



DECEMBER 17, 2023 THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH
7717 RIVER ROAD - TOWNSEND, TN 37882
865 - 448 - 6070

WEBSITE: STFRANCISTOWNSEND.ORG
E-MAIL: STFRANCISTOWNSEND7717@GMAIL.COM

MASS & CONFESSION SCHEDULE

HOLY MASS: Saturday – Vigil Mass - 4:00PM
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 (Church confessional)
Sunday Before Mass:
8:15 - 8:40 (Church confessional)
Confessions may also be scheduled
by calling the parish office for an
appointment.

HOLY DAYS: Check bulletin or website

The Rosary is prayed 35 minutes before each Weekend Mass

PARISH MINISTRY TEAM

PASTOR: Rev. Antonio Giraldo
DEACON: Deacon Jim Schmall
OFFICE MANAGER: Kathy Meyerkord
BOOKKEEPER: Kathleen Halligan
LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTOR: JoAnne Romer-Aylward
**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION:** Julie Dew
OCIA: Bruce Boudin
WELCOMING, EVENTS AND SOCIALS (WEST): All
GARDENS & GROUNDS: Ilene Rainwater
FACILITIES: David Girard
SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITE: JoAnne Romer-Aylward
**PASTORAL CARE
(SICK & HOMEBOUND):** Suzie Fay
ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP: Camilla Sorrell
COLUMBARIUM: Bob Eberhardt

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 parish priest a minimum of six months before the wedding to allow for marriage preparation formation.

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 to fit the format of the bulletin. THANKS!

PASTORAL CARE AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI: How can St. Francis of Assisi be of assistance/service to you & your loved ones? Please contact Suzie Fay at 423-829-5466 or contact the office at 865-448-6070.

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

Mon 12/18 8:30 AM Alfonzo Cambron Esquivel †
Tue 12/19 8:30 AM Alfonzo Cambron Esquivel †
Wed 12/20 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 12/21 8:30 AM Alfonzo Cambron Esquivel †
Fri 12/22 8:30 AM Alfonzo Cambron Esquivel †
Sat 12/23 4:00 PM Philip Peychal †
Sun 12/24 9:00 AM St. Francis of Assisi Parishioners

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, Ann Sorvillo, Naomi Nwadike, Jerome Chris Owens, Christopher Kramer, Cam King, David Holmes, Amy Frink, Myra Montero, Robert Modisett, Tony Foster, Mary Sellers, Claire Cheadle, Kathy Janke, Charlotte Fernandez, Elise Martin, Paula Watson, Mike Lauer, Tom Beasley, Bruce Haverkos, Mike Scully, Paul Fain, Joyce Fain, Normand Messier, Jr., Charles Jones, Kelly Keran, Lori O'Toole, Raymond Payne, Sue Ann Tippitt, Charles Tippitt, Emmanuel Nwadike, Julie Schirack

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: No Sanctuary Flowers during Advent.

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 two weeks.



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST



Philippians 3:20-21

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our mortal bodies, to conform with his glorified body.

ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon 12/18 9:00 AM Church & Hall Cleaning
Tue 12/19
Wed 12/20
Thu 12/21
Fri 12/22
Sat 12/23 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 12/24 9:00 AM Mass (4th Sunday of Advent)
 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Mass



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

In today's Gospel John the Baptist says, "I am the voice of one crying in the desert; make straight the way of the Lord." Let us ask for the grace to help others to know the love of the Lord.

Christmas is a time of love and gift giving...please give 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.

Is there a family you know who needs assistance? Please call the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (865-312-0141) so that together we can help the suffering and poor to celebrate Christmas.

Reminder: When contributing to St. Vincent de Paul by check, please make the check payable to The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP). The Poor Box is located in the church vestibule.

SVDP meets the
1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month
at 5:00 PM in the PRC.

All Are Welcome!

Thank You
for your continued support of SVDP!

SVDP DECEMBER "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH"



Laundry Detergent and Softener Sheets

SVDP 2023 CHRISTMAS BASKET GIVEAWAY



DEACON JIM'S CONTACT INFO

Deacon Jim Schmall has asked that we include his contact information in the bulletin.

1621 Hughes Loop
Maryville, TN 37803-4223
junglejim1908@gmail.com
901-493-2123 Cell

YEAR END FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Thank you to everyone who has been donating so faithfully throughout the year.

- **Christmas Collection:** This year half of the Christmas Collection will be given to the Diocese.
- **Cut-Off for Year-End Donations:** Please note that any donations for 2023 must be either postmarked or in our possession by 12/31/23. Giving your Solemnity of Mary donation at the Sunday Mass on 12/31 will be recorded as a 2023 donation.



WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP—12/10/2023

2nd Sunday in Advent —Attendance: 155

Sunday Offertory.....	\$ 6,608.00
Donation Box	0.00
Holy Days	595.00
Other Donations*	305.00
Donations for the Week	\$ 7,508.00

Year-to-Date Donations	\$ 87,514.60
Year-to-Date Budgeted Donations.....	85,095.74
Year-to-Date Donation Surplus	\$ 2,418.86

Other Donations Not in Budget

Maintenance Fund	\$ 340.00
Parish Charity	180.00
Second Collection.....	571.00
Total Non-Budget Donations	\$ 1,091.00

* Mass Intentions, Flowers, Candles, Facility Use, etc.

** Based on Year-to-Date Total Donations minus Year-to-Date Budgeted Donations



To receive the bulletin as an e-mail attachment every week, simply send an e-mail with "E-Bulletin" in the subject line to

SFABulletin7717@gmail.com.



EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS PILGRIMAGE

Join other pilgrims from the Diocese of Knoxville on a pilgrimage to the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis **July 17-24, 2024.**

The diocesan pilgrimage will include round trip transportation, a four-night hotel stay, and admission for all Eucharistic Congress events, speakers, and the closing Mass.

There is also a tickets only option, which excludes transportation and lodging. Buses will depart from Knoxville on July 17, 2024 and return on July, 21, 2024.

The cost and other details can be found at Dioknox.org/Revival, by email at Revival@Dioknox.org, or by phone at 423-596-0181.

The pricing ranges from \$541-\$1,098 per pilgrim, depending on the occupancy of the room. This includes 4 night hotel accommodations and admission to all events and speakers.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



These rose-colored priestly vestments today are meant to proclaim the theme of the day. This is Gaudete Sunday, “*Rejoice and be glad*” Sunday. Christ brought joy to the world, and we are being brought to Christ.

This is our joy. That God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we look with joy to celebrating his birthday. In this mystery of God’s fulfillment of our desires, joy has blossomed on earth.

The prophet Isaiah speaking to us in our first reading tells us he was sent to bring glad tidings to the poor, that he rejoices in the Lord, and in God is the joy of his soul. The response, which is always from the Book of Psalms, is today taken from St. Luke’s gospel. It is Mary’s hymn of joy which she enthusiastically proclaimed when she visited her cousin Elizabeth after the annunciation. St. Paul in the second reading tells us to rejoice always. His instruction “rejoice” implies that rejoicing is more of a choice in attitude rather than a feeling that spontaneously comes over us. John the Baptist from whom we hear in today’s gospel, was an austere person, but his message was a joyful one, joyful because the Lord was coming. John was honored to have been chosen by God to point him out to prepare the people for that coming.

We continue our Advent journey, which at times may have been dark and uncertain. But on Gaudete Sunday we must rejoice, for our period of preparation and waiting is ending. The light is near. The prophet Isaiah, proclaiming God’s word after the return from exile, says it is a new day and that it is time to rejoice. God will bring justice; God will bring liberty to captives and give release to prisoners. The light of faith was kept alive by the prophets, and so it is now time to rejoice as a bride and bridegroom celebrating their wedding day.

We can rejoice for the light - Jesus the Lord - is near. For the past two weeks in our gospel, we have been told of the need to prepare for the Lord. Today we hear that the light is near: Make a straight path for the Lord; it is time to rejoice. It is time to cast off deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Jesus the light comes to dispel the darkness, for the Lord is near.

All of us must pass through dark nights in our journey of life. As we experience these difficult challenges, we must constantly seek the light. But we know that the light is found at the end of the tunnel. We must, therefore, persevere in order to find the light.

What dark nights have you experienced? How have you fared, and what is your status today? Most people I have talked to believe the past covid virus was a dark night for humanity. For some, the dark night is loneliness. For others, the dark night is illness, be it our own sickness or that of a family member or loved one. There are times where the darkness is experienced through the loss of a job or underemployment. The dark night for a few is a loss of faith. We perceive the absence of God, and we wonder why God has abandoned us and does not answer our prayers as we think God should. In order to successfully traverse these dark nights, we must continually seek the light. As we continue our Advent journey, let us cast off darkness and seek the light. It is time to rejoice; the Lord is near.

CATECHISM CORNER

Dear St. Francis of Assisi Parishioners,

We have arrived at the half-time of Advent, for you football fans, which I happen to be! OR - Liturgically - we are in week 3 and will be lighting the Pink candle, pink is the liturgical color for **JOY**.

This week the candle is referred to as the **JOY** candle, also known as the Shepherd's Candle, and also referred to as Gaudete Sunday meaning rejoice or praise. This candle takes us back to the **JOYful** anticipation of the shepherds who journeyed to see Jesus in Bethlehem, even before the wise men.

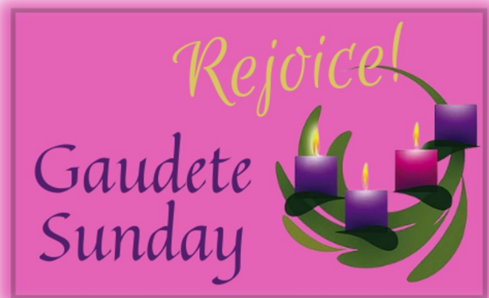
But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great **JOY** for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' (Luke 2:10-12)

As in the previous week, again this candle builds off of the **PEACE** (The Bethlehem Candle). Notice that the shepherds are traveling to Bethlehem to see the new born king, the Messiah. The **JOY** the shepherds must have felt when they laid their eyes on Jesus, how privileged they were to be the first to see the new born king.

I would like to leave you with a challenge this week: let all of us spread the gift of **JOY** to everyone we meet.

With that, I wish a **JOYous** third week of Advent and many **JOYful** Advent Blessings,

Yvonne Peychal



SUNDAY MORNINGS COFFEE, DONUTS, AND FELLOWSHIP

A clipboard with sign-up sheets for our Sunday morning coffee, etc. is available on the wall in Shea Hall next to the bulletin board for anyone who would be interested in hosting any given Sunday. Hosting duties include (but are not necessarily limited to) providing a small assortment of pastries (donuts, cupcakes, muffins, scones, danishes, etc... no casseroles or main-course dishes, just light finger-food pastries please), setting up, cleaning up after fellowship, and taking out the trash. If you have questions, please contact Donna Czerniewski (847-668-4074) who is coordinating this ministry. We need your help to keep this ministry active!



**CHURCH DIRECTORY
PICTURES
ARE AVAILABLE
ONLINE**

Simply direct your browser of choice to **http://www.cheryns.smugmug.com**.

Scroll down to “**galleries**” and select “**St. Francis Directory 2023.**” If you would like to purchase a photo, select an option from the menu on the left of the photo and follow the instructions (a printed 8x12 photo is only \$6.25 and a downloaded photo is only \$.01—ONE PENNY!).



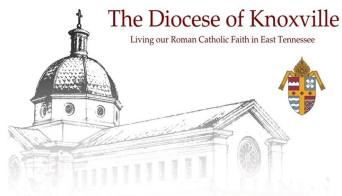
Occasionally, we run out of paper bulletins after our weekend Masses. If we have run out of bulletins, you can always request a paper bulletin from the church office or access our bulletins online at our website www.stfrancistownsend.org. Just click on the “Bulletin” icon/button on our website’s home 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.



Are you receiving your copy of the East Tennessee Catholic newspaper? All parishioners should be receiving this publication monthly. Several parishioners notified us recently that they weren’t receiving them so we’re trying to make sure everyone is aware of this informative newspaper. Please contact the office if you are not getting your copy.



DioNotes
a newsletter for our parishioners

Are you receiving your weekly Diocesan DioNotes e-mails? DioNotes is an electronic/online newsletter for all the faithful in the diocese of Knoxville. If you are not yet on the mailing list, and would like to be, go to www.DioKnox.org, scroll down to the bottom of the page until you see this section:

Click through and follow the instructions to sign up.


Subscribe to DioNotes

Click to Subscribe

Receive our weekly newsletter in your email inbox.

*Parish Christmas Party
December 10, 2023
The Barn Event Center*



The background of the entire page is a soft, artistic illustration of the Holy Family in a stable. Mary is seated on the left, holding the infant Jesus. Joseph is kneeling on the right, looking down at the child. The scene is set in a rustic stable with stone walls and straw on the floor. The lighting is warm and gentle, creating a peaceful atmosphere.

Christmas Season Mass Schedule

Saturday, December 23	4:00 pm	4th Sunday in Advent Vigil Mass
Sunday, December 24	9:00 am 4:00 pm	4th Sunday in Advent Mass Christmas Eve Mass
Monday, December 25	9:00 am	Christmas Day Mass (OFFICE CLOSED)
Tuesday, December 26	8:30 am	Mass
Wednesday, December 27	No Morning Mass	
Thursday, December 28	8:30 am	Mass
Friday, December 29	8:30 am	Mass
Saturday, December 30	4:00 pm	Vigil Mass: Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
Sunday, December 31	9:00 am	Mass: Holy Family of Jesus Mary & Joseph
Monday, January 1	8:30 am	Mass: Solemnity of Mary (Not a Holy Day of Obligation)
Tuesday, January 2	Return to normal Mass times	