



**MARCH 8, 2026
3RD 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) 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 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 3/9 8:30 AM Geraldine Lein †
Tue 3/10 8:30 AM St. Benedict †
Wed 3/11 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 3/12 8:30 AM Bud Utter
Fri 3/13 8:30 AM Joyce Welsh
Sat 3/14 4:00 PM JR Bell; Natalie & Joseph Watson
Sun 3/15 9:00 AM Dora Morris †

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, Beryl Quinton, Obed Sexton, the Gruber Family, Betty Gonzalez, Carmen Milton, Edgar Miller, Carolyn & Bruce Haverkos

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

Mon 3/9	9:00 AM	Church and Hall Cleaning
Tue 3/10	6:00 PM	OCIA - PRC
Wed 3/11		
Thu 3/12		
Fri 3/13	5:00 PM	Stations of the Cross
Sat 3/14	4:00 PM	Vigil Mass
Sun 3/15	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



THE SCRUTINIES OF LENT

The conversion of the Samaritan woman can be observed in the degrees to which she gains understanding of Who and What Jesus is. The Samaritan woman first observes Jesus to be a Jewish man. Jesus, a Jew, is speaking to a Samaritan woman and asking for a drink and she was shocked. Then, Jesus tells her the truth about herself and she is amazed and now she believes him to be a prophet! Then she tells Jesus that the Messiah is coming and “he will tell us everything” to which Jesus replies, “I am He, the one speaking with you.” She brings many to come and see Jesus (“Could he possibly be the Christ?” she says to them) and they come first because of her word but they end up believing that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ because of His word. The Samaritan woman converts her town to Christianity.

A couple of weeks ago, our two catechumens went to the Cathedral and are now known as the elect. To help them complete their journey to conversion at the Easter Vigil, over the next three weeks we will celebrate the scrutinies.

During the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent, we observe the Scrutinies to support the Elect in our parish as they prepare for conversion, much like the Samaritan woman in Scripture. These rites guide the Elect through self-examination and repentance with a spiritual focus. In each of the three Scrutinies, the journey mirrors that of anyone embracing Christianity: starting with no understanding of who Jesus Christ is, then gradually recognizing Him as a remarkable person - a leader, teacher, humanitarian, and compassionate figure - and ultimately coming to grasp His divinity and grace, leading to full faith. Recognizing Jesus for who He truly is and accepting His divine grace requires sincere commitment to turning away from sin.

“The Scrutinies are meant to uncover, and then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. For the Scrutinies are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life.” from [Creighton University Online Ministries](#).

During the Scrutinies, we accompany the Elect, offer them support, and participate in prayer alongside them. At the Easter Vigil, we join the Elect in reaffirming our Baptismal commitment as we symbolically turn away from sin and embrace renewed life in Christ.

As they begin the final stage in their conversion, the period known as Purification and Enlightenment, please keep Ocean Teaster and Brooke Pouliotte in your prayers.



Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM



The age of casual Catholicism is over,
the age of heroic Catholicism has begun.
We can no longer be Catholics by accident
but instead we must be Catholics by conviction



- Fr. Terrence Henry, TOR, Franciscan University

CATECHISM

C
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BY: Julie Dew

THE DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER

Hello and welcome to the Third Sunday of Lent! As I talked about a few “Corners” ago, everywhere you look in the liturgical calendar you’ll encounter God’s grace and all throughout the liturgical year you get opportunities to begin to reorient your life!

I hope that you are taking advantage of attending the Stations of the Cross on the Fridays of Lent sponsored by each of our ministries. Thank you to the ministry coordinators for organizing the Stations and the “Simple Soup Suppers.”

I also hope that you are taking advantage of attending the Lectio Divina sessions offered on Tuesdays right after morning Mass! Thank you, Ilene Rainwater for coordinating this!

AND... this year something new! We are using Ascension Press’ *No Greater Love* beautiful holy week journey through the Holy Land on Sundays after fellowship in the PRC. Hope to see you there!

In this “Corner” I would like to “talk about” the discipline of prayer. Prayer in Catholicism is rich and varied, rooted deeply in Scripture and Tradition. The Catechism (CCC 2559-2565) teaches us there are several types of prayer:

Blessing and AdorationRecognizing God’s greatness (CCC 2626).

PetitionAsking God for our needs (CCC 2627).

IntercessionPraying on behalf of others, including saints in heaven (CCC 2634).

Early Church Fathers like Origen affirmed this communion of saints (Article 1).

ThanksgivingGratitude for God’s gifts (CCC 2637).

PraiseGiving glory to God simply because He is God (CCC 2639).

Regarding repetitious prayers like the Rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Church distinguishes between vain repetition condemned in Matthew 6:7-8 and meaningful, meditative repetition. Jesus Himself gave us the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13), a model for repeated prayer. Standardized prayers are not mechanical but help unite the faithful in sincere worship (CCC 2685). Thus, Catholic prayer embraces both spontaneous and structured forms, all directed to deepen our relationship with God. I’ve always said that the New Testament is revealed in those beautiful beads of the Rosary.

But what is prayer, you ask...St. John Damascene quotes the CCC 2559: “The raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.” Put a little more simply: “prayer is talking with God” (my quote!) When you want to know someone better, what do you do? You talk with them, right? This contemplative type of prayer is explained perfectly in his book, *I Think I heard God Laugh*, by Matthew Kelly. If you have not read the book, please do. It is an enlightening book of a young man’s journey and struggle with his prayer life and his relationship with God. Here’s a brief summary, according to Matthew Kelly, on how to pray:

1. **Gratitude:** Begin by thanking God in a personal dialogue for whatever you are most grateful for today.
2. **Awareness:** Revisit the times in the past 24 hours when you were and were not the-best-version-of-yourself. Talk to God about these situations and what you learned from them.
3. **Significant Moments:** Identify something you experienced and explore what God might be trying to say to you through that event (or person).
4. **Peace:** Ask God to forgive you for any wrong you have committed (against yourself, another person, or Him) and to fill you with a deep and abiding peace.
5. **Freedom:** Speak with God about how He is inviting you to change your life, so that you can experience the freedom to be the-best-version-of-yourself.
6. **Others:** Lift up to God anyone you feel called to pray for today, asking God to bless and guide them.
7. Finish by praying the Our Father.

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As you were reading these “7” steps, you probably noticed some similarities to what the CCC says about prayer. I’m thinking it’s a “God-incidence” Mr. Kelly has this complete (the number 7!) list on how to pray. His book goes into more detail and is an easy read! I highly recommend it!

Here are some more “tips” to help you with your 3 disciplines of Lent:

- FAST** from insensitive, cruel comments about others – no gossiping.
- PRAY** about volunteering in a ministry at our own St. Francis Parish that needs help.
- GIVE** Volunteer at a shelter or soup kitchen. (Again, I’m plugging our St. Vincent de Paul Society. Pray about this – seriously!)

Until next week, have a blessed week.....



ST. FRANCIS WORDS OF WISDOM - JUBILEE YEAR 2026



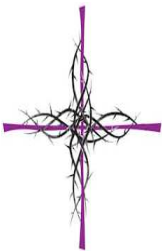
*While you are proclaiming peace with your lips,
be careful to have it even more fully in your heart.*



*- St. Francis of Assisi
1181 - 1226*

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS
FRIDAY 3/13/2026 - 5:00 PM**

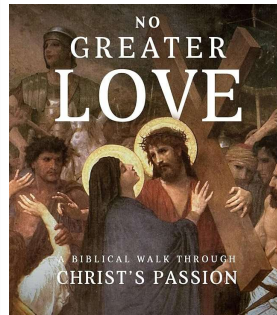
**FACILITATED BY THE MUSIC MINISTRY
MEATLESS LENTEN SUPPER TO FOLLOW**



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.



**LENTEN STUDY GROUP
SUNDAY, MARCH 8
(SESSION 3)
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



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

In today's Gospel, Jesus says: "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work." Through your almsgiving you are doing the will of the Father and finishing the work of Jesus. Know that your nickel, dime or quarter is multiplied by the coins placed by others in the St. Vincent de Paul Poor Box.

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



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!



EAST TENNESSEE CATHOLIC 2026 READER POLL

We want to hear from you!

Use QR code to take brief survey

The East Tennessee Catholic
2026 Reader Poll

The East Tennessee Catholic newspaper is conducting a diocese-wide reader poll during Lent this year and they need our help to ensure the results reflect the voice of every parish in the diocese.

The poll is live now through the end of March and is advertised in both the February and March editions of the newspaper. The goal is to better understand who is reading the newspaper, what content resonates most with readers, and how the faithful can best be served in the pews for years to come.

In addition to the digital option of participation, 1,000 paper surveys will be mailed out to randomly selected reader households. If you prefer a paper copy, please call or email the diocese office to request one: Ebooker@dioknox.org; 865-584-3307 ask for Emily Booker.

Please take a few minutes to complete the brief poll and share your insights. Your perspective helps our diocesan newspaper understand its role in your life and how to best serve the East Tennessee Catholic community for years to come.

'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. To the right is the pope's full prayer for March.



**Pope's Worldwide
Prayer Network**

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.



Antonio Miliary / ALETTA

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2026 SPECIAL HOLY HOUR OF ADORATION

3:00 PM

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
Scripture Readings
Praying the Rosary (with special text)
Praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy
Benediction

Jesus, I Trust in You

SUPPORT THE
CATHOLIC
RELIEF
SERVICES
COLLECTION



SECOND COLLECTION ON MARCH 14 & 15 FOR CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), is the international humanitarian agency of the U.S. Bishops and Catholic community. With your generosity, CRS is helping to break the cycle of poverty in more than 90 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. CRS also provides emergency relief in the wake of natural disasters. Your donation also assists the work of the U.S. Bishops' Offices of International Justice and Peace, Migration and Refugee Services and Pastoral Care, the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, and the relief work of the Holy Father. Thank you for your generous donation to this very important organization!

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
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: https://knoxstpatricksparade.com/ Click on "Registration Is Open" Icon
4/5/26	Easter Sunday Masses: 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM	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)



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*For a faithful Catholic, everything should begin and end
with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
The Holy Eucharist is what makes us Catholics - it is, indeed, our identity.
In this sense, the one who calls himself or herself a Catholic
and does not participate in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass every Sunday
is being untruthful to one's commitment to Jesus - it is living a lie.
We are the Eucharistic People of God.
The Catholic Church exists because of the Eucharist.*

Fr. Absalom Coutinho - Just a Thought

