



DECEMBER 3, 2023 FIRST 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.	12/4	8:30 AM	Kerry O'Brien †, Michael O'Brien †
TUES.	12/5	8:30 AM	Brian Barker †
WED.	12/6	NO MORNING MASS	
THURS.	12/7	8:30 AM	Kerry O'Brien †, Michael O'Brien †
FRIDAY	12/8	9:00 AM	Alfonzo Cambron Esquivel †
SAT.	12/9	4:00 PM	Robert Cramton †
SUN.	12/10	9:00 AM	Alfonzo Cambron Esquivel †

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

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

St. John Damascene (c. 675-749)

"The Eucharist is a fire which inflames us."



**ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP
OPEN FOR BUSINESS
AFTER WEEKEND MASSES**

ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon	12/4	9:00 AM	Church & Hall Cleaning
Tue	12/5		
Wed	12/6	5:00 PM	SVDP
Thu	12/7	6:00 PM	Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass
Fri	12/8	9:00 AM	Immaculate Conception Mass
Sat	12/9	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass
Sun	12/10	9:00 AM	Mass



PASTOR'S NOTES

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Today we begin a new year in our religion life and our worship. We start preparing for our Lord's birthday. But we prepare for more than that. We prepare for all his comings.

Even unbelievers have begun searching for the best Christmas gifts for their loved ones. We, for our part, have to remember the most loved one, our Lord Jesus Christ. What is the choicest gift for him? Needless to think about it; He gave us himself, and he wants

from us our very selves. Advent is the time of preparing our gift of self to Christ. Our preparation involves looking back, looking to the present, and looking forward. Today's readings help us to do it.

In the reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, the people of God are pleading to God to come to their aid. They are back from exile. They thought it would be all roses at home in Israel. But in fact things are a mess. They felt dirty by their sins, shamed by their betrayals, and justly abandoned to their troubles. They are lonely for God and his help. They call to God to come as their Lord and Savior.

By the time of the second reading, several years later, their cry had been answered. God the son has torn open heavens and come down in the Incarnation. The Virgin Mary had conceived, Christ had been born on the first Christmas, and his resurrection had taken place. The first Christians had been called, and we are hearing from them through St. Paul.

Paul's point is: Do not settle for what Christ has already done. Look forward for his return. Keep serving with your wonderful gifts so you will be free of blame and eager for his second coming. In Mark's Gospel, our Lord's parable tells us the kind of waiting we must do. His parable applies both to his coming to call us individually, and to his coming to call home the whole human race.

Our Advent worship of waiting, then, is really a waiting for all the comings of the Lord into our lives. We meditate on his past comings; we alert ourselves to his daily comings into our lives; we look to the celebration of his birthday; and we prepare for his final coming and our going home to him.

The Advent waiting is really a special waiting, is an active waiting. It's not like waiting for your ride to come church or to go buy groceries. It is a waiting of preparation, a waiting by doing, a waiting for making everything ready for the Master's return.

The parable is a guide for the Advent waiting. Our waiting is not passive but active. This waiting is sometimes a painful waiting. As we saw in the first reading, things were not going right. The people were suffering. As Jesus told us, we too will suffer. Our waiting is also progressive. Unlike the people of Old, we don't have to wait until Jesus' Incarnation and resurrection. Furthermore, Jesus keeps coming in many ways. He visits us through life's events, through prayer, and through sacrament. At this Mass, he will rend the heavens and come down to us. But we must be alert, or we won't recognize these comings. Advent is meant to make us more sensitive to the many ways the Lord keeps coming into our lives.

This waiting is communicative. We do not wait as though God is far away like a bus out of sight. By prayer we talk to God already present, and beg him to become more present. We wait to be fully with him as love desires. This waiting is also penitential. We search our lives for the obstacles to his coming, find them, and remove them. We correct what is wrong, stir sorrow for our sins, and confess them. We pray more, go to Mass more, we do whatever we can do to intensify our love life with God.

As we begin a new liturgical year, we might ask ourselves, are we any better prepared to meet him today than we were a year ago? If we backtracked or just stayed in the same place spiritually, we need to hear Jesus once again tell us "stay awake, be alert."

CATECHISM CORNER

Blessed First Sunday of Advent and Happy New (Church) Year dear parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi. As we begin this new Church year, we also begin a new cycle of the lectionary for our Scripture. We are now in Cycle B. This is the second time I have been asked to write the Catechism Corner. My reflections will be on the Advent Wreath, one candle per week. Each candle deserves its own corner, I **hope** I do this season justice.

Before we discuss the first candle, let me remind you of the meaning of the Advent Wreath itself. The circular shape of the wreath symbolizes God's infinite love for us, the evergreens used to make the wreath symbolize life and growth, and green is the color of **hope**. Are you seeing a pattern with the word **hope**?

Why the first candle of Advent is important is because it serves as a new beginning. Advent which is taken from the Latin word Adventus means arrival. The candle represents **HOPE** or the Prophecy Candle. The first candle takes us back to Isaiah's foretelling of the birth of Christ and all the promises made in the Old Testament. We read, pray and reflect on the **hope** God's plan gives us, fulfilled by the life and death of Christ and the promise of Christ's return. It is fitting that the color of the candle is purple, the primary color of Advent and a color that symbolizes royalty.

In the words of Pope Francis: "Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. May we let ourselves be drawn by The Light of God made man".

Have a wonderful first week of Advent, next week we will enjoy learning about the second candle of Advent **PEACE**.

God Bless all of you this beautiful Advent Season.
Yvonne Peychal



Give yourselves a huge pat on the back! We have achieved 85% participation upon completion of our photography sessions for the new pictorial directory! The pictures are available on

<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!).

Hopefully the new directories will be available some time in January, 2024. We are still looking for recent photos (from the last couple of years) of St. Francis of Assisi Parish life that you might be willing to share in our new pictorial directory! We are looking for pictures of any church gathering that celebrates the family life of this parish! If you have some pictures you would like to share, please email them (and any questions you might have) to JoAnneRA.726@gmail.com.



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

As we begin Advent we are called to “Be watchful! Be alert” as we stand in joyful anticipation for the grace of Christmas to once again bless our lives.

Your gift in the St. Vincent de Paul Poor Box will help the poor to celebrate the grace of God’s love this 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



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP



**ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SALE
15% OFF**



Come shop at the St. Clare Gift Shop during our Advent/Christmas Sale. We are well stocked with necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, rosaries and statues for gifts or for yourself. All items within the gift shop will be sold at 15% off (tax included). This sale will continue through December 31. The gift shop is open before and after the 4 pm Saturday and the 9 am Sunday Masses.

In addition, the shop will be open on **December 12 and 14 from 9 am until 2 pm**. You may also call the office to make an appointment. Please note that this sale does not include any of the items on the Smokies Crafts table (Nativities, Cabins and other locally made items).

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

CALENDARS FOR SVDP NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Each year, St. Vincent de Paul gives our Neighbors in Need calendars along with their Christmas Food Basket. If you have any 2024 Calendars that you will not be using, please leave them on the back counter in Shea Hall and we will collect them for our Christmas giveaway.

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.

2ND COLLECTION - RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

You can help. “Religious are blessed to serve,” says Dominican Father Bertrand Ebben, age 90. Please donate to the Retirement Fund for Religious next week (December 9 & 10). Your gift will provide essential care for nearly 25,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests who have dedicated their lives to serving others. Let us show our gratitude to these selfless individuals by giving generously.



Photos: Jim Judkis. ©2023 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Used with permission.

WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP—11/26/2023

Feast of Christ the King —Attendance: 177

Sunday Offertory.....	\$ 1,766.00
Donation Box	0.00
Holy Days	0.00
Other Donations*	70.00
Donations for the Week	\$ 1,836.00

Year-to-Date Donations	\$ 74,485.60
Year-to-Date Budgeted Donations.....	78,023.72
Year-to-Date Donation Deficit**	\$ 3,538.12

Other Donations Not in Budget

Maintenance Fund	\$ 150.00
Parish Charity	0.00
Total Non-Budget Donations	\$ 150.00

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

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

2ND COLLECTION - CATHOLIC CHARITIES OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT SERVICES

A collection to assist Catholic Charities of East TN Office of Immigrant Services will be taken at the Masses celebrated at St. Francis on December 16 & 17.

The Office of Immigrant Services is a DOJ recognized law office that provides immigration legal services to immigrants and refugees. It offers legal assistance with family reunification, adjustment of status for refugees and asylees, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) renewals, humanitarian services under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and more. Your gift will help Catholic Charities in their important work throughout our diocese.

PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY—DECEMBER 10; 4 -7 PM

Just a reminder for those who have a paid reservation, our annual parish Christmas Party will be held this coming **Sunday, December 10th at 4 PM at The Barn Event Center of the Smokies**. Entertainment after dinner will include the return of our **Ornament Exchange game**. **Please bring a wrapped, non-breakable ornament if you wish to play.**