

HOLYOKE MARCHES

The year's Holyoke St. Patrick's Day parade is special, but then again, so is every parade in Holyoke. It is special to the hundreds of devoted volunteers who lovingly organize this event. It is special to the thousands of marchers and to the tens of thousands of spectators who will cheer from the sideline.

This year's 72nd Annual parade kicks off at 11:10 a.m., on Sunday, March 17, on the feast of St. Patrick's Day itself, and that makes it special too.

Leading up to the parade there are dozens of fundraisers and sponsor nights, pageants, award ceremonies, breakfasts luncheons and dinners. You've got the Colleen Pageant and Coronation, the 2024 Grand Marshal Reception for Holyoke native Mary M. Lynch, the Good Citizenship award for Holyoke Road Race guru Billy Harbilas, and other awards given out to deserving people.

Perhaps the most anticipated award of all is the JFK National Award, presented annually to Americans of Irish descent who have distinguished themselves in their chosen field. President John F. Kennedy got the very first award in 1958, and then it was named in his honor.

This year's JFK Award goes to Boston Celtics play-by-play announcer Mike Gorman, a fitting tribute to Mike's stellar career as a broadcaster, for his service in the U.S. Navy, and for being an all-around great guy and community leader.



Gorman is retiring after this NBA season, from a job he's held since 1981. Basketball fans across New England and around the world will miss Mike's sharp reporting, Irish wit and knowledge of the game.

But Holyoke plans to give Gorman the send-off he deserves. He and his family will be honored at the JFK Award Dinner at Log Cabin

on Saturday, March 16, and at the Holyoke Road Race that morning. Then on parade day, the Gormans have a featured position in the grand Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade procession.

Recognizing distinguished service, that's what the Holyoke parade is all about. Congratulations to Mike Gorman, Mary M. Lynch, Bill Harbilas and to all of this year's award winners for being extra special.

holyokestpatricksparade.co

