



Saint Mary of Carmen Society

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Anthony Clemente
Festival Vice Chairman

Tax Id #
20-4035392

To our friends, neighbors, and fellow residents of Newton:

Late on the night of June 26th, without any public notice or outreach, the City of Newton abruptly removed the iconic Italian-colored lines on Adams Street. These lines are not just paint, they are sacred symbols of Italian-American pride, religious tradition, and community identity. They have been faithfully re-painted each July since **1935** to honor the Blessed Mother and mark the path of the Saint Mary of Carmen procession to our church.

This tradition is not new. It has existed in harmony with city traffic and public safety regulations for nearly a century. In fact, it has been formally permitted by the City of Newton for decades—long before the current administration.

This surprise removal of our sacred religious public art installation was done hastily and under the cover of darkness, mere weeks before the **90th Annual Festival**.

The sudden invocation of a decades-old law and the timing of this selective enforcement raise serious concerns about motive and priorities. This decision didn't just disrupt logistics, it struck a blow to the heart of our community.

To the generations of immigrant families who built Nonantum, and to the young immigrant families who are learning to carry their legacy forward, this was a painful reminder that our traditions can be erased without warning or respect. It was more than a breach of trust: it was a slap in the face.

We have worked closely and in good faith with city departments over the decades to ensure the safety, structure, and success of the festival. We have always complied with every process, filed the necessary paperwork, and maintained open communication.

At no point were we informed formally, that the painting would be removed. The actions taken that night stand in direct violation of the spirit and content of our relationship with the city.

We are calling on the City to do the right thing:

- **Immediately restore the historic religious procession route on Adams Street**
- **Publicly acknowledge the harm caused to the Nonantum community due to unconscious cultural bias**
- **Recommit to honoring the cultural and religious traditions that have defined this neighborhood for generations**

Let this moment not divide us, let it unite us in defense of what makes our city strong: its diverse neighborhoods, its traditions, and its history. No matter race, religion, creed, or social-economic background, the Nonantum community has always stood together as one—and we always will. Our community does not tolerate bias, exclusion, or the erasure of identity. We respect our differences. Our St Mary Of Carmen Society was formed so that newcomers to our city support each other and stand by each neighbor.

We invite you to stand with us.

In community & in pride,

The members of the Saint Mary of Carmen Society