



**DECEMBER 22, 2024
FOURTH 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

PASTOR	Rev. Antonio Giraldo	GARDENS & GROUNDS	Ilene Rainwater
DEACON	Deacon Jim Schmall	FACILITIES	David Girard
OFFICE MANAGER	Kathy Meyerkord	SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITE	JoAnne Romer-Aylward
BOOKKEEPER	Kathleen Halligan	PASTORAL CARE	Suzie Fay
LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTOR	JoAnne Romer-Aylward	ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP	Camilla Sorrell
DIR. OF RELIGIOUS ED.	Julie Dew	COLUMBARIUM	Bob Eberhardt
RCIA/OCIA	Bruce Boudin	WELCOMING, EVENTS &	All Parishioners
ART & ENVIRONMENT	Norene O'Donnell	SOCIALS TEAM (WEST)	

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	12/23	8:30 AM	Philip Peychal
Tue	12/24	4:00 PM	Parishioners of SFA (Christmas Eve)
Wed	12/25	9:00 AM	Parishioners of SFA (Christmas Day)
Thu	12/26	8:30 AM	Poor Souls in Purgatory
Fri	12/27	8:30 AM	Charlie Graham
Sat	12/28	4:00 PM	Teresa Peacock & Violet Jastrab
Sun	12/29	9:00 AM	Joseph Angle

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 Montera, 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: The sanctuary flowers are in honor of Ron and Charlie Graham on their 30th Wedding Anniversary. 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**

*St. Alphonsus Liguori
(1696 - 1787)*

*“Of all devotions,
that of adoring Jesus
in the Blessed Sacrament
is the greatest
of the sacraments,
the one dearest to God
and the one
most helpful to us.”*



Eucharisticrevival.org

ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon	12/23	9:00 AM	Church & Hall Cleaning
Tue	12/24		OFFICE CLOSED
		3:30 PM	Prelude Program
		4:00 PM	Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
Wed	12/25		OFFICE CLOSED
		9:00 AM	Christmas Day Mass
Thu	12/26		
Fri	12/27		
Sat	12/28	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass
Sun	12/29	9:00 AM	Mass

PATIENT EXPECTATION AND FAITHFUL SURRENDER



PASTOR'S NOTES

This is the last weekend of Advent! We are only a few days away from celebrating once again the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the message we receive in our liturgy is powerful. God keeps promises! When we grasp this eternal truth and let it get inside of us, we are overwhelmed with gratitude and joy.

Each year, the gospel passage for the fourth Sunday of Advent is a story of Mary's pregnancy. This year is the story of the Visitation. Because it is so familiar, we can gloss over some of the details. After being told by the angel that she is pregnant with the Son of God, Mary utters the great prayer – the Magnificat – “May it be done to me according to your word.” She answers with a beautiful and powerful YES to God's invitation. And then we hear in today's gospel that Mary “traveled to the hill country in haste.”

I could imagine that there were plenty of things for Mary to do immediately following this unexpected news. Just think of what we do today to prepare for a child – doctor's visits, preparing a crib or nursery, the worries, the stresses, the excitements! St. Luke however does not include any of these preparations in the account. Rather, we are told of Mary's immediate, hasty visit to her cousin Elizabeth. You might think that the last thing Mary needed was a long journey to the hillside, but this is what she does. And so, despite all that the gospel writer could have focused on, Luke includes the visit and the embrace of these two women, Elizabeth and Mary, and their two different experiences of motherhood. The contrast and the tension of these two mothers are brought together in a beautiful embrace. Not only the embrace of Elizabeth and Mary, but also the embrace of John the Baptist and Jesus.

Despite the contrast, both mothers are open to God's work through them in such a beautiful and profound way, though neither could possibly know what it would require of them or of their sons. Both of these women model a gift of faith and will literally nurture God's presence on earth.

In Elizabeth, we see an example of faith through long suffering. How many of us here have desired something? Perhaps it is a child, but perhaps it is more stable employment? Or freedom from an illness, an addiction, or an affliction? How many of us have wanted this for a loved one? How many of us have been teetering on the edge of despair and trying to hold onto hope in the face of this long disappointment. How many of us have been angry with God in the face of these circumstances?

In Mary we see an example of faith in unexpected hardship. Certainly, children are a gift, but not without difficulty. How many of us have encountered a hardship and struggled to see it as a gift? How many of us are called by God to take a step into the unknown, to leave comfort and safety, and to follow God in an unexpected way?

This is why Mary goes with haste to meet her cousin Elizabeth. This is why St. Luke includes this story in the gospel and why the church gives us this gospel on the last Sunday before Christmas. Both Mary and Elizabeth model for us the patient expectation and the faithful surrender that will be answered by the coming Christ. Like Mary and Elizabeth, may we be open to the unexpected and awesome gift of God in our lives.



CATECHISM

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OMGOSH! We have arrived at the Fourth Sunday in Advent! WHERE did the time go??? OK, I'm calmed down now..... Let's begin again: Here we are! Happy Fourth Sunday of Advent! The tidbit I would like to share this week concerns the fourth candle on the Advent wreath. It is called the Angels' Candle. Luke, in his Gospel, tells us about the angel who visited Zechariah to inform him that he and Elizabeth would have a son. (Sound familiar? Remember Sts. Anne and Joachim?) The angel also appeared to Mary to tell her that God had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus. Later a chorus of angels sang songs of praise to God to the shepherds in their fields. Matthew, in his Gospel, tells us that on the last day, Jesus will send out His angels to the four corners of the earth to gather his chosen people from one end of the earth to the other. (Matthew 24:31)

On this Fourth weekend of Advent, I would like to reflect on the Second Luminous Mystery which is the wedding feast at Cana. Bishop Barron comments in his prelude to the Second Luminous Mystery: "Weddings are a consistent biblical symbol for the mystical union between God and His people. God wants to marry His people Israel because He loves them so passionately. He wants to fill them with His own life - consummating the marriage if you will. Now what is the fulfillment of this prophecy? Nothing other than the incarnation. When a divine nature and a human nature came together in the unity of a divine person to form a marriage between God and Israel. Jesus is the Wedding of heaven and earth, the marriage of divinity and humanity. He is the Bridegroom and the Church (US!) is the bride in Him the most intimate union is achieved between God and the world. At this wedding, Jesus changes 180 gallons of water into the wine of the divine life.....an intoxication of grace. When we are infused with the divine life, when we are married to God, life never runs out."

When you recite this decade of the Second Luminous Mystery, "consider the great mystery of Christ's own wedding feast, the abundance of divine grace coming to Israel and all of humanity through the incarnation."

Whenever I reflect on this scripture reading/ Second Luminous Mystery of the Wedding at Cana, I think of how Mary reacted to the request from the "servers." The servers came to Mary with the request, then Mary went to Jesus with the request and then Jesus fulfilled the request. When I reflect on this scripture from the Gospel of John 2:1-11, it reinforces my prayers of intercession to Mother Mary. There have been times in my life that only my "Momma Mary" could handle for me.

I certainly hope you enjoyed the "meditations" from Bishop Robert Barron. They are from the Hallow App with Bishop Barron leading the recitation of the different Mysteries of the Rosary. In addition, I would like ya'll to know I had a little bit of help deciding which mysteries to use for the Four Weeks of Advent: thank you Debbie Eberhardt, Martha Frink and Deacon Jim! I appreciate your input and your insight.

In a few days we will be celebrating the Birth of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, so if I don't get a chance to see/talk with you, I would like to wish everyone from our beautiful "Little Church on the River" a very Happy and Merry Christmas at St. Francis of Assisi!



Visit [Tribe of Many Arrows](#) on Etsy.
This image is used with their permission.



Our RCIA classes are taking a Christmas break and will resume on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. 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: sfadeacon7717@gmail.com OR 901-493-2123.



The Wisdom of the Christmas Season

“ *The world needs wisdom.
More than that it needs wise people.
You cannot Google wisdom.*

Google has no wisdom - it has information and knowledge.

What wisdom is: is truth lived. It cannot be transmitted by books and lectures alone. Wisdom is most potent and most transmissible when someone lives it.

Think deeply about something this advent and Christmas Season. Deep thought is a beautiful thing. It will bring you joy, the joy of getting clearer every day. About what matters most and what doesn't matter at all. That clarity will inform your decisions and every wise decision brings with it more joy. ”

- Matthew Kelly



Christmas Flowers

The Christmas Flowers that will decorate our altar this year during the Christmas season have been donated by several parishioners in memory or in honor of someone they know.

In Memory of

Lois & Elmer Szekely
Lois Zehnder
George Szekely
Edward Szekely
Mary Sellers
Raymond & Dorothy Simons
Molly Pickett
Margaret Jordan
Judy Compton
Normand & Terese Messier
Ed Murphy
Virginia Ann Welsh
Norman & Lucille Weiland
Herma & Ralph Psychal
Mario & Natilye Bummara
Catherine Kirkham

Ada-Fain-Fendley
Marion E. Ganley
Jack Troupe
Philip Psychal
Kathleen Denning
Berry Rytel
Joseph & Marlena Rytel
Joe & Martioca Rytel
Ralph & Irene Meyerkord
Jesse & Gloria Colvin
Ted & Violet Jastrab
John & Theresa Peacock
Bernard & Loretta Eberhardt
Raymond & Joann Nieman
Paul & Sharon Durm

Deceased members of the Nenadovich Family
Deceased members of the Wilson Family
Friends of Kathy Davis: Sue, Shelby & Lia
Betty & Frank Czerniewski
Betty & Joe Tkatch
Charles Fiorella
Grace & Charles Hearth
Ruthie McCarley
Dick H.
Dick C.
The Harbit & Davis Families
The Provenzo Family
Mr & Mrs. P. J. Scholsser
Gabriel Ruiz
Jesse Fendley

In Honor of:

Sr. Millicent Zimmer
Fr. Anthony Mulderry
Fr. Antonio Giraldo
Fr. Eric Zeeger
Claire Martin



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

Jesus was born during the night of the year when darkness is the longest. The Savior of the world comes for the people in dark places. The real, lasting, and deep joy is that the Light shines there. Through your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, "Light" has shown, bringing real, lasting and deep joy to the hearts of the poor who live in dark places in our streets and neighborhood.

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.



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!

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
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

Another Great Christmas Party!



*The Barn
Event Center
2024*

