeting for First Reconciliation
- Oct 28<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1:30 pm (light luncheon), Adult Faith Formation, "Preparing a Catholic Funeral"
- Dec 9<sup>th</sup>, 9 am, Christmas Pageant & Pancake Breakfast
- First Sunday of the month 7:00 pm, Parish Pastoral Council meeting at the Rectory
- Every Tuesday 7:30 pm, Adoration and Evening Prayer
- Second Tuesdays of the month 7:30 pm, St Irene's Knight of Columbus meet at the Parish Hall



Saint Irene

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