



**DECEMBER 14, 2025
THIRD SUNDAY OF 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

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

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

Mon 12/15 8:30 AM Thanksgiving to St. Anthony of Padua
Tue 12/16 8:30 AM Vo Van Thiet † Judas Thaddaeus †
Wed 12/17 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 12/18 Deacon Jim Schmall
Fri 12/19 Patricia Andrews †
Sat 12/20 4:00 PM Charles Fiorella †
Sun 12/21 9:00 AM Vo Van Thiet † Judas Thaddaeus †

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, Amy Frink, Claire Cheadle, Elise Martin, Paul Fain, Joyce Fain, Emmanuel Nwadike, Julie Schirack, Marcus Bolte, Stephanie Romer, John & Maria Bermudes, Michael Slater, Rocky Brach, Marion McCaughey, Sue Wood, Sue Corsini, Bill Irby, Teresa Williams, Jeffrey Garrison, Ann Day, Ed Welsh, Thomas Fay, Dale DuRussel, Suzie Fay, Robert Schumacher, German Giraldo, Jean Claude Augustin, Christopher Schiel,

Joyce Schiel, Connor Dietrich, Mrs. Irene Seyle



*Lord,
thank you for
our answered
prayers!*

Bruce Dunn: Bruce's surgery went very well and he is well on his way to a full recovery! Bruce is very grateful for all of our prayers!
Sofia Graziano: Sofia is responding to treatments very nicely. Sofia's treatments will be lifelong and she and her family are extremely grateful for all the prayers!
Dennis Richards: Dennis has improved, but the stroke has left some permanent deficiencies. Dennis and his family are very thankful for all of our prayers!
Laken DuRussel: Laken continues to have lingering symptoms which have caused some memory difficulties. The family is maintaining a positive outlook and knows that God is in control They truly appreciate ALL our prayers!
Jeff Herzog: Jeff and his family are SO very grateful for our prayers! Jeff knows that it is only through the grace of God and prayers of family and friends that he has been able to even stand up to these challenges.

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!



ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon 12/15
Tue 12/16 9:00 AM Advent Lectio Divina
 6:00 PM OCIA - Shea Hall
Wed 12/17
Thu 12/18
Fri 12/19
Sat 12/20 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 12/21 9:00 AM Sunday Mass



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

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



WE HAVE FORMED!

OVER 6,000 PARISHES AND 1.6 MILLION INDIVIDUALS ARE USING FORMED TODAY! INCLUDING ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, TOWNSEND!

Formed.org is a digital library with over 1000 resources, all teed up and ready for you and your family to stream. I'd like to thank Father Antonio and Julie Dew for helping us get this wonderful resource for our parish.

Formed offers inspirational Catholic videos, courses, audio talks, books, and movies that give you great Catholic teaching in your life and for the best of all - it's right here for your use, already paid for, downloadable, and easy to access.

It's Free! All you have to do is go to Formed.org and enter our parish name or zip code, and you are signed up. The zip code for Townsend is 37882. Anytime, anywhere, any platform - personal computer, tablet, smartphone, smart tv - all kinds of advice on difficult subjects of the faith and living a moral life in a damaged world. If you are already signed up at another parish you can reach out to the support group at custom-er.service@augustineinstitute.org. They will help you switch from your old parish to ours.

Again, Formed offers resources for adults, teens, children, parents, widows, those who are suffering from addiction, those who are searching, and for those who feel their faith life has grown stagnant. Truly, there is something for everyone.

Moving forward we will use it at the parish level for OCIA, Sacramental Prep, Bible Study, etc. The app is available on the new smart tv in the PRC and available on line in Shea Hall!

One last thing...we live in a busy world, and it can feel hard to find time to do something to take a step forward in your faith. Formed is an easy way to listen on the go while you are driving, exercising, or watching TV as a family. We encourage you to JUST PRESS PLAY. Try it out today. And then come back next week and tell Father/Deacon what you think about it. Peace, Deacon Jim.



SANCTUARY FLOWERS: During the liturgical season of Advent, flowers are not present in the sanctuary so as to emphasize the solemnity of the season. The focus during Advent is on eager expectation and preparation for Christmas. If, after the Advent season 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!



For parishioners who receive tithing envelopes in the mail, you will have received an envelope for Christmas flowers. The donation in this envelope is used to help purchase flowers and Christmas trees to decorate the altar and the church. If you do not receive tithing envelopes, you can still contribute to this fund by placing your contribution in an envelope marked "Christmas Flowers," and your contribution will be put toward purchasing poinsettias and Christmas trees for our church decorations. You can place your **marked envelope** in any collection basket at weekend Masses or drop it off in the church office Monday through Friday 9:00 AM until Noon.



CATECHISM

ORNER



BY: Julie Dew

Happy Third Sunday of Advent or also known as Gaudete Sunday! The word, Gaudete, is derived from the Latin word meaning rejoice! You will notice that Father and Deacon will be sporting their “rose” colored vestments today!

The Church encourages moderation in floral decorations during Advent and Christmas (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 305). So, what’s with the poinsettias? The poinsettia has long been used to decorate during the holiday season. Also known by its Spanish name of Flores de Noche Buena, or “flower of the holy night” and the Latin name of

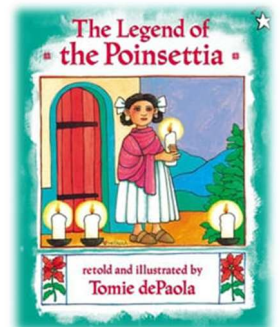
Euphorbia pulcherrima, the poinsettia’s beauty is almost as intriguing as some of the legends that surround it. Some say the poinsettia’s scarlet petal-like bracts represent the star of Bethlehem or the red color symbolizes the blood of Christ and the joy of the Nativity. Others believe it’s more magical and involves a young Mexican girl named Pepita. That legend goes like this:

“Pepita wanted more than anything to present to the Christ Child a special gift on Christmas Eve, but she had no money. Crying as she walked to church, she saw an angel who instructed her to gather weeds from the roadside and present them to the Christ Child. Pepita took the angel’s advice and gathered a bouquet of weeds to take to the church. Upon entering the church, she placed the weeds at the feet of the Christ Child, and suddenly, her humble weeds burst into brilliant red blooms.” This legend is told from the book: *The Legend of the Poinsettia* by Newbery, honor-winning author and Caldecott honor-winning illustrator Tomie dePaola. I would read this to my preschoolers every year during the Advent Season!

Poinsettia Flower Facts and Trivia (farmersalmanac.com/poinsettia)

- * Indigenous to Mexico and Central America, the poinsettia flower was cultivated by ancient Aztec and Mayan peoples. The Aztec name translates to “brilliant flower” (cuetlaxochitl). The Mayan name translates to “ember flower” (k’alul wits). RELATED: Learn about Ember Days.
- * Poinsettias are the number one potted plant sold in the US today, exceeding annual sales of all other potted plants combined!
- * Poinsettias are not toxic to children or humans but they should not be eaten. A child would have to consume more than 500 bracts (leaves) in order to reach an unsafe level, according to the Poisindex (a software database used by poison center staff). They are, however, mildly poisonous to cats and dogs, so it’s best to keep them out of their reach.
- * Poinsettias come in many colors. From the traditional red to shades of white, peach, pink, and yellow, cultivars are now available in marbled, striped and spotted tones. A seasonal variety, “Jingle Bells.” with its red bracts and pink flecks.

I bet you didn’t think you were going to receive a botany lesson today! Next week let’s “talk” about the Nativity! Have a wonderful week rejoicing in our Savior’s birth!



Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM



Advent is a time of waiting for our Lord, who will visit us all in our own hearts.
The Lord is coming! Let us wait for him!



- Pope Francis

THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



In today's Gospel Jesus tells us that the good news can be seen, touched felt and heard through the lives of God's people. We are now charged to take up the ministry of Jesus's, but we can't just ask people to take our word for it; our actions must speak for us. Since Christmas is a time of love and gift giving, please share in Jesus ministry by giving a gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that those who are poor can know the good news of Jesus.

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 DECEMBER "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH" LAUNDRY SOAP & DRYER SHEETS



Some general reminders and guidelines about donating to SVdP:

- For those who use preprinted church contribution envelopes, the SVdP envelope (which is marked for the beginning of the month) can be placed in the collection basket **ANY** time of the month. If you are not using preprinted church contribution envelopes and want to place your donation in a weekend Mass collection basket, please put your donation in an envelope (of any kind) marked SVdP to make sure it gets into the SVdP account.
- Please make any checks out to: **St. Vincent de Paul** (not St. Francis of Assisi).
- Donations can also be placed in the St. Vincent de Paul Poor Box, located in the Narthex, to the right of the exit doors (just above the holy water station). Ushers can show you the location.
- Feel free to reach out to us with any questions.

DEACON FORMATION



BY: DAVID QUINN

BECOMING A DEACON – THE OLD TESTAMENT

When we started studying Scripture, we started with the Old Testament. We spent four months going through the different books of the Old Testament, gaining a deeper understanding of the context of each book and what was being communicated to all. We learned about the meaning behind covenants, agreements, and relationships for that time.

The covenants with the Lord in the Old Testament focused on land and children for the Israelites, while the Israelites were to focus on worshipping the Lord only. We learned the impact to women and orphans in terms of inheritance when a husband/father died. We focused on key figures like Ruth, Judith, and Esther.

As part of our Old Testament studies, each Aspirant had to create a 10-minute presentation on a specific theme. The intended audience for these presentations was supposed to be 11th graders in a high school, trying to engage them in Scripture and capture those items that could help high schoolers stay involved in the Church.

UPCOMING EVENTS

| DATE | EVENT | DETAILS |
|-----------|---|---|
| 12/21/25 | Santa's Visit to SFA 10:00 AM Shea Hall | Online: N/A E-Mail: stfrancistownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070 |
| 4/18/2026 | CCW Spring Event - 9AM-3PM St. Mary's Church, Athens, TN | Online: N/A E-Mail: ajschaef21@gmail.com Phone: 901-485-1965; OR 423-715-2579 (Brenda Ratcliff) |

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 12/2/24 AT 9:15 (AFTER MASS)



FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS!

As you may have noticed recently, a new exit door has been added to the South side of Shea Hall close to the walkway. Once the finishing touches are complete on the exterior ramp, the door will be ready for use. For security reasons, this new door is an EXIT ONLY door with a push/crash bar release on the inside.

And speaking of security: a new/upgraded security system has been installed on the church grounds which includes the Church/Shea Hall building, the PRC, and the Rectory. The security system will be armed nightly from 10 PM until 7 AM. Please be advised that if you need to be in the Church, Shea Hall, or the PRC during alarmed hours, you will need to make arrangements with the church office to have the security system disarmed during your use of the facility and then armed upon your departure.

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*Mother Teresa
1910 - 1997*

*“In an ever-changing world,
the Holy Eucharist
is a constant reminder
of the great reality
of God’s changeless love.”*



OCIA AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



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 are held every Tuesday in Shea Hall at 6:00 PM. For more information please contact Deacon Jim: 901-493-2123 or sfadeacon7717@gmail.com