



SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 24TH 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

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)
	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 please 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 9/14 8:30 AM Elias Ventura;† Genoveva Fuentes +
Tue 9/15 8:30 AM Special Intention
Wed 9/16 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 9/17 8:30 AM Ralph Peychal +
Fri 9/18 8:30 AM Armando Rodriguez +
Sat 9/19 4:00 PM Debbie Eberhardt; Brooks Watson
Sun 9/20 9:00 AM Grace Harth +

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, Doreen Mancuso, Claire Cheadle, Paul Fain, Joyce Fain, Julie Schirack, John & Maria Bermudes, Michael Slater, Marion McCaughey, Sue Corsini, Teresa Williams, Jeffrey Garrison, Ann Day, Ed Welsh, Dale DuRussel, Robert Schumacher, German Giraldo, Connor Dietrich, Sofia Graziano, Obed Sexton, Carmen Milton, Carolyn & Bruce Haverkos, Marlene Doerrer, Michael Grier Jr., Cathy Luck, Ann Svoboda, J.R. Bell, Marcus Bolte, Amy Buxton

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: If 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 this week in honor of Julie and Michael Dew.* 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 9/14 9:00 AM Church and Hall Cleaning
Tue 9/15 6:00 PM OCIA - PRC
Wed 9/16 5:00 PM SVdP - PRC
Thu 9/17
Fri 9/18
Sat 9/19 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 9/20 9:00 AM Sunday Mass

WEEKLY OFFERTORY

Week of 9-6-2026

Actual Weekly Offertory	\$ 5,297.00
Budgeted Weekly Offertory	3,634.62
Weekly Surplus/(Deficit)	1,662.38
YTD Actual Offertory	42,286.45
YTD Budgeted Offertory	36,346.20
YTD Surplus/(Deficit)	5,940.25

FORGIVE WITHOUT LIMITS



Jesus taught us to pray to the Father with these words: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." These words challenge us to grapple with the practical questions of forgiveness and church order.

Today's readings deal with relationships. Relationship is at the heart of what it means to be human. Healthy, life-giving relationships make the difference between depression, anxiety, and violence versus a vibrant, happy, peace-filled, and meaningful journey through this earthly sojourn. Relationships are what distinguish human beings from the lower levels of creation. Good relationships require effort and discipline.

Pride, egotism, jealousy, power, and control are the driving forces behind the human tendencies to destroy rather than uplift. Unchecked and unbridled anger and resentment are what prompt human beings to kill one another.

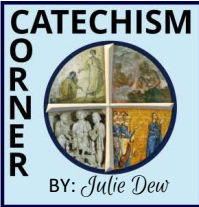
Today's first reading from the Book of Sirach takes the argument beyond. Those who know God and are in relationship with God must avoid anger and resentment because they are conscious of their need for divine mercy. Only God has the authority to judge. It is arrogant for human beings to assume God's role. People can seek God's mercy and forgiveness. Sinners in turn are to extend the same mercy to others.

Matthew's passage today, emphasizes the relationships that are to exist within church: between church members, one to another, and between church authorities and church members. Matthew counsels the church on the way to live in the reign of God. Our readings today explain this way of living very well. It is clear: we are to live as brothers and sisters in God's human family. We just heard it before this gospel passage "I give you a new commandment says the Lord; love one another as I have loved you." In reality, because our human failings and our selfishness, we fail in our love and hurt one another. When this happens - and it will happen - we must forgive and be forgiven.

Peter wants to know the limits of forgiveness: "Must I forgive my brother seven times?" Jesus' answer is crystal clear: "Seventy-seven times." He is saying that there is absolutely no limit on forgiveness. God's forgiveness of our sins should enable us to forgive those who offend us. While the number and nature of our sins may differ, it is an unfortunate fact that all of us commit sins that hurt ourselves and others. Our human tendency is to point out the wrong that has been done to us, and never forget it: "He did this," "She said that," "It's unfair and it hurt me." Even small children can recount such experiences in their young lives. Compared to our offenses against God, the debt owed to us is comparatively minor. It is simple justice that we should forgive without limit.

Matthew's account continues with the parable of the unjust steward. Out of mercy and compassion, a king forgives an enormous debt owed to him by one of his servants. Then this same servant viciously demands payment for a tiny debt owed him by a fellow servant. He does not listen to the debtor's plea for more time. He fails to forgive as he has been forgiven. The story ends with the unjust servant handed over to the torturers until he pays the whole debt. Jesus concludes: "So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart." This forgiveness is not simply a legal procedure. It must be rooted in our sincere love for all in God's family.





HOW THE BIBLE CAME INTO EXISTENCE

Thank you, David, for the wonderful educational “Corners” about the Books of the Bible that are not included in the Protestant Bible. All the “Corners” were immensely informative! I’m still thinking my favorite “Corner” was about the Books of Maccabees because of history, prophecy fulfillment, and jaw-dropping courage! But the Book of Sirach is a close contender because it was originally written in Hebrew, follows the Book of Wisdom and has a literary feeling of Proverbs! I truly appreciate David’s illuminating and revealing “Corners” for these past weeks. Hey,

St. Francis, email me at jdewtn2018@att.net and tell me what “Corner” about “The Missing Books” was your favorite and why!

After David’s enlightening “Corners,” I thought I would share with you how the Bible was compiled and maybe some other “tidbits” like how to select a Bible!

The Bible is God’s Word through Human Authors and was compiled over many years and several Councils. It developed over many centuries, beginning with oral traditions and later being committed to writing, edited, and preserved by scribes. This is a concise explanation!

The Old Testament books were written well before Jesus’s Incarnation, and all of the New Testament books were written close to the end of the first century A.D. The canon of the Bible was affirmed at the Council of Rome in 350 A.D. Yes, you’re right in thinking – Rome, Italy. At this time in the history of the Church, Rome was the seat of the Bishop of Rome (the Pope) and the primary meeting place for major synods – same as a council. It was the Catholic Church who determined the canon - or list of books - of the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

At the Council of Hippo in 393 A.D. which is modern day Annaba, Algeria, the first time a council of bishops formally approved a biblical canon that closely matches our Roman Catholic Old Testament. The Third Council of Carthage in 397 A.D. which was held in Carthage (where else, right?) reaffirmed the canon list from the Council of Hippo. Modern day Carthage is located in northern Tunisia, Africa and remains an archaeological site of ancient Carthage. It’s interesting to note that St. Augustine was at both!

As you can see, the Church in all of Her wisdom does not do a “knee jerk” type of decision making when it comes to something as important as the canon of the Bible.

If you have read or seen any of the original writings of the Old and New Testament, the writings in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, have no breaks or punctuation as we would use them today. Texts were written in continuous script with no spaces between words and no punctuation to mark sentence endings or pauses. This was largely due to the fact that the writing materials like papyrus or parchment were limited and rare. However, Jewish scribes used a system of open-and-closed spaces to show separate sections within the text. When the Old Testament was translated into Greek (the Septuagint), this translation incorporated numerical divisions for the Psalms, but most of the Bible remained undivided. The chapter divisions were added by the Archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton - an English Cardinal from 1207 to his death in 1228. The chapter divisions were believed to have been done in 1227. His chapter system became the foundation for the modern Bible’s chapter structure. The first Bible to include both chapters and verses as we know them today was the Geneva Bible in 1560. If you have a moment, look up Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury. A **very** interesting read! For further reading, may I suggest “*The Bible is a Catholic Book*” by Jimmy Akin. Next week, let’s look at “How to select a Bible?” Have a blessed week St. Francis!!





THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

The challenge in today's Gospel, is to forget how others have behaved toward us and to look to God's way of loving and forgiving. Our focus must be on God.

Is there a neighbor or friend of yours who is in temporary need because of a loss of a job or an illness? Please leave a message for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul...we want to help!

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 SEPTEMBER "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH"



CHANGING OF THE GUARD



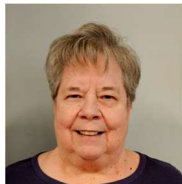
GLORIA PFEIFER
PRESIDENT

On October 1, 2026 Gloria Pfeifer will step into the role of President of our St. Vincent de Paul Conference here at St. Francis of Assisi Church. ***Welcome, Gloria!*** Thank you for saying "yes" to accepting this position and a special "Thank You" to Debbie Eberhardt for her many years of service as our current president! Debbie and Gloria will work closely together over the next several months to ensure a smooth and timely transition of duties.

On the weekend of October 10 & 11 our SVdP Conference members will rededicate themselves to their ministry at both weekend Masses. Following each Mass our SVdP Conference will be hosting a Food Pantry open house in the Parish Resource with cake, coffee, a video presentation, and a tour of the facility. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending this celebration on the weekend of October 10 and 11!



Debbie Eberhardt
Vice President



Sharon McKune
Treasurer



Claire Andersen
Secretary



Ilene Rainwater
Spiritual Advisor



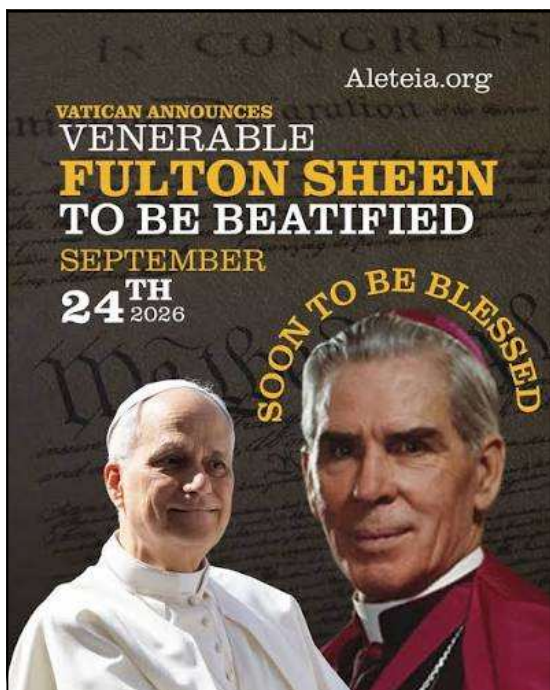
Kathy Meyerkord
Technology Coordinator



Ron Andersen
Food Pantry Manager

SVdP DONATION GUIDELINES

- The preprinted SVdP church contribution 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 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.

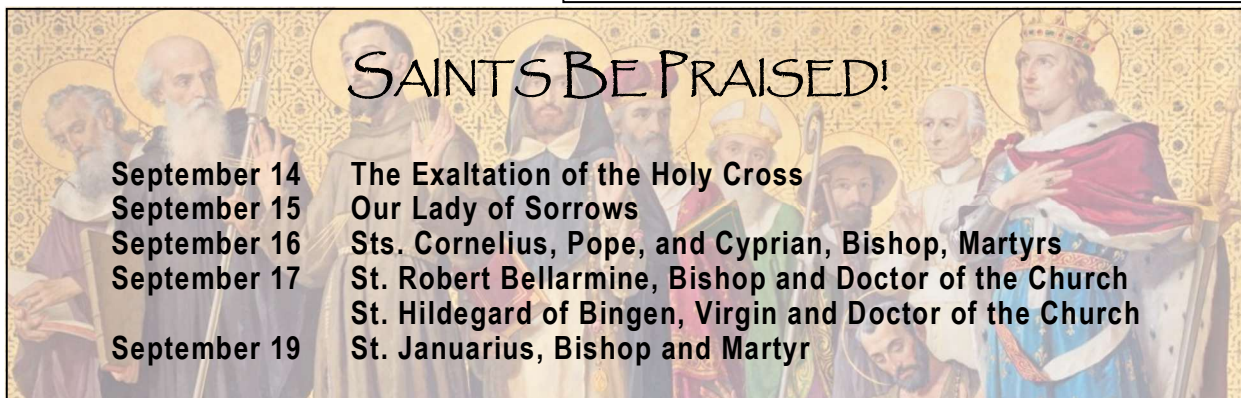


INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

"If you have anything against any man, forgive it: you come here to receive forgiveness of sins, and thou also must forgive him that has sinned against you. Else with what face will you say to the Lord, Forgive me my many sins, if you have not yourself forgiven your fellow-servant even his little sins."

*- St. Cyril of Jerusalem
315 AD - 386 AD*

(From his Catechetical Lectures, linking our readiness to forgive others directly to receiving the Lord in the Eucharist).



Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM

“

To love and forgive as God loves and forgives is a program of life that cannot know interruptions or exceptions.

- Pope Francis
1936 - 2025

”

POPE LEO'S MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION SEPTEMBER 2026

For the Care of Water

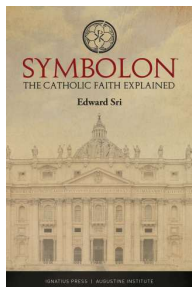
Let us pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.



OCIA AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

If you are interested in exploring the Catholic Church - or you know someone that is - 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!

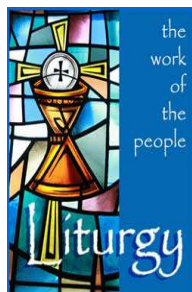
2026-2027 classes are held every Tuesday in the PRC at 6:00 PM.



This year we will be using a program called "Symbolon" via the online digital streaming platform *Formed.org*. *Formed* provides Catholic educational content, movies, audio books, Bible studies, and family programs which are available to EVERY St. Francis of Assisi parishioner! *Formed* is produced by the Augustine Institutes and is often described as a "Catholic Netflix!" *Formed* is 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). You really need to get yourself registered on *Formed* and start making use of this unbelievable resource!

Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained is a systematic presentation of our Catholic Faith. It leads the participant through the "big picture" of the Catholic Faith using the Creed as the guide. Symbolon brings together some of the most trusted Catholic teachers in the world to guide you through the breadth and richness of the Catholic faith. One of the things that OCIA participants will find beneficial this year is the ability to look ahead and prepare for upcoming sessions and/or review past sessions. While there is a lot to be said for small group discussions and faith sharing, if your schedule does not permit, you do not have to attend the OCIA sessions to benefit from the Symbolon presentations! Go get yourself *Formed*!

For more information please contact Deacon Jim:
901-493-2123 or sfadeacon7717@gmail.com.



LITURGICAL MINISTERS NEEDED!

We are in need of Liturgical Ministers - **ESPECIALLY USHERS AND MUSICIANS** - for our liturgical celebrations of weekend Masses and special occasion celebrations (weddings, funerals, holy day Masses, etc.). This is a great time to "get in the boat" as our new liturgical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent: November 29th this year! Most ministries require a small amount of training and Eucharistic Ministers require commissioning as well - all of which can happen before our new liturgical year begins if you get involved now.

If you would like more information about our Liturgical Ministries, or are ready to get involved, please check out our website, the bulletin board in Shea Hall or contact one of our ministry heads:

Lectors	Martha Frink	865-556-4684	marthafrink00@gmail.com
EMHC*	Karen Messenger	225-572-9400	kommessenger@gmail.com
Musicians	JoAnne Romer-Aylward	859-361-4561	joannera.726@gmail.com
Ushers	Paul Czerniewski	847-877-7347	paul.czerniewski@gmail.com
Sacristans	Kathy Meyerkord	630-698-5563	kmmeyerkord@gmail.com
Altar Servers	Dan Meyerkord	708-846-4144	dkam27@sbcglobal.net

* Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
9/18/26	Rachel's Vineyard Weekend Retreat Christ Prince of Peace Retreat Ctr. Benton, TN	Online: ccetn.org/project-rachel E-Mail: sandi@ccetn.org Phone: 865-776-4510
9/20/26	Young Adult Mass & Dinner with Bishop Mark Beckman Sacred Heart Cathedral 4:00 PM	Online: dioknox.org/events Scan: QR code on poster in Shea Hall E-Mail: mlouque@dioknox.org
10/3/26	Pet Blessing Outside behind the PRC 10:00 AM	Online: N/A E-Mail: StFrancisTownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070
10/4/26	"Feasting" Potluck with St. Francis Shea Hall 4:00 - 7:00 PM	Online: N/A E-Mail: StFrancisTownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070
10/23/26	Diocesan Young Adult Frassati Retreat (23rd-25th) Christ Prince of Peace Retreat Ctr.	Online: dioknox.org/events Scan: QR code on poster in Shea Hall E-Mail: mlouque@dioknox.org
10/24/26	Lead In His Image Diocesan Men's Retreat 8:00 AM Sacred Heart Cathedral	Online: https://dioknox.org/events/lead-in-his-image Scan: QR code on poster in Shea Hall Phone: N/A
11/1/26	Parish Movie Night with popcorn "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" A St. Francis/St. Clare Movie Shea Hall 4:00 - 6:00 PM	Online: N/A E-Mail: StFrancisTownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070
12/6/26	Parish Christmas Party Tremont Lodge - Townsend 5:00 - 8:00 PM	Online: N/A E-Mail: StFrancisTownsend7717@gmail.com Phone: 865-448-6070



ST. FRANCIS WORDS OF WISDOM JUBILEE YEAR 2026



*It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned.*



*St. Francis of Assisi
1181 - 1226*



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

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