



FEBRUARY 15, 2026
SIXTH 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

PASTOR .....Fr. Antonio Giraldo
DEACON.....Dc. Jim Schmall
OFFICE MANAGERS .....Katrina Allocco & Lesa Schmall
BOOKKEEPER .....Kathleen Halligan
LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTOR.....JoAnne Romer-Aylward
DIR. OF RELIGIOUS ED. ....Julie Dew
OCIA .....Dc. Jim Schmall
ART & ENVIRONMENT .....Michele Girard & Norene O'Donnell
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

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 2/16** 8:30 AM Lila Laney †  
**Tue 2/17** 8:30 AM Lila Laney †  
**Wed 2/18** 9:00 AM SFA Parishioners  
**Thu 2/19** 8:30 AM Irene Seyle †  
**Fri 2/20** 8:30 AM Therese Messier †  
**Sat 2/21** 4:00 PM Susan Taylor †  
**Sun 2/22** 9:00 AM Alexander Malocha †

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): Amy Frink, Pat Sanders, Doreen Mancuso, Claire Cheadle, Elise Martin, Paul Fain, Joyce Fain, Julie Schirack, Marcus Bolte, Stephanie Romer, John & Maria Bermudes, Michael Slater, Marion McCaughey, Sue Corsini, Bill Irby, Teresa Williams, Jeffrey Garrison, Ann Day, Ed Welsh, Dale DuRussel, Robert Schumacher, German Giraldo, Jean Claude Augustin, Connor Dietrich, Sofia Graziano, Mark Reddan, Terry Keran, Mark Gruber, Beryl Quinton

**SANCTUARY FLOWERS:** During the Lenten season, we change our sanctuary floral decorations from fresh cut flowers to dried floral arrangements to reflect the dry period of Jesus' 40 days in the desert.



If, after the Lenten 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!

**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

<b>Mon 2/16</b>	9:00 AM	Church and Hall Cleaning
<b>Tue 2/17</b>	6:00 PM	OCIA - PRC
<b>Wed 2/18</b>	9:00 AM	Ash Wednesday - Mass and Ashes
	<b>5:00 PM</b>	<b>NO SVdP MEETING</b>
	6:00 PM	Ash Wednesday - Mass and Ashes
<b>Thu 2/19</b>		
<b>Fri 2/20</b>	5:00 PM	Stations of the Cross
<b>Sat 2/21</b>	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass
<b>Sun 2/22</b>	9:00 AM	Sunday Mass
	10:30 AM	No Greater Love Lenten Study Group - PRC

### INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*St. Pope John Paul II  
1920 - 2005*

*“From the Eucharist  
comes strength  
to live the Christian life  
and zeal  
to share that life with others.”*



## JESUS IS THE FULFILMENT OF ALL THINGS



In the Old Testament, God revealed himself and gave direction to his people through the law and the prophets. The law began with the Ten Commandments that were given to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20).

As the Word of God who came into the world, Jesus is the fulfillment of all the things God had spoken about through the law and prophets. The word “fulfill” means to make complete, or to complete what is lacking. In this text, the word “fulfill” is expanded to include the perfecting of something that is imperfect. Jesus recognized that the laws of Moses and the prophets were good but imperfect. Thus he came “not to abolish them but to fulfill them” and said that anyone who relaxed even “the least of these Commandments... shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven” (Mathew 5:17, 19).

Mathew’s Gospel goes on to identify six areas in which the law was to be perfected and fulfilled: Murder, adultery, divorce, oaths, revenge, and love of enemies. Jesus said that unless our righteousness exceeded that of the scribes and Pharisees, we would never enter the kingdom of heaven (Mathew 5:20). He was telling us that being right with the Lord does not depend solely on refraining from acts prohibited by the law, but on the condition of our hearts in our relationships with our neighbors and with God.

Instead of feeling self-satisfied because we are not murderers, let us examine our hearts to see the angers or resentments we may have toward others. Our resentments and hatred, even though we hold them in check, violate the greatest commandment Jesus taught us: Love of God and love of neighbor (Mathew 22: 37-40). Our proper response is clear: we need to repent and be reconciled (5:24). It is not enough to say, “I should not be angry with my spouse or children or teacher. I should not be jealous of that co-worker. I should not resent my boss for correcting me or for not appreciating the things I do.” The kingdom of heaven calls for reconciliation, not just an acknowledgment of wrongful thoughts or acts.

Mathew’s Gospel portrays Jesus as the Messiah who inaugurated the long awaited kingdom of God. In the Sermon on the Mount, he first describes the Beatitudes. Then, like a new Moses, Jesus introduced a series of principles that characterized the messianic reign.

In the light of this kingdom, Jesus taught his followers how to live so that the life of God would take root and grow in their lives. He spoke about many of the challenges we face in our daily lives: The call to righteousness, turning away from anger, swearing, revenge, and the need to love our enemies.

To live up to this new way requires an inner work of the spirit. Through faith we can experience the power to love others as Christ loves us. Let us ask the Lord to give this grace to all of us.



“Seeking God’s will is not something that’s done once or twice in a lifetime. Seeking and responding to the Lord’s voice is something we have the opportunity to do every day.”

GARY ZIMACK  
*Faith, Hope, and Clarity*

 **Dynamic Catholic**  
Be Bold. Be Catholic.



**ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP**

OPEN

after weekend Masses  
and by request/appointment  
after daily Mass

## CATECHISM

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BY: Julie Dew

## THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

As we begin our next season of the Church year this Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, Ash Wednesday, I would like for us to “reflect” - or better yet “ponder” - on Good Friday with the crucifixion of Jesus through this Lenten Season.

I had read this a while back but want to share with you these next few “Corners” on this saving act of our Lord. I for one have never been able to watch in its entirety *The Passion of the Christ* movie. I find it difficult to accept that He would do this for me, a sinner. But then I reflect on the words Jesus said to St. Teresa of Avila: “I would create the world again just to hear you say you love me.” He loves me THAT much. So, here we go.....

“On Ash Wednesday 2004, the eagerly-awaited movie *The Passion of the Christ* hit movie screens - but hit its viewers much harder. With ashen foreheads, Catholics across America cringed in their theater seats as they watched the portrayal of the intense whipping, beating, and stabbing of their Savior. Many in the audience openly wept as they watched what was unfolding on the screen and saw teams of Roman soldiers thrash Jesus’ body with whips with metal hooks. The scene was violent, portraying the Roman soldiers covered in Jesus’ blood, with only the physical exhaustion of the Roman soldiers finally slowing the assault. Most moviegoers had never seen such brutality - real or imagined - like this. The two-hour depiction of Jesus’ passion and death proved emotionally exhausting for the audience. A movie reviewer for the *Evening Standard* accounted that the cinematic “assault was so sustained and voyeuristic that with most of the audience I saw the film with covered their eyes.” Another reviewer referred to it as a “primitive and pornographic bloodbath.”

As difficult as it was for the viewers to sit through these scenes, there is a reality that most audiences and reviewers missed: in comparison to the cinematic portrayal of the event, the actual crucifixion of Jesus was far worse. Some disbelievers may simply dismiss the account of Jesus’ passion and crucifixion on the grounds that no human could survive such a physical assault. Yet, first-person accounts, ancient historians, and archaeology confirm that many thousands of men survived wanton scourging and lived - sometimes for days - on crosses before they succumbed to death. Even modern medical science confirms how that could occur. But the objectors are indeed correct on one essential point: crucifixion was almost indescribably violent and heartless. This is important to appreciate because within the sheer violence of the crucifixion lies much of the mystery behind the stigmata of the saints. Thus, in our quest to understand the how and why of the stigmata and stigmatists, we must begin by focusing on the *general nature and history of crucifixion itself and, specifically, the wounds of Christ.*” Catholic Answers Insiders Newsletter May 2025

Next week we will “talk” about the Roman Crucifixion. Until then, peace to you and yours.



## Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM



It is not that we keep His commandments first and that then He loves us,  
but that He loves us and then we keep His commandments.  
This is that grace which is revealed to the humble, but hidden from the proud.



- St. Augustine  
354 - 430 AD



## HOW TO LENT

A couple of months ago we announced a new resource available to our parishioners - Formed.org. Formed is a digital library with over 1000 resources, all teed up and ready for you and your family to stream.

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 and they will help you switch from your old parish to ours (customer.service@augustineinstitute.org).

Specifically, the first Formed.org offering we would like to promote is "How To Lent." Sometimes, it feels like Lent is just about giving up chocolate. But deep down, we all desire to do something more for Lent - we just don't know how to do it.

"How to Lent" is a new series from the Augustine Institute that aims to equip Catholics with the tools to understand and practice the pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Guided by Solenne Santiago and with the help of priests and religious, this series of 4 15-minute videos will challenge your preconceived notions about Lent, laying out a roadmap for entering the season with a purpose. Don't let Lent sneak up on you like it did last year. Instead, heed the call of St. John the Baptist by preparing for the Lord, using "How to Lent" to transform your spiritual life this Lenten season. Visit <https://watch.formed.org/how-to-lent> and start your Lenten journey today.



## BECOMING A DEACON - SUMMER PROJECTS

Deacon Formation does not meet in the months of June and July. We perform summer projects in those months. These projects can range from helping at a homeless shelter to building or fixing a structure at a parish or the diocese to creating training courses to leading a pilgrimage. These projects are intended to help get into the mindset of service to our parish and diocese.

My first summer project involved creating a training curriculum called The Confident Spiritual Speaker. Since speaking does not come easy to some people, this set of training videos married up tips on public speaking with how to making the speaking a more spiritually enriching

experience. It ended up being 11 five-minute videos with an accompanying student workbook and instructor guide. I also translated the workbook and guide to Spanish. And, so Spanish speakers could understand the lessons better, I put the videos on YouTube so they could have Spanish captions turned on.

## LECTIO DIVINA

Lent begins February 18<sup>th</sup>. Start planning now for your Lenten intentions! One of your Lenten intentions could be to consider attending any or all sessions of Lectio Divina on Tuesdays right after morning Mass (9:15ish).

What Is Lectio Divina? It is Latin for “Divine reading,” a traditional Christian method of prayerful scripture reading, meditation and contemplation. It encourages a slow, thoughtful encounter with biblical texts allowing individuals to open themselves to spiritual insight and communication with God. It’s a meditative process that seeks to transform the reader through reflection and prayer.

### Lectio Divina typically involves 4 stages:

1. **Lectio** (reading): slowly reading a passage of scripture and paying close attention to each word and phrase.
2. **Meditatio** (meditation): reflecting on the meaning of a text considering how it applies to one’s life.
3. **Oratio** (prayer): responding to the passage with personal prayer, engaging in a dialogue with God.
4. **Contemplatio** (contemplation): resting in God's presence, allowing the heart and mind to be open to God's will and love.

Lectio Divina has its roots in early Christian monasticism. The origins of this practice are commonly traced back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century desert fathers and mothers who emphasized the importance of meditated scripture reading as a means of spiritual growth. The practice was formalized by Saint Benedict in his rule of Saint Benedict, which was considered an essential daily practice for monks, forming the heart of their spiritual discipline. Over time, the practice spread beyond the cloister, influencing various Christian traditions and spiritual movements.

In recent decades Lectio Divina has experienced a resurgence among lay Christians and is embraced by people seeking a deeper contemplative approach to scripture. The practice is valued for its capacity to foster a personal relationship with God, spiritual transformation, and inner peace.

Lectio Divina remains a time-honored spiritual discipline, inviting believers into a sacred encounter with scripture through reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. Its rich history and enduring relevance continue to inspire those who seek a deeper connection with their faith and the divine.

All are welcome to come and experience this wonderful time of reflection and discussion with fellow parishioners. (P.S. Pastries and coffee will be available!)



### ST. FRANCIS WORDS OF WISDOM - JUBILEE YEAR 2026



*God, enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me a right faith, a sure hope, a perfect charity, sense, and knowledge, so that I may carry out your holy command.*



*- St. Francis of Assisi  
1181 - 1226*

## RETREAT OPPORTUNITY

In the Disciple Maker Index Survey conducted last year, many of you expressed a desire to have more opportunities for spiritual enrichment. Have I got a deal for you! Listed below is a description of an upcoming retreat at St. Meinrad, in Indiana.

I have been to many retreats at St. Meinrad's and have always come back enriched and fulfilled with the Holy Spirit. It is truly a beautiful place to relax and recharge. The fees include room and meals, and the cost of the retreat itself is included as well.

I have already signed up, and if you think you may want to go you should sign up soon because these things fill up fast. They won't charge you until the weekend of. Also included in the cost is a private tour of all my old haunts around campus including the famous (or infamous?) Un-Stable. LOL!!

St. Meinrad is located in the rolling hills of Southern Indiana about an hour west of Louisville, KY, about a 5-hour drive from Townsend. I'd like to get as many from our parish as possible to attend. ROAD TRIP!

Any questions, please call me. Peace, Deacon Jim 901-493-2123 or sfadeacon7717@gmail.com.

### FROM THE RETREAT WEBSITE:

Step away from the noise of daily life and experience the peace of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Whether you're seeking spiritual renewal, discernment, or simply time with God, our Benedictine hospitality, beautiful surroundings, and guided retreats offer a sacred space to listen, pray, and grow.

Check-in time for retreats is 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Central Time. Vespers in the Archabbey Church is at 5 p.m., followed by supper. The opening conference typically begins at 7:30 p.m. The retreat concludes with lunch on the last day of the program. A complete schedule will be provided at check-in. If you would like to arrive or depart on dates other than the scheduled retreat start and end, please contact us at [guestservices@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:guestservices@saintmeinrad.edu) or by calling 812-357-6611. To register online, begin by clicking on the title of the retreat that interests you.

### **Lifted High: A Retreat for the Exaltation of the Holy Cross Friday, September 11, 2026 - Sunday, September 13, 2026**

**Location:** Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center

**Session Faculty:** Fr. Kolbe Wolniakowski, OSB

**Fees:** Single- \$350; Double- \$550

[www.saintmeinrad.org/retreats/](http://www.saintmeinrad.org/retreats/)

"We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world." A retreat centered on the mystery and majesty of the Holy Cross - the instrument of our salvation and the sign of God's unfathomable love. Rooted in the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, this retreat invites you to gaze upon the Cross not as a symbol of defeat, but as the radiant center of Christian hope, mercy, and redemption. This retreat will offer time to come face-to-face with the Cross in your own life and to allow Christ to lift you up through it. Whether you carry burdens of grief, struggle, forgiveness, or surrender, the Cross stands as an invitation to deeper trust, renewal, and union with the crucified and risen Christ.



## 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 the PRC at 6:00 PM. For more information please contact Deacon Jim: 901-493-2123 or sfadeacon7717@gmail.com.



## THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

In the Gospel Jesus says: "Whoever fulfills and teaches these commands shall be great in the kingdom of God." By your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul you indeed put your faith into action as you fulfill the commands 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Wednesdays of the month at 5:00 PM  
in the PRC. All are welcome!

**Thank You**  
for your continued support of SVDP!

## SVDP FEBRUARY "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH" PASTA AND PASTA SAUCE



## YOUR KARM DONATIONS BENEFIT OUR FOOD PANTRY

Do you know that your donations to KARM can benefit our "Neighbors in Need" food pantry? All you have to do is take your donation items to any of the KARM locations. Tell them that your donations are to benefit St. Francis of Assisi - **Townsend** (mentioning **TOWNSEND** is important because there are two St. Francis of Assisi Churches on file with KARM - the other one is up in Knoxville). SVDP then receives gift cards from KARM which we give to our neighbors for purchasing clothing and other items. We have been getting \$100 to \$150 in gift cards each quarter, so your donations are greatly helping! Thank you for helping us and helping your brothers and sisters in need! We wish you could see the smiles this gift brings to them!



## "OPERATION RICE BOWL" 2026

During Lent, please be generous in supporting Catholic Relief Services (CRS) with "Operation Rice Bowl" (ORB). Remembering that "What I give up, I give to others." We are encouraged to widen the door of faith through our care for the poor. Monies collected assist CRS programs around the world with agriculture projects to help farmers improve harvests, with water projects to bring clean water to communities, with microfinance projects to support small businesses, with health and nutrition projects for expectant mothers and for children, as well as for educational projects. In addition, 25% of what is collected goes to *Catholic Charities of East Tennessee* to assist with its charitable programs in our diocese. Please take a Rice Bowl home with you and to your office as one of the ways to highlight the beauty of our Lenten triptych of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.



## KNOXVILLE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Registration is now open for parishes, ministries, and businesses to participate in the Knoxville St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at 1 p.m. The annual parade raises money for Catholic Charities of East Tennessee.

# ASH WEDNESDAY

## LENT BEGINS

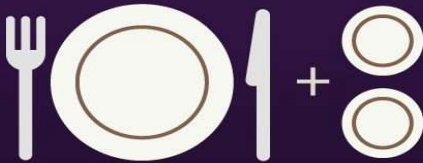
### What is Lent?

The 40-day period from Ash Wednesday and before Easter Sunday. It is marked by praying, fasting, abstinence, and other acts of penance.

PRAYING ||||| FASTING ||||| ABSTINENCE



### What is fasting?



One meal a day, and two smaller meals which if added together would not exceed one full meal

### What is abstinence?



Abstinence is refraining from eating meat. Meat is considered to be the flesh and organs of mammals and fowl.

### Days of fast?

Ash Wednesday

Good Friday

### Days of abstinence?

Ash Wednesday

All Fridays of Lent

Good Friday

### Who are required?

Catholics from age  
< 18 to 59 >



The sick are excused from fasting

### Who are required?

Mandatory for everyone



Source: Code of Canon Law

## 'PRAY WITH THE POPE' INITIATIVE

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network and the Dicastery for Communication announced January 7, 2026 the "Pray with the Pope" project. According to a press release, this is a new initiative in which the pope will share his monthly prayer intentions through both video and audio, "inviting the universal Church and all people of goodwill to unite spiritually, using the same prayer that will now be led by the pope himself."

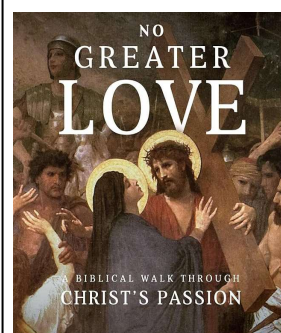
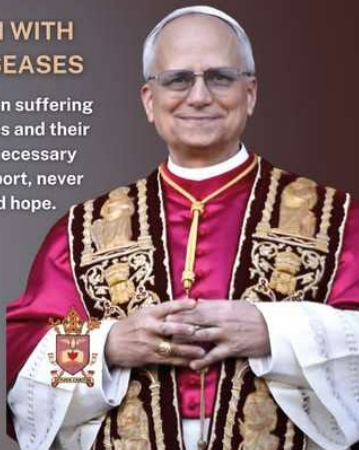
"This initiative aims to increase the visibility of the pope's prayer intentions, using a language suitable for prayer, in new formats, so as to better reach the faithful throughout the world, especially in today's world of digital communication," the press release stated.

In the full video shared on the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network website, Pope Leo recites an original prayer written specifically for this month's prayer intention. Below is the pope's full prayer for February:

**POPE LEO'S**  
MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION  
FEBRUARY 2026

**FOR CHILDREN WITH INCURABLE DISEASES**

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.



**LENTEN STUDY GROUP BEGINS**  
**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026**  
**10:30 AM IN THE PRC**

*No Greater Love* is a biblical pilgrimage that reveals Christ's amazing love for us. Best-selling author Edward Sri guides you through the last hours of Christ's life. You will

walk step-by-step with Jesus from the garden of Gethsemane to Mount Calvary. Every step of the way, Old Testament prophecies, messianic expectations, biblical symbolism, and historical context shed light on the mystery of Christ's suffering and death. Experience a deeper understanding and appreciation of God's immeasurable and unconditional love for you - grow closer to Jesus than you ever have before. For more information please contact Julie Dew 954-749-3929; [jdewtn2018@att.net](mailto:jdewtn2018@att.net)



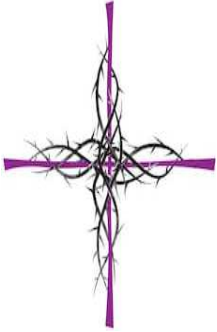
## ASH WEDNESDAY COLLECTION FOR THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

On Ash Wednesday, February 18, a collection will be taken up in support of the Church in Central and Eastern Europe that has suffered so much under decades of harsh Soviet communist rule. Great need remains for the Church in many of these countries as they are still unable to support their own renewal and growth. Your donation will help with the training of seminarians and lay leaders, youth ministry, pastoral and catechetical centers, schools, church construction and renovation, and evangelization through Catholic media.

Thank you for your generosity in support of the Church in Central and Eastern Europe.

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS - FRIDAY 2/20/2026 - 5:00 PM

FACILITATED BY THE LECTOR MINISTRY  
MEATLESS LENTEN SUPPER TO FOLLOW



Praying the stations of the cross - especially on Lenten Fridays - is a beautiful, spiritual experience and a wonderful way to enhance your Lenten journey. Please plan on joining your parish family in this beloved tradition. For more information please see the Lenten schedule inserted in this week's bulletin, on the website, and on the bulletin board in Shea Hall. There may also be some copies on the table in the church vestibule.

This year, since Pope Leo has declared 2026 as a Jubilee Year for St. Francis of Assisi, each facilitating ministry will be offering a mini-presentation on the life of St. Francis after each Lenten supper.



On Ash Wednesday we begin our 40-day liturgical and penitential season marked by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving – all with the goal of preparing our hearts and ourselves for Easter. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday (April 2<sup>nd</sup> this year). Since the season is closely associated with the transition from winter to spring in the northern hemisphere, the word “lent” can actually be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon word “lencten,” meaning “springtime.”

Just as we are called to fast and abstain from certain foods in Lent in a spirit of penance and self-discipline, so too in the liturgy we “give up,” for a time, some of the more joyful and glorious element of the Mass. One of the most notable things we give up is the Gloria - which we sing every Sunday outside of Advent and Lent, as well as every feast day and Holy Day of Obligation. We also give up the singing of the Alleluia, an acclamation derived from a Hebrew expression of praise to God. We sing Alleluia to thank and glorify God. During Lent, however, our focus is on the spiritual journey of Old Testament Israel toward the coming of Christ and the salvation of humankind through his death on the cross and the resurrection on Easter Sunday. This puts us on a spiritual journey toward the second coming of Christ, and in order to emphasize the penitential nature of that journey and the posture and attitude we must cultivate, we remove the Alleluia, and the Gloria from the Mass.

In terms of other music during the season of Lent, we will chant portions of our service music in Latin (the Sanctus and the Agnus Dei) and Deacon Jim will lead us during the penitential act in Greek with the Kyrie, Eleison. Again, this is to highlight a sort of fasting from the feasting we normally do during more joyful seasons; however, this principal also allows us to focus more intently on the sung prayer of the assembly.

“Reverent Silence” will play a more prominent role in our liturgies during Lent so as to support a focus of prayer and worship throughout Lent, and heighten the exuberant joy when Easter arrives.

Ultimately, the Church prescribes all of this because, above all, it wants Easter to feel like Easter! If you find yourself “missing” certain things during Lent, that’s good – that’s exactly the point! That’s what makes Easter all the more joyful when He is Risen from the grave!

Contributing sources for this article:

Bart McDonough, <https://ourladyofthepines.org> and Kim Mandelkow, <https://catholicerald.org>

# UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
2/27/26	SEARCH - Juniors & Seniors St. Therese of Lisieux Cleveland, TN	Online: Scan QR Code on poster in Shea Hall E-Mail: irene.scoggins@gmail.com Phone: 423-596-0053 (Irene Scoggins)
2/28/26	Weathering the Storm Appalachian Highlands Men's Conference (St. Dominic, Kingsport, TN)	Online: Facebook.com/CatholicMensConferenceKPT Scan QR Code on poster in Shea Hall
3/6-8/2026	Retrouaille Retreat - Nashville, TN	Online: HelpOurMarriage.com E-Mail: 3043@helpourmarriage.org Phone: 931-820-2115
3/6-7/2026	Frazzled in the Vinyard Drury Inn & Suites Knoxville West	Online: Scan QR Code on poster in Shea Hall E-Mail: N/A Phone: N/A
3/8-12 and 3/15-19	Serve4 Spring Break Service Week For 7th and 8th graders Johnston Woods - McDonald, TN	Online: More information on poster in Shea Hall E-Mail: djones@dioknox.org E-Mail: ahenderson@dioknox.org
3/14/2026	Knoxville St. Patrick's Day Parade 1:00 PM	Online: <a href="https://knoxstpatricksparade.com/">https://knoxstpatricksparade.com/</a> Click on "Registration Is Open" Icon
4/5/26	<b>Easter Sunday Masses: 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM</b>	Online: StFrancisTownsend.org Shea Hall: Lenten Schedule on Liturgy Bulletin Board
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)
April, 2026	Catholic Men's Emmaus Retreat St. Augustine Catholic Church Signal Mountain, TN	Online: N/A E-Mail: N/A Phone: 423-414-4532 (Michael Hart)

## SAINTS BE PRAISED!

February 21 St. Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

