

FEBRUARY 22, 2026  
1 ST SUNDAY OF LENT

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) Sunday 9:00AM The Rosary is prayed 35 minutes before each Weekend Mass  
**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](mailto: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 2/23** 8:30 AM Yvonne Peychal †  
**Tue 2/24** 8:30 AM Marion Ganley †  
**Wed 2/25** **NO MORNING MASS**  
**Thu 2/26** 8:30 AM Virginia Ann Welsh †  
**Fri 2/27** 8:30 AM Zack & Jessie Bell; Hadley Watson,  
 Baby Eberhardt  
**Sat 2/28** 4:00 PM Larry Kebbecus †  
**Sun 3/1** 9:00 AM Edward Maguire †

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, 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!

### ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

<b>Mon 2/23</b>	9:00 AM	Church and Hall Cleaning
<b>Tue 2/24</b>	6:00 PM	OCIA - PRC
<b>Wed 2/25</b>		
<b>Thu 2/26</b>		
<b>Fri 2/27</b>	5:00 PM	Stations of the Cross
<b>Sat 2/28</b>	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass
<b>Sun 3/1</b>	9:00 AM	Sunday Mass
	10:30 AM	No Greater Love Lenten Study Group - PRC

**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!



### ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

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





## JESUS: A MODEL FOR RESISTING TEMPTATION

The Sunday Scripture readings during Lent are especially meaningful. The Old Testament offers a history of salvation, the Gospels highlight major moments in Jesus's ministry, and the Epistles stress what God has accomplished through Jesus's life, death, and resurrection.

Lent is a period of self-examination, repentance, and discipline. Rather than focusing on ourselves, Lent encourages us to reflect on Christ's suffering and death. The Sunday readings provide context within the larger story of salvation, starting with Adam and Eve.

Today's passages from Genesis 2 and 3 recount the narrative of "original sin." The first section describes how God created Adam - the name meaning "human" - and placed him in Eden - meaning "delight." Adam was given one rule: not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the second section, Adam and Eve are tempted by a serpent, who assures them that if they break this commandment, they will not die but instead become "like gods." They give in to temptation, committing what is known as "original sin." This act has far-reaching consequences for all people, offering an explanation for human flaws and the tendency towards wrongdoing. Some say original sin is the easiest theological doctrine to accept.

The example set by Jesus, the Son of God, is clearly depicted in Matthew's account of his temptation. Throughout three instances, Jesus rejects Satan's efforts to divert him from his role as the new Adam and the new Israel. By consistently referencing the Scriptures of Israel, Jesus resists temptations aimed at fulfilling physical needs, demonstrating his abilities publicly, and seeking political authority. Instead, he maintains his commitment to serving God exclusively, providing a model for resisting temptation. Unlike Adam and Eve, who did not succeed in their trial, Jesus triumphs over sin and Satan, exemplifying the true nature of the Son of God. His actions serve as an instructive guide for others to emulate.

Romans 5 explains how, through Christ, we have the ability to find hope. Jesus, acting as the new Adam, overcame the power of sin and death. By obeying God and sacrificing himself, Christ reversed the effects of Adam's actions and opened the way for us to have a restored relationship with God.



## 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 [sfdeacon7717@gmail.com](mailto:sfdeacon7717@gmail.com).



## Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM



Be bound to one another by the bond of charity, treating each other with respect, helping one another, bearing with one another in Christ Jesus.



- St. Angela Mercici  
1474 - 1540

## CATECHISM

C  
O  
R  
N  
E  
R



BY: Julie Dew

## WELCOME TO THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT!

A quick refresher of the Season of Lent: Lent is a special time of prayer, penance, sacrifice and good works in preparation of the celebration of Easter. In the desire to renew the liturgical practices of the Church, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican Council II (no. 109) stated, "The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent - the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and penance - should be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. It is by means of them that the Church prepares the faithful for the celebration of Easter, while they hear God's word more frequently and devote more time to prayer."

The word Lent itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *lencten*, meaning "Spring," and *lenctentid*, which literally means not only "Springtide" but also was the word for "March," the month in which the majority of Lent falls. Have you noticed that the light of day has "lengthened"? The season of Lent is 40 days of preparing for the greatest celebration of Easter!

Do you remember from past years of the "Corner" mentioning the three disciplines of Lent: Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving? Our Parish offers many opportunities during the Season of Lent to enhance your prayer life and the discipline of fasting. Please consider attending the Stations of the Cross on Fridays with a simple supper following the stations, our Penance Service, Lectio Divina, Adoration, and maybe try to attend morning Mass! Our small parish also gives out Lenten pamphlets/books to assist with the scripture readings during Lent. Please use this aid! As far as almsgiving, we will "talk" about that during the next 40 days!

As I said last week, I would like to concentrate some more on the Roman Crucifixion. "Contemporary eyewitnesses, authors, and ancient and modern historians broadly confirm that crucifixion was a common practice before Constantine abolished it in the Roman Empire in the fourth century. In addition to the Romans, crucifixion was practiced by the Persians, Carthaginians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Germanic peoples, Assyrians, British peoples, and others. Considering its barbaric brutality, it is not observed lightly that crucifixion - in particular times and places - was a routine punishment. Several books have been written within the past few decades that have accumulated the historical findings illustrating widespread crucifixion, but our focus here is on Roman crucifixion - for that is what Jesus suffered. At first, that might seem overly exacting; after all, one might wonder, isn't there one basic method of crucifixion? But the answer is in the negative. As Martin Hengel notes in his book *Crucifixion*, "A particular problem is posed by the fact that the form of crucifixion varied considerably." The Roman method proved particularly dehumanizing, unjust, and widespread.

A study of crucifixion is such an analysis of violence and savagery that it is easy to lose sight of a central aspect of crucifixion: its intentional degradation. Under some Roman emperors, crucifixion was a common punishment for slaves. Cicero even refers to it as the *servitutis extremum summumque supplicium* (the highest and most extreme penalty for slaves).

Not only was a trial unnecessary to crucify a slave, no evidence was necessary; in fact, no underlying crime was necessary. Horace provides the example of a slave who was crucified for tasting the soup of his master, but slaves were crucified for less. Crucifixion was designed to illustrate ignobility; it was deemed the proper way to dispose of a slave. Simply put, slaves were treated as subhuman, and public crucifixion was designed to remind them - and all others who witnessed their deaths - of their sub-humanity." Catholic Answers Insiders Newsletter May 2025

(continued on next page)

All I can say is “unbelievable.” I thought I understood the Church’s stance on the sanctity of life, but after researching the Roman Crucifixion, I understand much better why the Church is inflexible about defending the sanctity of life.

Next week a continuation of Roman Crucifixion. Welcome to Lent and may the peace of our Lord be with you on your journey! To help you with your 3 disciplines of Lent:

**FAST** from unnecessary video clip watching on the internet.

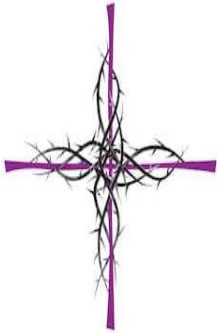
**PRAY** that when you find yourself feeling alone  
you look for comfort not in society but in God.

**GIVE** time today to someone in your life you know is lonely.



### STATIONS OF THE CROSS - FRIDAY 2/27/2026 - 5:00 PM

FACILITATED BY THE SACRISTANS AND ALTAR SERVERS MINISTRIES  
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.

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

*Pope Benedict XVI*  
1927 - 2022

*“The institution of the Eucharist demonstrates how Jesus’ death, for all its violence and absurdity, became in him a supreme act of love and mankind’s definitive deliverance from evil.”*





## THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Lent is a call to “give alms for the poor.” Wherever you live in the parish, there are poor families within walking distance of your home. When in need, they ring the rectory bell. They are, in effect, ringing your doorbell. Is there a family you know who needs assistance? Please call the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that together we can help the suffering and poor.

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.

## '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."

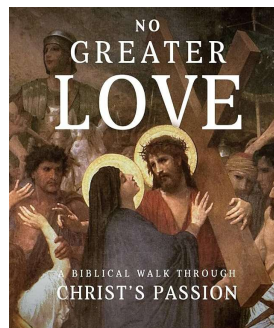
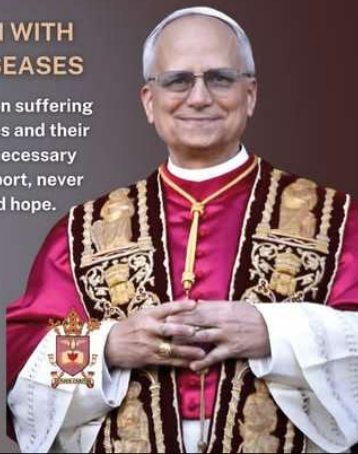
"This initiative aims to increase the visibility of the pope's prayer intentions, using a language suitable for prayer, in new formats, so as to better reach the faithful throughout the world, especially in today's world of digital communication," the press release stated.

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 SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 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)



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

“

*Every day He humbles Himself just as He did  
when from His heavenly throne into the Virgin's womb;  
every day He comes to us and lets us see Him in lowliness,  
when He descends from the bosom of the Father  
into the hands of the priest at the altar.*

”

*- St. Francis of Assisi  
1181 - 1226*

# 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	Retrouvaille 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)

