

EXHIBIT 1

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS**

TOGETHER EMPLOYEES, by	)	
individual representatives,	)	
ROBERTA LANCIONE	)	
JOYCE MILLER, MARIA DIFRONZO,	)	
MICHAEL SACCOCCIO,	)	
ELIZABETH BIGGER,	)	
NATASHA DICICCO,	)	
NICHOLAS ARNO and	)	CIVIL ACTION NO.
RUBEN ALMEIDA,	)	1:21-cv-11686-FDS
Plaintiffs	)	
	)	
v.	)	
	)	
MASS GENERAL BRIGHAM	)	
INCORPORATED	)	
Defendant	)	

DECLARATION OF NATASHA DICICCO

In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I Natasha DiCicco, declare under the penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States of America, and state upon personal knowledge that:

1. I am an adult of sound mind, and make this statement voluntarily, based upon my own personal knowledge, education, facts or data, and experience, and under the penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States of America.

2. I am an employee of defendant, Mass General Brigham Incorporated (“MGB”), currently on unpaid leave and subject to be terminated on November 5, 2021.

3. I sought a religious accommodation to MGB’s vaccination policy, notifying them that I had sincerely held religious beliefs that precluded me from taking the COVID-19 vaccines.

4. I have been a practicing Christian for my entire life, baptized as an infant and growing up in a Christian home.

5. I am currently a member of the Saint Joseph Parish in Wakefield, Massachusetts. This is a Catholic church.

6. My Christian beliefs come from my personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and not specifically the Catholic church as a whole, or even my specific parish.

7. The role that church plays in my life is that the Christian church is the body of Christ (Col. 1:18 – “And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.”) and is where I go to receive teachings on the word of God from our priest and fellowship with other Christian believers.

8. My faith is not limited to the simple act of going to church on Sundays; I read the Bible and pray continually (1 Thess. 5:17 – “pray continually”).

9. By reading the Scriptures and praying, God communicates His will to me through the Holy Spirit.

10. This is what many Christians refer to as their personal relationship with Jesus. My personal relationship with Jesus is one of the most important aspects of practicing my faith. (John 15:15 “No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”)

11. In referring to “God,” the “Holy Spirit” or “Jesus,” I am referring to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity. For more of an explanation, I have provided a helpful resource with a video:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Trinity-Bible.html>.

12. In my life I seek to live out God’s will, as He has communicated to me. (Rom. 8:14 “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”)

13. During the pandemic, throughout 2020, I prayed continually. While the vaccines were available, I sought counseling from my Priest and prayed and read the Bible to obtain God’s will as to whether I should take not only the COVID-19 vaccines, but any vaccines.

14. It was the COVID-19 vaccines that caused me to pray on vaccination in general and seek guidance from the Lord.

15. First, Exodus 20:13 states “thou shall not murder.” I am strongly opposed to abortion. This opposition is not a personal opposition, but one rooted in my religious beliefs through prayer and reading the Bible. (Psalm 139:13 “You formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb.”) Thus,

I believe from reading those (and other Scriptures), praying on the subject and receiving teaching on the subject from my Priest.

16. Therefore, I believe life is sacred, from conception, and that it would be a sin if I were to partake in any way whatsoever with the act of abortion.

17. To take vaccines that were either produced or manufactured using, developed with, or tested on aborted fetal tissue would be a sin and I cannot violated my conscience by partaking in such an act.

18. Praying about the COVID vaccines led me to look into what I was taking, and I learned of the vaccines' connection to the practice of abortion, namely that the Johnson & Johnson vaccines used fetal cell cultures to produce and manufacture the vaccine and that both Pfizer and Moderna used fetal cells for proof of concept for their vaccines¹.

19. For me to partake in this would be a serious and sinful act and would greatly harm my personal relationship with Jesus.

20. For me to disobey the Holy Spirit is the same a disobeying God, and that would also be a sin. (John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.")

21. In addition, by praying about these vaccines, God began to communicate with me regarding the ingredients themselves and the concept caring for myself in a way that I could honor Him with my body. (1 Cor. 6:19-20 "Do you not know

¹ https://www.health.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/COVID%20Vaccine%20Page/COVID-19_Vaccine_Fetal_Cell_Handout.pdf

that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body”).

22. This includes prayerfully considering what medicines I do and do not take and seeking guidance from God regarding those medical decisions.

23. In Matthew 9:20-22, a woman who had a bleeding disease that doctors and modern medicine at that time could not heal came to Jesus having faith that if she could just touch His cloak, that He could heal her. He did heal her, stating that it was her faith that had healed her.

24. I stated to MGB that I sought counseling from my Priest regarding these exact issues.

25. I was more than willing to discuss these beliefs with MGB.

26. I was more than willing to discuss what accommodation would allow me to practice my religion while at the same time ensure the safety of myself and others while at work.

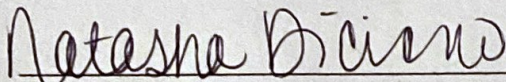
27. MGB sent me emails from a standard account and did not identify who was reviewing my accommodation request.

28. MGB denied my accommodation before even speaking with me or allowing me to submit supporting documentation (I emailed documents after being denied, which I have included with this Declaration).

29. MGB used, as one of its reasons for denial, that I was not seeking an exemption from the flu vaccine policy, however my application submitted asked for an exemption from the flu vaccine policy.

30. MGB never identified the reason for my denial.
31. MBG never stated that it would be a hardship for them to accommodate my religious beliefs, nor did it state that there were any specific safety concerns with my accommodations.
32. I am still willing to engage with MGB regarding my beliefs.

Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury this 27th day of October, 2021:



Natasha DiCicco

Exemption Request

Mass General Brigham is dedicated to providing a safe environment for all of its patients. Influenza infection can carry a significant risk for patients, visitors and staff. Therefore, all Workforce members are required to receive an annual vaccination for influenza unless an exemption is approved.

COVID-19 carries a significant risk of transmission, serious illness or death for patients, visitors and staff. Therefore, all Mass General Brigham employees are required to receive COVID-19 vaccination unless medically contraindicated or it is prohibited by a sincerely held religious belief or practice.

Mass General Brigham permits an exemption to mandatory influenza vaccination and/or Covid-19 vaccination for employees whose sincerely held religious beliefs prohibit vaccination.

Please complete the below form to request religious exemption(s). You can request an exemption for one or both vaccines, please complete all appropriate sections.

ID Number

* must provide value

100083269

User Name

* must provide value

naf11

First Name

* must provide value

Natasha

Last Name

* must provide value

Dicicco

Email Address

* must provide value

NADICICCO@PARTNERS.ORG

Affiliate Name

* must provide value

MGH

Please choose the exemption you are requesting?

* must provide value

☒ COVID

☒ Flu

In the space provided, please (1) identify your sincerely held religious belief, practice or observance and (2) explain why it prevents you from receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Please note that you may be required to provide additional information or supporting documentation to support your request for an exemption.

It is my sincerely held religious and spiritual

Employee attestation regarding Covid-19 vaccination religious exemption

* must provide value

- ☒ My religious beliefs, practices, and observances which form the basis for my exemption request are sincerely held.
- ☒ My religious beliefs, practices and observances prevent me from receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.
- ☒ I understand that I may be asked to provide additional information to support this request.
- ☒ I understand that if my request for exemption is approved I will be required to follow all applicable infection control policies and procedures, including wear an approved mask.
- ☒ I understand that, if approved, this exemption will last for the current COVID-19 vaccination process only.

In the space provided, please (1) identify your sincerely held religious belief, practice or observance and (2) explain why it prevents you from receiving an influenza vaccine. Please note that you may be required to provide additional information or supporting documentation to support your request for an exemption.

It is my sincerely held religious and spiritual

Employee attestation regarding influenza vaccination religious exemption:

* must provide value

- ☒ My religious beliefs, practices, and observances which form the basis for my exemption request are sincerely held.
- ☒ My religious beliefs, practices and observances prevent me from receiving an influenza vaccine.
- ☒ I understand that I may be asked to provide additional information to support this request.
- ☒ I understand that if my request for exemption is approved I will be required to follow all applicable infection control policies and procedures, including wear an approved mask.
- ☒ I understand that, if approved, this exemption will last for the current influenza vaccination process only.

Please sign as acknowledgment

* must provide value

 Add signature

Submit



August 30, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Natasha DiCicco is a baptized Catholic seeking a religious exemption from an immunization requirement. This letter explains how the Catholic Church's teachings may lead individual Catholics, including Natasha DiCicco, to decline certain vaccines.

The Catholic Church teaches that a person may be required to refuse a medical intervention, including a vaccination, if his or her conscience comes to this judgment. While the Catholic Church does not prohibit the use of most vaccines, and generally encourages them to safeguard personal and public health, the following authoritative Church teachings demonstrate the principled religious basis on which a Catholic may determine that he or she ought to refuse certain vaccines:

- Vaccination is not morally obligatory in principle and so must be voluntary.¹
- There is a moral duty to refuse the use of medical products, including certain vaccines, that are created using human cells lines derived from abortion; however, it is permissible to use such vaccines only under case-specific conditions—if there are no other alternatives available and the intent is to preserve life.²
- A person's assessment of whether the benefits of a medical intervention outweigh the undesirable side-effects are to be respected unless they contradict authoritative Catholic moral teachings.³
- A person is morally required to obey his or her conscience.⁴

A Catholic may judge it wrong to receive certain vaccines for a variety of reasons consistent with these teachings, and there is no authoritative Church teaching universally obliging Catholics to

¹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), "Note on the Morality of Using Some Anti-COVID-19 Vaccines," December 17, 2020, n. 5: "At the same time, practical reason makes evident that vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, it must be voluntary."

² See Pontifical Academy for Life, "Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared from Cells Derived from Aborted Human Foetuses," June 9, 2005; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction Dignitas personae, 2008, nn. 34-35; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Note on the Morality of Using Some Anti-COVID-19 Vaccines," nn. 1-3. When there is a sufficiently serious reason to use the product and there is no reasonable alternative available, the Catholic Church teaches that it may be permissible to use the immorally sourced product under protest. In any case, whether the product is used or not, the Catholic Church teaches that all must make their disagreement known and request the development of equal or better products using biological material that does not come from abortions.

³ See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, 6th ed. (Washington, DC: USCCB Publishing, 2018), n. 28. Hereafter "ERDs."

⁴ "A human being must always obey the certain judgment of his conscience. If he were deliberately to act against it, he would condemn himself..." Catechism of the Catholic Church (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), www.vatican.va, n. 1790. Hereafter "CCC."

We, the community of St. Joseph, strive to grow in our personal relationship with Jesus through prayer, scripture and the sacraments and to imitate the life of Jesus through service to one another.

receive any vaccine. An individual Catholic may invoke Church teaching to refuse a vaccine that used abortion-derived cell lines at any stage of the creation of the vaccine. More generally, a Catholic might refuse a vaccine based on the Church's teachings concerning therapeutic proportionality. Therapeutic proportionality is an assessment of whether the benefits of a medical intervention outweigh the undesirable side-effects and burdens in light of the integral good of the person, including spiritual, psychological, and bodily goods.⁵ The judgment of therapeutic proportionality must be made by the person who is the potential recipient of the intervention,⁶ not by public health authorities or by other individuals who might judge differently in their own situations.

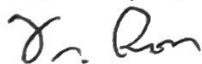
The Catholic Bishops of Colorado have affirmed this in two letters dated December 14, 2020 and March 17, 2021, concerning COVID-19 vaccines, stating:

"The bishops of Colorado affirm that the use of some COVID-19 vaccines is morally acceptable under certain circumstances.... However, if individuals have serious moral objections or health concerns about vaccines, those concerns should be respected by society and government, and those individuals should not be forced into vaccination, contrary to their conscience. The government should not impose the COVID-19 vaccines on its citizens."⁷

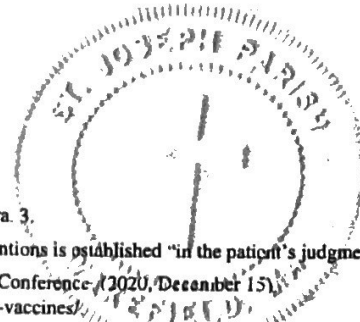
Furthermore, the free-exercise clause of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment requires state accommodation of individuals who object to vaccinations on religious grounds. Government neutrality also requires religious accommodation when the state offers secular exemptions, which is the case in Massachusetts for medical and non-medical exemptions⁸ and exemptions through the Americans with Disabilities Act and Civil Rights Act of 1964.⁹

Vaccination is not a universal obligation and a person must obey his or her own conscience. Therefore, if a Catholic comes to an informed judgment that he or she should not receive a vaccine, then the Catholic Church requires that the person follow this judgment of conscience and refuse the vaccine. The *Catechism* is clear: "Man has the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as personally to make moral decisions. 'He must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience. Nor must he be prevented from acting according to his conscience, especially in religious matters.'"¹⁰

God love you,



Rev. Ronald A. Barker
Pastor



⁵ See ERDs, nn. 32-33; nn. 56-57; Part Three, Introduction, para. 2; Part Five, Introduction, para. 3.

⁶ See ERDs, nn. 56-57. Both of these directives state that the proportionality of medical interventions is established "in the patient's judgment."

⁷ A Letter to the Faithful from the Colorado bishops on Covid-19 Vaccines. Colorado Catholic Conference (2020, December 15). <https://cocatholicconference.org/a-letter-to-the-faithful-from-the-colorado-bishops-on-covid-19-vaccines/>

⁸ Vaccine and Immunization. Massachusetts General Laws <https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/part/two/chapter76/section15>

⁹ Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/pandemic-preparedness-workplace-and-americans-disabilities-act>.

¹⁰ CCC, n. 1782, citing Second Vatican Council, *Dignitatis humanae*, December 7, 1965, n. 3.

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
WAKEFIELD MA

Dear Parishioner,

There is so much suffering in the world today. California is rampant with brush fires destroying homes. There are flash floods in Tennessee taking lives. The country of Haiti has undergone devastation from the recent earthquake. There is absolute chaos in Afghanistan. The economy is causing many to be in danger of becoming homeless. The Southern border is rampant with crime, rape, and starvation as immigrants flee their home countries and try to enter the U.S.

The delta variant is causing so much fear. Some are afraid of the virus, and some are afraid of losing the power to make their own choices. The famous mantra, "my body, my choice," was acceptable to many when it meant ending the life of the unborn. However, this claim is unacceptable for those who want to make the choice they believe is best for them. The virus is also causing division between friends and family members as people become disrespectful of each other's choices. These incidents are just a tiny sample of what is going on in our troubled world today.

Our world is becoming engulfed in a storm of darkness, with our lives battered on every side. What can we do? Who can help us? Where are the leaders of integrity and intelligence? The real tragedy is where we have placed God in all of this. Unfortunately, we have Him in quarantine. We don't want Him to infect us with His teaching of repentance, love, and forgiveness. To do so would upset our way of life. Our arrogance keeps us from realizing that He is truly the way, the truth, and the life. Instead, we believe we know better than Him how to live our lives.

When we are so fixated on protecting our bodies, it becomes our primary concern and focus. What about protecting our souls? We must care for our souls by engaging in a relationship with God. Living faithfully in the ways that Jesus taught will bring us peace and joy in this life and eternal life in the next.

We are living in a world of darkness. How can we help? Let us not return evil with evil. Instead, respond with love and be strong in facing the assault of evil. Let us be beacons of light. Bring love into this world by turning away from sin and living the virtues of the Christian life, such as forgiveness, patience, kindness, humility, and love. You may not be able to change much of the suffering, division, chaos, and hate in our world today, but you can have an impact. You can take charge of your own life. With daily prayer, Scripture, and Eucharist, you can be a faithful disciple of Jesus in the way you choose to live your life today and be a living example for others.

The Healing Mass will be on Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 7:00 pm. beginning with the rosary. I am available for confession this week on Tuesday, August 31, 2021 from 6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and on Saturday, September 4, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. in the church or any other time by appointment.

May Jesus continue to shepherd you in all of your needs.

God love you,



CERTIFICATE OF VITAL RECORD

VERIFY PRESENCE OF WATERMARK

HOLD TO LIGHT TO VIEW

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



CT618303

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE

FROM THE RECORDS OF MARRIAGES IN THE CITY OF WOBURN, MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.A.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REGISTRY OF VITAL RECORDS AND STATISTICS

CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE

(State file number)
WOBURN

(City or town making return)

Registered No. 74

Intention No. 68

1 Place of Marriage

City or Town Wakefield

2 Date of Marriage May 23, 2015

(Do not enter name of village or section of city or town)

(Month) (Day) (Year)

3 FULL NAME PARTY A

NATASHA ANN FRENZO

11 FULL NAME PARTY B

JOSEPH CHARLES Di CICCIO

**3A SURNAME
AFTER MARRIAGE**

Di CICCIO

**11A SURNAME
AFTER MARRIAGE**

Di CICCIO

4 DATE OF BIRTH

SEPT 17, 1988

5 OCCUPATION

PART-TIME RETAIL ASSOCIATE

12 DATE OF BIRTH

APRIL 1, 1984

13 OCCUPATION

**6 RESIDENCE
NO. & ST.**

20 A STREET

CITY/
TOWN READING,

ST. MA ZIP
CODE 01867

**14 RESIDENCE
NO. & ST.**

9 EMERSON ROAD

CITY/
TOWN WOBURN,

ST. MA ZIP
CODE 01801

**7 NUMBER OF
MARRIAGE
(1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)**

1ST

**7A WIDOWED
OR DIVORCED**

**15 NUMBER OF
MARRIAGE
(1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)**

1ST

**15A WIDOWED
OR DIVORCED**

8 BIRTHPLACE

WINCHESTER,

MA

(City or town)

(State or country)

16 BIRTHPLACE

WINCHESTER,

MA

(City or town)

(State or country)

**9 NAME OF
MOTHER/PARENT**

NANCY FRENZO/LABADINI

**17 NAME OF
MOTHER/PARENT**

GRACEANN Di CICCIO/AIELLO

**10 NAME OF
FATHER/PARENT**

NICHOLAS ANTHONY FRENZO

**18 NAME OF
FATHER/PARENT**

MAURICE LOUIS Di CICCIO

19 THE INTENTION OF MARRIAGE by the above-mentioned persons was duly entered by me in the records of the Community of WOBURN according to the City of Woburn of MAY 20 15

☐ COURT WAIVER Issued

May 7, 2015

(Name of Community)

by Will C. Campbell

(City or Town Clerk or Registrar)

☐ AGE ORDER

(Month)

(Day)

(Year)

20 I HEREBY CERTIFY that I solemnized the marriage of the above-named persons at No. ST. JOSEPH St.

(If marriage was solemnized in a church, give its NAME instead of street and number)

WAKEFIELD

on MAY

23

2015

Signature

FR RONALD BARKER

(Name of city or town)

(Month)

(Day)

(Year)

(Member of the Clergy, Priest, Rabbi, Imam, or Justice of the Peace, etc.)

Address

173 ALBION ST

WAKEFIELD, MA

21 Certificate recorded by city or town clerk June 1, 2015

(Month)

(Day)

(Year)

Will C. Campbell

CLERK OR REGISTRAR

22 PARTY A SEX: ☐ MALE ☒ FEMALE

23 PARTY B SEX: ☒ MALE ☐ FEMALE

I, William C. Campbell, depose and say, that I hold the office of City Clerk of the City of Woburn, County of Middlesex, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts; that the records of Births, Marriages and Deaths in the City are in my custody, and that the above is a true extract from the Records of Marriages in said City as certified by me.

Witness my hand and Seal of said City on

JUN 02 2015

Will C. Campbell

City Clerk

VOID WITHOUT WATERMARK OR IF ALTERED OR ERASED

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
WAKEFIELD MA

Dear Parishioners,

Before buying a food item, people often read the ingredients to check how many calories, sugar, salt content, and preservatives. I always enjoyed the Breyers' ice cream commercial. They pledged ripe fruit, natural sugar, pure milk and cream, and nothing artificial. Some of the other brands have ingredients that you cannot even pronounce and so many additives. Being able to get the facts on ice cream helps people decide which brand to buy. They could choose what they felt was best for them. What would you think if you went into the store and only had one choice and were not allowed to read the ingredients? What if the store decided what was best for you? Would you continue to buy from that store? Isn't this what we see unfolding in our society today?

Let us look at the issue of the vaccine. I have two points to make. The first point is why are we not given all the information on the vaccine? There are two schools of thought if you listen to the medical doctors. Some say it is safe. Others say that long-term safety is not yet proven. Some call it a synthetic gene that is foreign to the body, while others call it a vaccine. Some say the vaccine protects you from COVID and others say that vaccinated people can still get and transmit the virus. I am stunned by how one-sided the media is regarding the vaccine. I hear the other side as people come up to me to tell me about close friends and family members who suffered adverse effects like memory loss, neurological disorders, and even death after getting the vaccine. You don't hear about that in the media.

There are always two sides. Let us look at God's teachings. He tells us that there are two ways, the way of love and the way of darkness. The way of love is forgiveness, patience, serving the needs of others, and compassion. The way of darkness is that of un-forgiveness, lust, bitterness, jealousy, and pride. Jesus gives us the ingredients of both, and so we may choose. We should get the information on both sides of this vaccine and then make a choice.

The second point is that God respects our free will. It is one of his principal attributes. He does not force us to follow the pathway that leads to life. We have the freedom to reject Him and eternal life. Many leaders today have superseded their God-given authority. They have taken away the free will of others and given demands that are not theirs to give. We can almost say that they have chosen to take a position of being God- false god. People have a God-given right to decide what they do and how they live. Even if we choose to do evil, God does not intervene to stop us. Those who take away the freedom of others are committing a spiritual crime. Now is not an easy time for us. There is so much division and people coming against one another. There is fighting between friends and family. Whatever you choose, allow the other the freedom to make their choice. We must respect one another.

Do what you need to protect yourself, and above all, trust in God. Let us look to the bible:

Psalms 118:8 [Better to take refuge in the LORD than to put one's trust in men.]

Proverb 3:5-6 [Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him]

Isaiah 41:10 [So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.]

Psalms 121:3 [My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.]

Do not live in fear. God is still on His throne. Be faithful in walking in His ways and trust that He will protect you and provide for you. Do your part in performing due diligence to learn all the facts before making important decisions with long-range consequences. There is a

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
WAKEFIELD MA

website:
reflections.

that may provide some helpful spiritual

Adult Faith Formation continues with "The Chosen" (see below for times) and **COMING SOON** on Tuesday evenings, Footprints of God: The Story of Salvation from Abraham to Augustine is a 10-volume documentary film series hosted by popular Catholic author, speaker, and apologist Steve Ray, who takes us on amazing journeys of adventure to meet the people and see the places of Scripture and Church history. We begin with Abraham: Father of Faith and Works -- This amazing saga sweeps through the Book of Genesis from creation to the journey into Egypt. All this in a fast-paced, entertaining biography, travel documentary, Bible study, apologetics course, and Church history study rolled into one remarkable adventure see page 7 for more information.

I am available for confession this week on, Tuesday September 21, 2021, from 6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and on Saturday, September 25, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. in the church or at any other time by appointment. May Jesus continue to shepherd you in all of your needs.

God love you,

Tom Ray

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

We hope you will join us for the final week of "The Chosen" about the life of Jesus through the eyes of those who knew Him. —We will be starting our new Faith Formation Program, Footprints of God: The Story of Salvation from Abraham to Augustine. See page 7 for details.

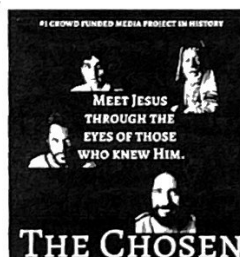
September 20, 2021, Monday

9:30am Beyond Mountains (Episode 2.8) 57 min

September 21, 2021, Tuesday

6:00 pm Beyond Mountains (Episode 2.8) 57 min

7:00 pm The Shepherd (Pilot Episode) 20 min



ONLINE GIVING

Online giving is easy! You can use credit cards, debit cards, or your bank account and start or stop at any time. You can also include charities like St. Vincent de Paul, special collections, or St. Joseph School.

Please visit: www.stjosephwakefield.org and click on GIVING or, for help with set up and management of online giving, contact Maureen Miller the parish accountant.

Reflection of the Week

Encourage Instead of
Complain

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
WAKEFIELD MA

STOP

Dear Parishioners,

Everywhere I look, I observe those in authority issuing directives to people about protecting themselves from contracting the virus. The media inundates us with orders to mask up and get the vaccine. The consequences for non-compliance are grave. People risk job loss, rejection from school, the inability to attend social activities, even losing custody of their children. These directives are efforts to keep the body safe from dying. I ask you, what about the soul? How well do we follow the commands of Jesus to save our lives from eternal damnation? Do we obey His instructions to live our lives as best we can to achieve eternal life in heaven? It is good to focus on our physical health but not at the cost of our spiritual well-being.

One example of people choosing the physical over the spiritual is that many have stayed away from worship. Those who do not attend Mass separate themselves from the community and the Eucharist. Jesus tells us to take and eat His body for His flesh is real food, and unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood, we have no life in Him. Let us keep our priorities in order and be responsive to the commands of Jesus to save our souls while also doing what we need for the health of our bodies. We must trust in Him.

For your information, I met with our finance committee last week to review our budget for the coming year. The parish experienced a recent increase in expenses due to the rising cost of health and property insurance, meaning our costs will exceed our average weekly income of \$15,500.00 for the first time in several years. Our parishioners have consistently supported the parish avoiding the need for any additional collections making both you and me happy. However, we will require an additional \$500 per week due to these new expenses. Our financial success relies on tithing - giving God His money, the first tenth of your income. I only ask for a part of your tithe to meet our expenses. If you already tithe to the parish, thank you for your generosity which allows us to maintain our church without a capital campaign. If you are not tithing, I ask you to consider it. God promises abundant blessings to those who faithfully tithe.

Our offertory receipts are printed in the bulletin monthly. The "weekly offertory" indicates what we receive in the weekend collection basket. You will notice this amount is much more considerable than the "electronic giving" total. I ask that you consider electronic giving. Our weekly offertory can easily be affected by unknowns such as bad weather and summer vacations that can adversely affect Mass attendance. Electronic giving allows us to plan our budget, knowing this money is sure to come in. Thank you for your continued financial support. Because of you, I can sleep well at night.

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
WAKEFIELD MA

PARISH NEWS

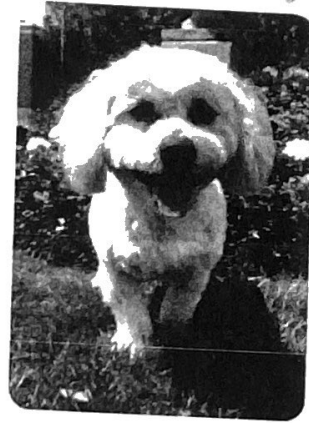
This week, we welcome our St. Joseph school children back for a new school year. Our school has experienced increased enrollment as many parents see the value of in-school learning and the teaching of Catholic Christian values. I wish all our students a safe and healthy school year.

I am available for confession this week on Wednesday, September 8, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. and on Saturday, September 11, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. in the church or any other time by appointment. May Jesus continue to shepherd you in all of your needs.

God love you,



CALEB'S CORNER



My sunshine doesn't come
from the skies - It comes from
the love that's in my dog's eyes

PARISH PAID BILLS

St. Joseph Parish Expenses Paid
August 14, 2021 - August 27, 2021

Altar Supplies	1,097
Archdiocese Tithe	3,706
Building Maintenance & Supplies	54
Charitable Works	100
Clergy Benefit Trust	3,000
Heartbeat Pregnancy Center	500
Insurance & Benefits	11,400
Office Supplies & Expenses	1,309
Payroll and Taxes	16,603
Rectory Food & Supplies	164
St Joseph's Table	530
The Pilot	360
Vacation Bible School	259
Wakefield Food Pantry	500
Total	\$ 39,582

PARISH GIVING

Offertory ~ August

Weekly Offertory	\$ 53,962
Electronic Giving	\$ 23,540
Total Offertory for August	\$ 77,502

Needed to meet expenses
(\$16,000 per week) without
Grand Annual Collection

\$ 80,000

ONLINE GIVING

Online giving is easy! You can use credit or debit cards or your bank account and start or stop at any time. You can include charities like St. Vincent de Paul, special collections, or St. Joseph School.

Please visit: www.stjosephwakefield.org and click on GIVING or, for help with set up and management of online giving, contact Maureen Miller the parish accountant.

PASTOR'S LETTER

Dear Parishioner,

There is so much suffering in the world today. California is rampant with brush fires destroying homes. There are flash floods in Tennessee taking lives. The country of Haiti has undergone devastation from the recent earthquake. There is absolute chaos in Afghanistan. The economy is causing many to be in danger of becoming homeless. The Southern border is rampant with crime, rape, and starvation as immigrants flee their home countries and try to enter the U.S.

The delta variant is causing so much fear. Some are afraid of the virus, and some are afraid of losing the power to make their own choices. The famous mantra, "my body, my choice," was acceptable to many when it meant ending the life of the unborn. However, this claim is unacceptable for those who want to make the choice they believe is best for them. The virus is also causing division between friends and family members as people become disrespectful of each other's choices. These incidents are just a tiny sample of what is going on in our troubled world today.

Our world is becoming engulfed in a storm of darkness, with our lives battered on every side. What can we do? Who can help us? Where are the leaders of integrity and intelligence? The real tragedy is where we have placed God in all of this. Unfortunately, we have Him in quarantine. We don't want Him to infect us with His teaching of repentance, love, and forgiveness. To do so would upset our way of life. Our arrogance keeps us from realizing that He is truly the way, the truth, and the life. Instead, we believe we know better than Him how to live our lives.

When we are so fixated on protecting our bodies, it becomes our primary concern and focus. What about protecting our souls? We must care for our souls by engaging in a relationship with God. Living faithfully in the ways that Jesus taught will bring us peace and joy in this life and eternal life in the next.

We are living in a world of darkness. How can we help? Let us not return evil with evil. Instead, respond with love and be strong in facing the assault of evil. Let us be beacons of light. Bring love into this world by turning away from sin and living the virtues of the Christian life, such as forgiveness, patience, kindness, humility, and love. You may not be able to change much of the suffering, division, chaos, and hate in our world today, but you can have an impact. You can take charge of your own life. With daily prayer, Scripture, and Eucharist, you can be a faithful disciple of Jesus in the way you choose to live your life today and be a living example for others.

The Healing Mass will be on Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 7:00 pm. beginning with the rosary. I am available for confession this week on Tuesday, August 31, 2021 from 6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and on Saturday, September 4, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. in the church or any other time by appointment.

May Jesus continue to shepherd you in all of your needs.

God love you,

