



**DECEMBER 15, 2024
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH
 7717 RIVER ROAD - TOWNSEND, TN 37882
 865 – 448 – 6070
 WEBSITE: ST.FRANCISTOWNSEND.ORG
 E-MAIL: STFRANCISTOWNSEND7717@GMAIL.COM

MASS & CONFESSION SCHEDULE

HOLY MASS: Saturday 4:00PM (Vigil Mass) The Rosary is prayed 35 minutes before each Weekend Mass
 Sunday 9:00AM

DAILY MASS: MON, TU, TH & FRI: 8:30AM **(NO MASS ON WEDNESDAYS)** *Check bulletin/website for changes*

CONFESSION: Saturday before Mass: 3:00 - 3:40 PM (Church confessional)
 Sunday Before Mass: 8:15 - 8:40 AM (Church confessional)
 Confessions may also be scheduled by calling the parish office for an appointment.

HOLY DAYS: Check bulletin or website

PARISH MINISTRY TEAM

PASTORRev. Antonio Giraldo DEACONDeacon Jim Schmall OFFICE MANAGERKathy Meyerkord BOOKKEEPERKathleen Halligan LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTORJoAnne Romer-Aylward DIR. OF RELIGIOUS ED.Julie Dew RCIA/OCIABruce Boudin ART & ENVIRONMENTNorene O'Donnell	GARDENS & GROUNDSIlene Rainwater FACILITIESDavid Girard SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITEJoAnne Romer-Aylward PASTORAL CARESuzie Fay ST. CLARE GIFT SHOPCamilla Sorrell COLUMBARIUMBob Eberhardt WELCOMING, EVENTS &All Parishioners SOCIALS TEAM (WEST)
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PARISH ASSOCIATIONS

COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN: Ilene Rainwater **ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:** Debbie Eberhardt

NEW PARISHIONERS: Please contact the pastor or ask an usher for a registration form, and then place the completed form in the offertory basket or mail it to the church office. For more information call 865-448-6070.

PARISHIONERS: Please report any change of contact information to the parish office via e-mail, mail or phone.

BAPTISM: Parents are required to attend the Baptismal Prep Class. Your family must be registered in the parish.

MARRIAGE: Contact the office a minimum of six months prior to the wedding for planning and preparation.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Anyone entering the hospital or in serious ill health is encouraged to be anointed.

BULLETIN DEADLINE: Please email Microsoft Word articles to sfbulletin7717@gmail.com with the subject of "Bulletin Announcement" by Tuesday 12:00PM. All submissions are subject to further editing.



How can St. Francis of Assisi be of assistance/service to you & your loved ones?
 Please contact Suzie Fay with our Pastoral Care Ministry at 423-829-5466 or the Parish office at 865-448-6070.

MASS INTENTIONS: (Mass cards are available upon request at the office.)

Mon 12/16 8:30 AM Monica Nouhan
Tue 12/17 8:30 AM Loretta Bailey
Wed 12/18 **NO MASS**
Thu 12/19 8:30 AM Pat Baker
Fri 12/20 8:30 AM Joe & Mary Petroskey
Sat 12/21 4:00 PM Charles Fiorella
Sun 12/22 9:00 AM Elmer Szekely

To schedule a Mass intention, please contact the Parish Office via phone or email or in person during office hours. Please specify whether the Mass Intention is for a living or deceased loved one. The usual requested donation for a Mass intention is \$10.00 in the Diocese of Knoxville.



PRAYER REQUESTS: (Homebound, sick or recovering parishioners, friends and relatives): Charlotte Graham, Pat Sanders, Judy Sanders, Doreen Mancuso, Naomi Nwadike, Chris Owens, David Holmes, Amy Frink, Myra Montero, Claire Cheadle, Elise Martin, Mike Scully, Paul Fain, Joyce Fain, Raymond Payne, Sue Ann Tippitt, Charles Tippitt, Emmanuel Nwadike, Kay Walker, Julie Schirack, Deb Koehler, Laken DuRussel, Marcus Bolte, Johnny Mallory, Louann Felske, Stephanie Romer, John & Maria Bermudes, Anne Pate, Michael Slater, Rocky Brach, Dennis Richards, Jeff Herzog, Edward McCaughey, Marion McCaughey, Sue Wood

SANCTUARY CANDLE: If you would like to donate to the sanctuary candle fund in memory of or in honor of someone, please contact the Parish Office via phone or email. The cost is \$15 for 1 week.



SANCTUARY FLOWERS: If you would like to donate to the sanctuary flowers fund in memory of or in honor of someone, please contact the Parish Office via phone or email. The cost is \$40.00 for one week.



**INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES
TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS
IN THE EUCHARIST**



Eucharisticrevival.org

*St. John Vianney
(1786 - 1859)*

*“When we receive
Holy Communion,
we experience something
extraordinary -
JOY,
a fragrance,
a well-being
that thrills the whole body
and causes it to exalt.”*

ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon 12/16 9:00 AM Church & Hall Cleaning
Tue 12/17 9:15 AM Lectio Divina
 4:00 PM RCIA Class - PRC
Wed 12/18 1:00 PM Bible Study - PRC
 5:00 PM SVdP - PRC
Thu 12/19
Fri 12/20
Sat 12/21 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 12/22 9:00 AM Mass
 10:30 AM Santa Visit after Mass!

REPENTANCE IS THE DOOR TO A MAGNIFICENT CHRISTMAS



According to the song, “tis’ the season to be jolly.” We hear so much about the joy of this season. Is that how we really experience it? For many people, this is the season of the year that produces not joy but anxiety, friction, exhaustion and debt. There is a great deal of stress because the preparations for Christmas can get out of hand. Also, we are surrounded by images of the perfect Christmas, the perfect tree, perfect food, perfect decorations, perfect family gatherings, perfect guests, and perfect harmony. But Christmas is never that perfect. The perfect Christmas eludes most people every year.

As always, John the Baptist shows us the way to the profound joy that is at the spiritual heart of this season. In the Gospel, several groups of people ask him how they should prepare for the Messiah. John tells the crowds to share what they have with others, the opposite of selfishness and greed. Tax collectors come and he tells them not to extort money from people. Soldiers come to him, and he tells them not to abuse their power. In other words, we clear for the Messiah a path not with bulldozers or earthmovers nor by reading, singing or decorating but by repentance.

We can make John’s message our own. How do we prepare for the coming of the Messiah? It is very tempting to pray for the coming of the Kingdom in the sense that the Lord will impose His Kingdom on others without any personal change on our part. The full coming of the Kingdom will happen in the future in the Lord’s own time. But experiencing the Kingdom in our life now is always possible. The price, however, is clearing a path for the Lord and that means repentance.

The joy of this Gaudete Sunday, or the Sunday in Advent to rejoice, comes from appreciating the fact that our Christmas doesn’t have to be picture-perfect to be truly Christmas. Christ can come to us in our imperfection. His Kingdom can begin to take root in our life today, this year. But we need to prepare the way for the Lord, to clear for Him a straight path and He will come. Whatever the limitations of our life, we will be able to experience the joy of His presence.

In Zephaniah’s words today, the Lord will renew us on the inside with His love. That is a magnificent promise of spiritual renewal, spiritual rejuvenation whatever our age and whatever the condition of our health. In St. Paul’s words today, “the peace of God... will guard your hearts and minds.” What a powerful spiritual security system, the very peace of God within us no matter what is happening around us. In John the Baptist’s words today, “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire,” that burns out the phony, releases the genuine and ignites others.

Repentance is the key to a joy-filled Christmas. Without clearing a straight path for the Lord, Christmas becomes simply a winter frolic without spiritual consequence. And when it’s over, it’s over. With repentance, however, Jesus Christ becomes and remains an important part of our life. There are many ways of clearing a way for the Lord. For us Catholics, one way is very specific and concrete. That way is the sacrament of Penance with its honest self-examination, confession, and intention to change our life, absolution and God’s grace. Repentance is the door to a magnificent Christmas.



CATECHISM

CORNER



On this third weekend of Advent, I would like to “talk” about the Third Joyful Mystery – the Nativity, but first some more “tidbits” about the Advent Wreath! The **FOUR CANDLES**: The Chosen People in the Old Testament waited 4000 years for the coming of the Savior. Our four weeks of Advent represent our preparation and longing for the coming of the Savior. Three of these candles are purple, for in the early Church, Advent was a season of penance and forgiveness. It reminds us to return to the love and kindness of our Savior. One rose or pink candle is lit on the third Sunday of Advent often called “Joyful Sunday.” The pink color

represents joy. On the third Sunday of Advent, today, we pause in our penance and rejoice in the fact that the celebration of the coming of Christ is almost here. This Sunday is also called Gaudete Sunday and like Lent, Advent is a penitential season, so the priest normally wears purple vestments. But on Gaudete Sunday, having passed the midpoint of Advent, the Church lightens the mood a little, and the priest may wear rose vestments. The change in color provides the Church with encouragement to continue their spiritual preparation (especially prayer and fasting) for Christmas and we are joyful because of this. The third candle on the Advent wreath is called the Shepherds’ Candle. The shepherds listened and obeyed the angels even though they were afraid. Then they saw Jesus and believed and told all that had happened to them.

Today we will “talk” about the Third Joyful Mystery which is the Nativity. Bishop Barron offers a prelude to the Third Joyful Mystery on the Word On Fire Website (<https://www.wordonfire.org/rosary-joyful/>) “When we turn to Luke’s familiar account of the birth of Jesus, we see that it commences as one would expect poems and histories in the ancient world to commence with the invocation of powerful and important people: Emperor Augustus (FYI: Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus, born Gaius Octavius; 23 September 63 BC – 19 August AD 14, also known as Octavian (Latin: Octavianus), was the founder of the Roman Empire. He reigned as the first Roman emperor from 27 BC until his death in AD 14.- tidbit from me!) and Quirinius the governor of Syria (FYI: Also translated as Cyrenius, was a Roman aristocrat. After the banishment of the ethnarch Herod Archelaus from the tetrarchy of Judea in AD 6, Quirinius (51 BC – AD 21. Another tidbit from me!) was appointed legate governor of Syria, to which the province of Judaea had been added for the purpose of a census.) But then Luke pulls the rug out from under us for we promptly learned that the story isn’t about Augustus and Quirinius at all but rather about two nobodies making their way from one forgotten outpost of Augustus’s empire to another. When Mary and Joseph arrived in David’s city there was no room even at the crude traveler’s hostel and so their child is born in a cave or some scholars have recently suggested the lower level of a dwelling - the humble part of the house where the animals spent the night. Luke therefore sets up his story as the tale of two rival emperors: Caesar the king of the world and Jesus the baby King. While Caesar rules from his palace in Rome, Jesus has no place to lay His head. While Caesar exercises ranging power, Jesus is wrapped in swaddling clothes. While Caesar surrounds himself with wealthy and sophisticated courtiers, Jesus is surrounded by animals and shepherds of the field. And yet the baby King is more powerful than Augustus. And this is signaled by the presence of an army – stratos (Greek) of angels in the skies over Bethlehem.

All four of the gospels play out as a struggle culminating in the deadly business of the cross between the worldly powers and the Power of Christ. For Jesus is not simply a kindly prophet with a gentle message of forgiveness, He is God coming in person to assume command. He is the Lord, the Word made flesh. When you pray this decade, contemplate the great mystery of the nativity and the subversive presentation of the arrival of the new King.”

During the coming week, please think about this: As the Shepherds’ candle adds its light, think of ways in which you, like the shepherds, can tell others about Jesus. Next week: Wedding at Cana!





kroger community rewards

Thank you St. Francis of Assisi Parishioners!

We have 26 households participating in the Kroger Community Rewards Program, and during the months of September, October, and November those households have earned the church

\$81.70

If you are not yet participating in this wonderful program, please visit Kroger's website and get started!

You shop. Our church gets "free" money!

Direct your browser to <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards> (Our NPO number is XP941).



“ The best present is presence. Maybe during Advent, God is calling you to forgo some of the frenzy - do less shopping and pray more; attend fewer holiday events and do more volunteer service; run around less and spend more time just being, watching, and waiting along with Mary, John the Baptist, all the saints, and the entire Church for the surprising revelation of Jesus - His presence, love, mercy, and life. ”

- Bishop Donald Hying
From his book, *Love Never Fails: Living the Catholic Faith in Our Daily Lives*



Occasionally, we run out of paper bulletins after our weekend Masses. If we have run out of bulletins, you can always request a paper bulletin from the church office or access our bulletins online at our website www.stfrancistownsend.org.

Simply click on the "Bulletin" icon/button on our website's home page and then select the week you wish to view.

Additionally, you may choose to receive the weekly bulletin as an e-mail attachment simply by sending an e-mail with "E-Bulletin" in the subject line to: SFABulletin7717@gmail.com.



Our RCIA classes continue! Whether you are inquiring about the Catholic faith or are already a Catholic wishing to learn more about your faith, please join us in the PRC (Parish Resource Center) on Tuesdays at 4:00 PM! All are welcome - even if you haven't been with us since the first

session! Bring your Bible and a copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Questions? Please contact Deacon Jim: sfdeacon7717@gmail.com OR 901-493-2123.

MARRIAGE MINISTRY PARTNERS NEEDED



The Diocesan Marriage Office is looking for Marriage Ministry Partners. If you would be interested in supporting marriage and family topics please contact Carolyn Krings at ckrings@dioknox.org or 865-584-3307 x5739.

One aspect of our ministry is working with engaged couples and we are pleased to work alongside you sharing your life-experiences in supporting marriages and families in our diocese. Please consider sharing your life experiences with young couples contemplating entering into the world of married life.

Christmas Season 2024 Mass Schedule

Tuesday, December 24	8:30 AM 4:00 PM	No Morning Mass Christmas Eve Mass Prelude Program begins at 3:40 PM OFFICE CLOSED
Wednesday, December 25	9:00 AM	Christmas Day Mass OFFICE CLOSED
Thursday, December 26	8:30 AM	Daily Mass
Friday, December 27	8:30 AM	Daily Mass
Saturday, December 28	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Sunday, December 29	9:00 AM	Mass - The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Monday, December 30	8:00 AM	Daily Mass
Tuesday, December 31	8:30 AM 6:00 PM	No Morning Mass Vigil Mass: Mary Mother of God - Holy Day of Obligation OFFICE CLOSED
Wednesday, January 1	9:00 AM	Vigil Mass: Mary Mother of God - Holy Day of Obligation OFFICE CLOSED
Thursday, January 2	8:30 AM	Daily Mass
Friday, January 3	8:30 AM 9:00 AM NOON	Daily Mass Adoration and Healing Service Benediction and Closing of Adoration
Saturday, January 4	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass: Feast of the Epiphany
Sunday, January 5	9:00 AM	Mass: Feast of the Epiphany
Monday, January 6		Return to normal Mass schedule



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

In today's Gospel John the Baptist says, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise..." Christmas is a time of love and gift giving...please share your abundance by giving a gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that those who do not have clothes and food can share in the blessings of Christmas.

Have you considered answering the call to serve the poor by joining the Society of St. Vincent de Paul? Contact Debbie Eberhardt at 865-312-0141 for more information.

SVDP meets the 1st and 3rd
Wednesdays of the month at 5:00 PM
in the PRC. All are welcome to attend!

Thank You

SVDP DECEMBER "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH" LAUNDRY DETERGENT AND SOFTNER SHEETS



DEACON HAROLD BURKE-SIVERS

"The Dynamic Deacon"



Dc. Harold Burke-Sivers will be speaking at St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Faragut, TN on

Friday 1/3/25 at 6 PM
and
Saturday 1/4/25 at 10 AM

Friday's talk will be a family talk - all ages are welcome - with a theme of "Go and Make Disciples: The Call to Evangelization."

Saturday's talk will be geared toward Men: "Putting on the Armor of God: Preparing for Spiritual Combat."

For more information about Deacon Harold and the Mustang Dads Club, please visit

www.deaconharold.com
www.mustangdads.org

Ticket information can be obtained by scanning the QR codes on the poster in Shea Hall.



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

Open after weekend Masses and by request/appointment after daily Mass

The Gift Shop is fully stocked with Christmas items awaiting your (Last Minute) Christmas Shopping! The gift shop is open after weekend Masses and by request/appointment after daily Masses. Please stop by and take a look at all of the beautiful merchandise.

ADVENT LECTIO DIVINA

A CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNEY DURING ADVENT



*Lectio Divina is
an ancient
contemplative approach
to listening for God in scripture.*

TUESDAYS OF ADVENT

BEGINNING 12/3/24 AT 9:15 (AFTER MASS)

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
12/22/2024	Santa Visits St. Francis of Assisi! After Mass ~10:30 AM	Online: N/A E-mail: stfrancistownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070
1/3 & 4/2025	"The Dynamic Deacon" - The Call to Evangelization (6PM and 10AM) St. John Neumann - Farragut, TN	Online: www.mustangdads.org E-mail: beaubroussard@protonmail.com QRcode: See flyer in Shea Hall
2/21/2025	SAVE THE DATE!!!! Esteban Salazar & Friends in Concert Church and Hall	Online: N/A E-mail: joannera.726@gmail.com Phone: 859-361-4561

END OF THE YEAR DONATIONS



Per IRS RULES: If you are considering a 2024 donation to St. Francis of Assisi Church for tax purposes, checks must be dated 2024 AND received at the parish office no later than December 31st.

If you are mailing in a donation, the envelope MUST BE POSTMARKED no later than December 31st.

Checks or cash received or postmarked after December 31st will be recorded as 2025 gifts. Thank you for considering our beautiful little church on the river as a recipient of your financial gift!