



MARCH 29, 2026
PALM SUNDAY

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
BOOKKEEPER Kathleen Halligan	PASTORAL CARE Suzie Fay
LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTOR JoAnne 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 & ENVIRONMENT Michele Girard & Norene O'Donnell	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 3/30 8:30 AM Michael O'Brien †
 Elizabeth Isave
Tue 3/31 8:30 AM Dang Thi Sinh †
Wed 4/1 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 4/2 **NO MORNING MASS**
Fri 4/3 **NO MORNING MASS**
Sat 4/4 8:00 PM OCIA Candidates
Sun 4/5 9:00 AM SFA Parishioners
 11:00 AM SFA Parishioners

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, 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, Beryl Quinton, Obed Sexton, the Gruber Family, Betty Gonzalez, Carmen Milton, Carolyn & Bruce Haverkos, Marlene Doerrer, Monica Meyerkord

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: The sanctuary candle is lit in honor of Fr. Antonio. 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 3/30	9:00 AM	Church and Hall Cleaning
Tue 3/31		
Wed 4/1		
Thu 4/2	7:00 PM	Mass of the Lord's Supper
Fri 4/3	3:00 PM	Stations of the Cross
	7:00 PM	Good Friday Service
Sat 4/4	8:00 PM	Easter Vigil Service
Sun 4/5	9:00 AM	Easter Sunday Mass
	11:00 AM	Easter Sunday Mass



ST. FRANCIS WORDS OF WISDOM
JUBILEE YEAR 2026

“ Nor did demons crucify Him;
 it is you who have crucified Him
 and crucify Him still,
 when you delight in your vices and sins. ”

- St. Francis of Assisi
 1181 - 1226



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP
 OPEN
 after weekend Masses
 and by request/appointment
 after daily Mass



THE LITURGICAL YEAR'S HOLIEST, MOST SOLEMN WEEK

Holy Week Palm Sunday, while still part of the Lenten season, inaugurates entrance into the Liturgical year's holiest, most solemn week. "Holy Week has as its purpose the remembrance of Christ's passion, beginning with his Messianic entrance into Jerusalem. The sixth Sunday of Lent, which marks the beginning of Holy Week, is called Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)."

The first days of Holy Week, like all of Lent, serve as final preparation for the celebration of Easter. As the Triduum fast approaches, our focus turns toward the suffering of Christ.

Lent ends the evening of Holy Thursday with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. On the morning of Holy Thursday the Chrism Mass is celebrated, although, for pastoral reasons, in our Diocese is celebrated on the Tuesday prior to Holy Thursday. The premier focus of the Chrism Mass is the Priesthood of Christ. The oils used for Baptisms, Confirmations, Ordinations, and Anointing of sick are blessed and a renewal of commitment to priestly life takes place.



THE EASTER TRIDUUM



The Easter Triduum is the "mother of all feasts." All other feasts of the year hinge on this great feast. The feast takes its name from the Aramaic and Greek, word, *pascha*, which is a translation from the Hebrew, *pescha*. The Hebrew word is translated as a "passing by" or "passing through." The word refers to the primary saving event of Israel. Christians appropriated the feast of Passover to their understanding of Jesus' *pasch*: "He passed through the sea of suffering and death and led the people of God to a communion of grace of faith with the Father."

The word Easter is probably derived from some connection to or translation of the word *East*, where each day meets the rising sun (an obvious metaphor for "Christ, the sun of justice who will rise again in the East after his descent into death").

The Triduum is the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. Jesus' *Pasch* includes his suffering, passion, death and – most of all – his passage from death to new life through the resurrection.

The Feast of Easter is the ritual proclamation and embodiment of the saving of Jesus' resurrection and glorification. This saving reality is remembered and brought into the present.



PASCHAL TRIDUUM



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*"Do grant, oh my God, that when my lips approach Yours to kiss You,
I may taste the gall that was given You;
when my shoulders lean against Yours,
make me feel Your scourging;
when my flesh is united with Yours, in the Holy Eucharist,
make me feel Your passion;
when my head comes near Yours, make me feel Your thorns,
when my heart is close to Yours, make me feel Your spear."*

- St. Gemma Galgani
1878 - 1903

CATECHISM

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BY: *Julie Dew*

Welcome to Palm Sunday! Not sure how we got here SO fast, but I do pray that this journey was one that opened your eyes, to see the Lord in everyone you met on the way, opened your ears to better hear what the Lord had to say to you and touched your hearts in a way to serve our God better!

We all know that this very holy time in the Church calendar centered around the Jewish feast of Passover, which Jesus celebrated with His Apostles. I would like to share with you some very interesting “tidbits” I’ve learned over the years! We all know about the plagues that affected the Egyptians because the Pharaoh would not allow freedom to the Jewish people. These plagues did not affect the Jewish people which made the Pharaoh’s heart even more “hardened” toward God’s people. Through Moses, God told the Pharaoh, “Israel is my son....Let my son go, that he may serve me; and if thou refuses,.....I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn” (Exodus 4:22-23). The last plague, the shadow of death, was to fly by night over the land, interrupting the line of inheritance, bringing tragedy to every home where God was not feared and obeyed. The Israelites were not automatically exempt from the last plague. So, God’s people were instructed to take this “perfect lamb” (I’ll write more about this “perfect lamb” in a bit), slaughter it and sprinkle the blood on the outside of the house door. There was a threshold or ditch which was dug just in front of the doorways of the houses to avoid flooding. The Israelites killed their Passover lambs right by the doors, where they were about to sprinkle the blood, and the blood from the lamb ran into the depression even though there was a container present to catch the blood. When they painted the blood on the door with the hyssop, (a plant used as a brush) they first touched the lintel (the top horizontal part of the doorframe) and then each side post (the vertical sides). In doing this, they went through the motions making the sign of a bloody cross! A bloody cross..... The door was sealed on all four sides with the blood of the lamb. Thus, the angel of death passed over these houses. In addition, the people were instructed to eat “the flesh of the lamb.” By obeying the Lord, Israel was rescued. It was a new birth, a new beginning.

Now about the lamb. The people had to single out from their flocks the handsomest, healthiest looking yearling, NO blemish. An animal of this age, just approaching the prime of its life, was frisky and winsome – fun to be around! The family had to watch it carefully for four days before the Passover to make sure it was healthy and perfect in every way. During this period of time of close observation, they fed and cared for the lamb and grew accustomed to having it around the house. By the end of the fourth day, I’m sure it must have won the affection of the entire household, especially the children. In ancient times, people did not have meat very often. But I still couldn’t imagine the anguish when it was time to slaughter the lamb! How could they enjoy eating the lamb’s flesh? The lesson was painfully sad: God’s holiness demands that He judge sin, and the price is costly indeed. But He is also merciful and provides a way of escape. The innocent Passover lamb foreshadowed the One who would come centuries later to God’s final means of atonement and redemption.

Remember, these are just some suggestions to help with the 3 disciplines of Lent:

FAST from hesitation today.

PRAY that you have interesting experiences which bring you knowledge of God’s presence in the world.

GIVE today by making yourself an action plan of weekly activities you will do post-Lent to help others.

May you receive many blessings this coming Holy Week.



Easter Triduum Services
April 2 - 4, 2026
One liturgy celebrated over the period of 3 days



The Easter Triduum (pronounced **Tríd • yoo • uhm**) services at St. Francis of Assisi Church are three of the most moving, reverent, and spiritually rewarding services in the entire Liturgical Year. If you have never attended an Easter Triduum service here at St. Francis, you owe it to yourself and your family to attend! Come be a part of your St. Francis parish family this Holy Week and share in the Easter Triduum experience on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil—one liturgy celebrated over the period of 3 days.

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND 7:00 PM: The Mass of the Lord's Supper begins at 7:00 PM by gathering in reverent silence. This very special Mass includes a foot washing service wherein we are reminded of Jesus bending down to wash the feet of his disciples. At the end of communion the Eucharist is transferred, in procession, to Shea Hall where it will be available for adoration until **10:00 PM**. Please come and worship as a parish family during this time of adoration.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3RD AT 3:00 AND 7:00 PM: We gather again on Good Friday in reverent silence at 3:00 PM for Stations of the Cross and then again at 7:00 PM to begin our Good Friday service with the Liturgy of the Word - an interactive Passion reading. The Passion reading is followed by Veneration of the Cross where we are all given the opportunity to approach the cross of Christ and offer our Lenten prayers and petitions. Our Good Friday service concludes with a communion service. After communion, reverent silence will be maintained in the church for at least 30 minutes, after which time the church will be made ready for the Easter Vigil.

EASTER VIGIL, APRIL 4TH AT 8:00 PM: The Easter Vigil service begins at approximately 8:00 PM outside on the lawn (weather permitting) behind the Parish Resource Center with the Service of Light from the new Easter fire. At the conclusion of the Service of Light, we process into the church where we continue our celebration with the renewal of our baptismal promise, the reception of our new candidates into our faith, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Immediately following the service we will have a welcoming reception in Shea Hall for our candidates .

The Easter Triduum:
The three-day celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Today is Palm Sunday and the beginning of the holiest of Christian weeks. Let us pray for the grace to take up our own cross and to follow Jesus through death to new life. Please support the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that together we can help the poor as they carry their cross of suffering and pain.

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 MARCH "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH" RICE A RONI AND PASTA SIDES



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.

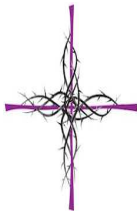


YOUR KARM DONATIONS BENEFIT OUR FOOD PANTRY

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!

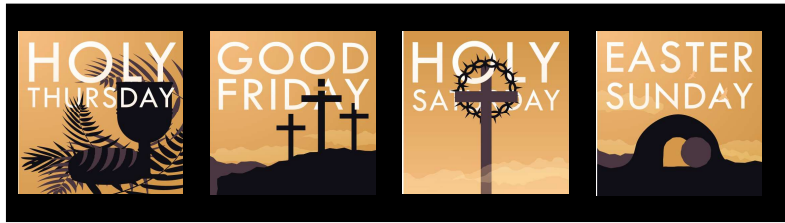


STATIONS OF THE CROSS GOOD FRIDAY 4/3/2026 - 3:00 PM FACILITATED BY THE USHER MINISTRY




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 join your parish family on Good Friday in this beloved tradition.

HOLY WEEK 2026



Holy Thursday	April 2 nd	Mass of the Lord's Supper	7:00 PM
Good Friday	April 3 rd	Stations of the Cross	3:00 PM
Good Friday	April 3 rd	Good Friday Service	7:00 PM
Holy Saturday	April 4 th	Easter Vigil Service	8:00 PM
Easter Sunday	April 5 th	Easter Sunday Mass	9:00 AM
Easter Sunday	April 5 th	Easter Sunday Mass	11:00 AM

 **Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM**


“ *The simple fact is this:
Jesus was not executed for saying,
“love one another” or “try to be nice.”
He was executed for claiming to be
the God of the universe -
the I AM.
He doesn't ask us merely to accept his
teachings; he calls us to accept him.* ”

- Curtis Martin
from his book *Made for More*


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

For Disarmament and Peace

*Let us pray that nations move
toward effective disarmament,
particularly nuclear disarmament,
and that world leaders choose
the path of dialogue
and diplomacy
instead of violence.*



PONTIFICAL GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION FOR THE HOLY LAND



A second collection will be taken up on Good Friday, April 3rd, in support of the Pontifical Collection for the Holy Land. This collection, in the words of Paul VI is “not only for the Holy Places but above all for those pastoral, charitable, educational, and social works which the Church supports in the Holy Land for the welfare of their Christian brethren and of the local communities.” Your generosity also assists those such as the Franciscans who have been in the Holy Land since 1209 caring for the poor, protecting the Holy shrines, and keeping the light of Christianity alive.

Image by pngtree.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
4/5/2026	Easter Sunday Masses: 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM	Online: StFrancisTownsend.org Hall: Lenten Schedule on Liturgy Bulletin Board Phone: 865-448-6070
4/12/2026	Divine Mercy Sunday Holy Hour of Adoration 3:00 PM in the Church	Online: StFrancisTownsend.org Hall: Flyer on Liturgy Bulletin Board 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)
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)

E-MAIL AND TEXT SCAM ALERT



We have received word from the Diocese that parishioners have been receiving E-Mails and Texts purportedly sent by Priests, Deacons, or other Clergy asking for urgent financial assistance. Additionally, within our OWN parish, parishioners have reported receiving emails and texts from Fr. Antonio with a similar message. If you have received correspondence like this, please DO NOT respond to it and report it to the Church or Diocesan office. Our diocesan

office has asked that we share that **no priest or deacon will ever contact you by email or text asking for your assistance.**

To report a suspicious email or text to the Diocesan office please contact Mara Lentz at mlentz@dioknox.org or 865-862-5734. To report a suspicious email or text to the Parish Office please call 865-448-6070 or send an email to StFrancisTownsend7717@gmail.com.

SECOND COLLECTION ON EASTER SUNDAY



On Easter Sunday, a second collection will be taken up in support of Diocesan Seminarian Education. Though we are one of the smallest dioceses in the U.S., we are blessed with a rich harvest of vocations to the priesthood. Presently, we have 9 seminarians enrolled in studies - one who, God willing, will be ordained to the priesthood shortly. And it is our hope that we will have 11 seminarians for the 2026-2027 academic year. But with this wonderful blessing comes a financial challenge. The cost of educating just one seminarian is over \$50,000. Your investment in the future of the priesthood is greatly needed to help guarantee the growth of the Catholic faith in East Tennessee. Please be generous in supporting our Diocesan Seminarians in their formation as they endeavor through the grace of God to become your future priests.