



AUGUST 24, 2025 21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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

WEEKDAY MASS: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday at 8:30 AM (NO MASS ON WEDNESDAYS)
WEEKEND MASS: Saturday 4:00PM (Vigil Mass) The Rosary is prayed 35 minutes before each Weekend Mass
Sunday 9:00AM
HOLY DAYS: Vigil Mass 6:00 PM (evening before); Holy Day Mass 9:00 AM (day of)
CONFESSION: Saturday before Mass: 3:00 - 3:40 PM (Church confessional)
Sunday before Mass: 8:15 - 8:40 AM (Church confessional)
By Appointment: 865-448-6070

PARISH MINISTRY TEAM

PASTORFr. Antonio Giraldo	GARDENS & GROUNDS Ilene Rainwater
DEACONDc. Jim Schmall	FACILITIES David Girard
OFFICE MANAGERSKatrina Allocco & Lesa Schmall	SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITE JoAnne Romer-Aylward
BOOKKEEPERKathleen Halligan	PASTORAL CARE Suzie Fay
LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTORJoAnne Romer-Aylward	ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP Camilla Sorrell
DIR. OF RELIGIOUS ED.Julie Dew	COLUMBARIUM Bob Eberhardt
OCIADc. Jim Schmall	WELCOMING, EVENTS & All Parishioners
ART & ENVIRONMENTMichele Girard & Norene O'Donnell	SOCIALS TEAM (WEST)
	<u>PARISH ASSOCIATIONS:</u>
	ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY: Debbie Eberhardt
	COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN: Ilene Rainwater

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 the church office at 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 sfabulletin7717@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

Mon 8/25 8:30 AM Margaret Jordan †
Tue 8/26 8:30 AM Noah Bell
Wed 8/27 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 8/28 8:30 AM Edward Murphy †
Fri 8/29 8:30 AM Ruben Fraire †
Sat 8/30 4:00 PM Anne McTavish †
Sun 8/31 9:00 AM Elizabeth Ann Kirkpatrick †

To schedule a Mass intention, please contact the Parish Office via phone or email or in person during office hours. Mass cards are available at the church office. 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): Pat Sanders, Doreen Mancuso, Naomi Nwadike, David Holmes, Amy Frink, Claire Cheadle, Elise Martin, Paul Fain, Joyce Fain, Charles Tippitt, Emmanuel Nwadike, Julie Schirack, Laken DuRussel, Marcus Bolte, Stephanie Romer, John & Maria Bermudes, Michael Slater, Rocky Brach, Dennis Richards, Jeff Herzog, Marion McCaughey, Sue Wood, Sue Corsini, Adela Maurer, Bill Irby, Teresa Williams, Jeffrey Garrison, Ann Day, Ed Welsh, Thomas Fay, Sofia Graziano, Dale DuRussel, Suzie Fay, Beaux Stephen Crane



We have been praying for Layla Sexton and Louann Felske for many months. Layla is improving every day! Louann had a second surgery which was successful and, with therapy, she anticipates a full recovery. They have both been removed from our prayer request list but continued prayers are always welcomed!

Lord, thank you for our answered prayers!

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. Thank You!



SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

If you would like to donate to the altar flowers fund in memory of or in honor of someone, contact the Parish Office via phone or email. The cost is \$40.00 for 1 week. Thank You!



ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon 8/25 9:00 AM Church & Hall Cleaning
Tue 8/26
Wed 8/27
Thu 8/28
Fri 8/29
Sat 8/30 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 8/31 9:00 AM Sunday Mass



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

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



ONLY THE NARROW DOOR WILL LEAD TO ETERNAL LIFE

The Jews were in exile in Babylon at the time today's Gospel was proclaimed. They had been in exile for about two generations and they had given up any hope of returning to the land of Judea and to their beloved city, Jerusalem. The prophet tells God's disheartened people not to lose hope; they would once again worship in Jerusalem. Moreover, there will come a time when even people from foreign nations would join the Jewish people in worshipping the God of Israel. Most surprising of all, foreigners would be accepted as priests. This radical concept was unthinkable. Basically, the Jews thought they had a monopoly on

God's love, and they thought that Gentiles had very little chance for salvation or for sharing in God's kingdom. This question about salvation comes up in today's gospel: how many people will be saved?

Today's gospel presents Jesus uncompromising challenge regarding the serious demands of true discipleship. We read in Scripture that his disciples often did not fully grasp the challenge of being a disciple. Jesus is the door to life that we must walk through to enter the kingdom, but today's images – a "narrow gate" and a locked door, with Jesus urging us to focus on entering through them remind us that this journey requires effort.

Even though Jesus did not say how many may or may not be saved, he does give us some very important advice. He answered: "Strive to enter through the narrow door" – the door that leads to eternal life - and don't wait until the last minute to do it. Only the narrow door will lead to eternal life. The door that's easy to get through will take you to the place where you will find no happiness. The key idea here is that to get **through** the narrow door requires effort on our part. Jesus said: "**strive** to get through the narrow door." The important word is strive, from the Greek *agonizamai*, meaning agony. Does this mean we have to torture ourselves, do a lot of fasting, and whip ourselves like the monks in the middle-ages? No, that's not what Jesus is asking of us.

The agony we have to go through is to fight against our selfishness and pride. Jesus asks us to pray, to come to Mass, to forgive those who have hurt us, to help the poor, not to abort innocent life; in brief, keep the Commandments. His law does challenge us to live by the values he has taught us. If we fail to do that sometimes, we must remember that God is merciful and always ready to forgive if we approach him with love and sincerity. Those who take Jesus' instruction to Heart will experience his salvation. What must we do? What is needed to pass through this door of Jesus? What kind of strength and perseverance is required?

Jesus is telling us that we must be willing to take up our cross and follow him every day of our lives. The Christian way of living is not meant to be easy. Our culture often tells us to work smarter, not harder, and to take the path of less resistance. Yet the Church's tradition provides us with a road map that helps us spiritually train to get through the locked and narrow door. For example, adults preparing for initiation in our community are provided a kind of training, and this training involves living in love within a community, engaging with the Word, participating in outreach and service, and ultimately worshipping God in spirit and truth. But all of us are called to embrace these four tenets, and by doing so, we can encounter Jesus and, hopefully, experience a conversion of our hearts toward him. The key is responding to God's invitation each day of our lives. The only way we can authentically proclaim that we are truly followers of Christ is to this continual desire to know and to follow Jesus.

We ought to be certain in our hearts that we have indeed "entered through the narrow door" without allowing our own sense of self-esteem to cloud our analysis. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to show us our true condition before God.



CATECHISM

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BY: David Quinn

SUFFERING – PART ONE

You've likely said the statement or heard the statement a number of times: "I can't imagine what you are going through." It is a sympathetic statement, expressing that what a person is going through must be extremely difficult, if not devastating. We are acknowledging that they are currently suffering in an undesirable state.

Suffering is something we all encounter. However, the question constantly arises – why do we have to suffer? People will put it in the context of why an all-loving God would allow suffering in the world. Perhaps the start of the answer to the question about suffering is this – why wouldn't we have to suffer during life?

God created two places where we would never experience suffering. The first was Heaven. The second was the Garden of Eden. Unfortunately, mankind ruined the Garden of Eden, which is what introduced suffering to the world. The Church teaches that suffering is a result of Original Sin. If it weren't for Adam and Eve, there might not have been suffering in the world.

This is not to imply that if we are suffering, we must have sinned. We see that thought process in the Old Testament but in John 9, Jesus explains to his disciples and the Pharisees that the blind man he cures was not guilty of sin and neither were his parents. Suffering is not based on sinning but on giving the opportunity to show God's love and healing power.

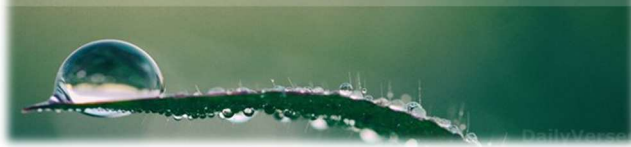
Jesus became a man and, therefore, He understands what we are experiencing. If we pray and say to the Lord, "I am so tired," Jesus can say, "Yes, I know what it is like to be tired." If we pray and say, "Lord, I am so hungry," Jesus can say "Yes, I remember what it felt like to be hungry." If we pray and say, "I'm not sure I can take much more of this," Jesus can respond with "I was to the point of asking the Father to let my suffering pass." Since Jesus experienced life like we have, He can more than sympathize with us. Jesus can truly empathize with us.

Why we suffer will always be a mystery. But a key aspect of suffering is for us to be able to demonstrate God's love toward others. We should look at our suffering as a means of teaching us empathy for other people. While it is wonderful to tell someone you are sorry to hear about their suffering, it is more important to try to help in some manner. Our first action to help should always be prayer, asking for both God's healing and for His love to be felt by the person suffering. Then, we are better prepared to help in other ways.

It is in helping others during their periods of suffering that we obtain greater grace. In Matthew 25, Jesus tells us that we are to help those who are suffering: feed the hungry, cloth the naked, visit the sick. It is through these acts of helping the suffering that we become like Christ and receive God's grace.

And the God of all grace,
who called you to his eternal glory in Christ,
after you have suffered a little while,
will himself restore you
and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

1 Peter 5:10



“

To remain at peace,
it is necessary to love while suffering
and to suffer while loving.

”

- *Blessed Maria Romero Meneses*



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us to "strive to enter through the narrow gate." Our call to be disciples and to follow Jesus demands that we learn to live for the sake of others.

In the month of August, through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was able to assist local families, providing them with food from our pantry and providing financial assistance with utility and rent bills, etc. Thank You!

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!

Thank You

for your continued support of SVDP!

SVDP AUGUST "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH" PASTA & PASTA SAUCE



SVDP HELPING TOWNSEND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Recently our SVdP President, Debbie Eberhardt met with the new Townsend Elementary School Principal, Ashley Evans. Ashley is an awesome young lady, and SVdP is looking forward to more involvement with the school this year!

Do you know that students are now allowed to eat at their desks during non-lunch hour! How things have changed over the years! Had some of us been born later, we could have saved our hands from a few knuckle wraps from the nuns!

Ashley asked if SVdP could help supply snacks to the classrooms for the Teachers. Currently, TES Teachers purchase snacks for their students out of their own pocket - and we all know about Teacher's salaries! So.... SVdP is reaching out to parishioners to see if you would like to participate in this effort.

SVdP has provided each of the 7 classrooms with a bag of mixed snacks for the students and it is our intention to help the Teachers regularly throughout the year, reducing their financial burden. Would you like to help the TES students too? We bet you were hoping we'd ask!

There are currently NO allergy afflicted students at the school, so peanut butter filled crackers are great. Please avoid any sugary type snacks and **NO CANDY**. Individual packages of chips, pouches of applesauce, Gold Fish crackers, peanuts, pretzels, popcorn, cookies etc. - all are great items!

HELP FILL OUR SVDP PANTRY



Are you a BJ's Member? If so, would you like to help fill our SVdP pantry too? Below is a list of products we use from BJ's (but of course we will take any non-perishable item!). These are some of the items we have identified as being a good value:

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Canned Chicken | Paper Towels | Bath Tissues | Toothbrushes | Ramen Noodle Soup |
| Macaroni & Cheese | Saltine Crackers | Canned Tuna | Toothpaste | Chips (individual size) |
| Peanut Butter Crackers | Bar Soap | Kleenex | Microwave Popcorn | Canned Vienna Sausages |

Please place your purchased items in the St. Vincent de Paul food basket located in Shea Hall.

Thank You for always being there to help us help others!

DMI SURVEY RESULTS AND FOLLOW UP



Last weekend at the end of Masses, we shared with you some of the preliminary results from the Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey. The organization that facilitates the DMI Survey tool - Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI) - produces 10 reports from this survey. The 10 reports are grouped into 3 categories:

Custom & Context:

Demographics
Strengths & Opportunities
Key Leader Perspective

Beliefs, Effectiveness, and Drivers for Big Outcomes:

Key Drivers
Belief in Core Catholic Teaching
Effectiveness of Parish Support

Four Factors of a Thriving Parish:

Leadership Indicators
Sunday Experience
Spiritual Practices
Missionary

The first group of reports (Custom & Context) have been prepared for you to look at. We encourage you to visit the church website, click on the DMI box and then click on the report that you are interested in viewing. You are also able to print any of the reports you view. A small supply of paper reports are available on the table in the church vestibule for those who are not able to or prefer not to view this information online.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

MATTHEW 28:19



OCIA AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

What is OCIA? (Formerly RCIA) OCIA, the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, is a process through which adults become members of the Roman Catholic Church. This consists of steps, periods, and rites that make up the model of Christian Initiation as restored in the second Vatican Council.

If you or anyone you know are interested in exploring the Catholic Church as your church home or you have been sitting in the pew next to your Catholic spouse for years wondering what you have to do to become Catholic, or you are a practicing Catholic just wanting to learn more about your faith, please join us!

Classes will begin on Tuesday September 9, 2025 - 6:00 PM.

We will meet in the Parish Resource Center (PRC) which is the center of the three white church campus buildings (The church, the PRC, and the Rectory). Classes will run for about an hour and a half. If you have any questions, please contact Deacon Jim. All are welcome!

Peace, Deacon Jim ❖ sfadeacon7717@gmail.com ❖ 901-493-2123

SECOND COLLECTION AUGUST 30 & 31 - VICTIMS IN GAZA AND SURROUNDING AREAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Archbishop Broglio, President of the USCCB, wrote to all Bishops of the US and has asked, given the great pastoral concern for the terrible suffering of Christians and other innocent victims in Gaza, that dioceses take up a special collection to help with the humanitarian relief and pastoral support for our affected brothers and sisters in Gaza and surrounding areas in the Middle East.

Bishop Beckman has asked that all parishes in the diocese take up a second collection to assist the Catholic New East Welfare Association (CNEWA) who is providing vital emergency humanitarian relief and medical and psychological care for the sick, malnourished and wounded. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is working through local Church partners to help provide food, shelter, cash assistance, hygiene supplies and care.



**Saturday, September 20, 2025 - 6:00 PM
Knoxville Catholic High School**

Join Catholic Charities of East Tennessee for a fun-filled evening of dinner and square-dancing at the 2nd annual Barn Dance on Sept. 20 at 6 p.m. at the Knoxville Catholic High School Gymnasium. Come in your best country attire and BYOB.

100% of funds raised will benefit CCETN's A Loving Option Adoption program, and will provide necessary support to mothers facing crisis or unplanned pregnancies.

Please purchase tickets by September 6th on the diocesan website: <https://dioknox.org/events/ccetn-barn-dance>.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you know that we have a Prayer Shawl Ministry here at St. Francis of Assisi? Well, we do and we need crafters to help replenish our Prayer Shawl inventory!

Our pastoral care team enjoys takings small gifts on home visits and they also enjoy delivering prayer shawls when we have shawls available.

If you are a crocheter or a knitter and would like to make some prayer shawls for our inventory, please share your crafting talents with our ministry! You can use your own pattern or we have patterns available to share with you. At this time we have a very small supply of yarn, so it would be best if you could provide your own yarn. Scrap yarn from previous projects make wonderful prayer shawls! If you are not a crafter but would like to help support this ministry, yarn donations are very welcome, as well as monetary contributions.

While a prayer shawl is being created, prayers are lifted up for whomever will be receiving the prayer shawl. When the prayer shawl is delivered to its recipient a card similar to the picture to the right is attached to the shawl. Prayer shawl recipients are incredibly grateful for this gift of loving kindness and it is our blessing to be able to provide that kindness.

Crafters and patrons alike, if you are interested in contributing to this ministry please contact JoAnne (859-361-4561) to get involved.

Prayer Shawl

This shawl was handmade for you by our Prayer Shawl Ministry. As it was created, much love and many prayers went into it. We asked the Lord to give you many blessings and courage during this challenging time in your life.



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*“When you look at the crucifix,
you understand how much
Jesus loved you then.
When you look at the Sacred Host,
you understand how much
Jesus loves you now.”*

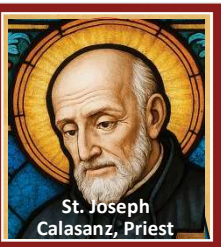
*St. Teresa of Kolkata
(Mother Teresa)
1910 - 1996*



UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
8/29-31/25	Retrouvaille Weekend Nashville, TN	Online: https://retrouvaille.org E-mail: 3043@helpourmarriage.org Phone: 931-820-2115
9/9/25	OCIA Classes begin PRC at 6:00 PM	Online: N/A E-mail: sfadeacon7717@gmail.com Phone: 901-493-2123
9/20/25	Hundredfold Workshop All Saints Church - Knoxville 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Online: dioknox.org E-mail: Scan QR code on poster in Shea Hall Phone: 931-820-2115
9/20/25	CCETN Barn Dance 6:00 PM Knoxville Catholic High School	Online: dioknox.org E-mail: N/A Phone: N/A
9/20-10/9/25	11-Day Jubilee Pilgrimage to the Shrines of Italy with Fr. Bill McNeeley	Online: Scan QR code on poster in Shea Hall E-mail: ascensiontourstravel@gmail.com Phone: 800-351-9893
9/27/25	Emma Fradd - Unplugged Concert Diocese of Knoxville Young Adult Ministry	Online: dioknox.org E-mail: Scan QR code on poster in Shea Hall Phone: N/A
10/16/25	WEST Meeting Noon in the PRC	Online: N/A E-Mail: stfrancistownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070
12/14/25	Parish Christmas Party Tremont Lodge - Townsend, TN	Online: N/A E-Mail: stfrancistownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070

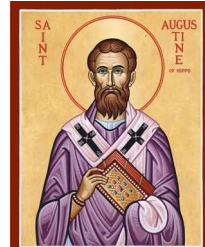
SAINTS BE PRAISED!



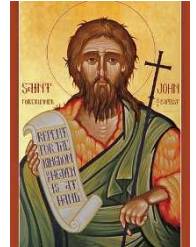
AUGUST 25



AUGUST 27



AUGUST 28



AUGUST 29