



SEPTEMBER 20, 2026 25TH 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 & GROUNDSIlene Rainwater
DEACONDc. Jim Schmall	FACILITIESDavid Girard
OFFICE MANAGERSKatrina Allocco & Lesa Schmall	SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITEJoAnne Romer-Aylward
BOOKKEEPERKathleen Halligan	PASTORAL CARESuzie Fay
LITURGY/MUSIC DIRECTORJoAnne Romer-Aylward	ST. CLARE GIFT SHOPCamilla Sorrell
DIR. OF RELIGIOUS ED.Julie Dew	COLUMBARIUMBob 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.

ANOIDING 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 sfabulletin7717@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 9/21 8:30 AM Armando Rodriguez †
Tue 9/22 8:30 AM Grace Harth †
Wed 9/23 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 9/24 8:30 AM Nicholas C. Provenzo †
Fri 9/25 8:30 AM Elias Ventura; † Genoveva Fuentes †
Sat 9/26 4:00 PM George Szekely †
Sun 9/27 9:00 AM Charles Fiorella †

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 memory of Nicholas C. Provenzo given by Camilla Sorrell.* 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 9/21 9:00 AM Church and Hall Cleaning
Tue 9/22 6:00 PM OCIA - PRC
Wed 9/23
Thu 9/24
Fri 9/25
Sat 9/26 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 9/27 9:00 AM Sunday Mass

WEEKLY OFFERTORY

Week of 9-13-2026

Actual Weekly Offertory	\$ 3,485.00
Budgeted Weekly Offertory	3,634.62
Weekly Surplus/(Deficit)	(149.62)
YTD Actual Offertory	45,771.45
YTD Budgeted Offertory	39,980.82
YTD Surplus/(Deficit)	5,790.63



THE LAST WILL BE FIRST, AND THE FIRST WILL BE LAST

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard is among Jesus' most difficult teachings - not because it is difficult to understand, but because it is difficult to accept. It challenges our instinctive sense of fairness and reveals the deeper truth of God's boundless generosity. The landowner returns throughout the day - early morning, mid-morning, noon, mid-afternoon, and even the final hour - to find workers. This reflects God's heart: He never stops seeking or inviting us. No one is forgotten, and no one arrives too late.

At day's end, the landowner pays every worker the same wage. The early workers complain, and we understand why: they worked longer, endured the heat, and did more. But the landowner answers: **"Didn't I pay you what I promised? Are you envious because I am generous?"**

This is the turning point. God's justice is not about calculating who deserves what. God's justice is mercy. God's justice is generosity. God's justice is love. The first workers were not upset because they were underpaid. They were upset because someone else was overpaid.

Comparison is a thief of joy. Comparison blinds us to our blessings. Comparison makes us forget the generosity we have already received. The early workers lost peace not because God was unfair, but because they could not rejoice in someone else's grace.

How often does this happen in our own lives? We see someone else succeed and feel diminished. We see someone else forgiven and feel overlooked. We see someone else blessed and feel forgotten. But God's blessings are not slices of a pie. When He gives to one, He does not take from another. His generosity is infinite.

The workers hired at the last hour represent all of us who have felt late in turning to God, slow in conversion, weak in discipleship, unworthy of His gifts. And yet God gives them the full wage. Why? Because God does not love us according to our performance. He loves us according to His goodness. This is the Gospel. This is grace. This is the heart of Christ. The parable is not only about wages. It is about the call.

God is still going out, again and again, searching for workers. Some of us have been in the vineyard for years. Some of us may feel like we are arriving at the last hour.

In the interest of full disclosure, in my professional life I was a union worker. I was a member of and later president of International Chemical Workers Local 397C. And so, whenever I read this Gospel passage, I am reminded of the work it takes to ensure dignity in the workplace. To remind society that workers are not tools to be used, but people to be respected. It gives voice to those who bear the heat of the day, who ask not for special privilege, but for fairness, safety, an honest wage, and the ability to provide for their families.

At the same time, the parable challenges every worker - union or non-union - not to let the pursuit of justice become poisoned by envy. Christian solidarity means we can fight for what is right while still rejoicing when another person receives mercy, opportunity, or a second chance. In God's vineyard, the dignity of one worker does not diminish the dignity of another.

It does not matter. What matters is that we respond. And when we do, God gives us not a wage but a gift: **the gift of salvation, the gift of belonging, the gift of His love.** Jesus ends with the famous line: **"The last will be first, and the first will be last."**

This is not a threat. It is a promise. It means that in God's kingdom, no one is forgotten. No one is too late. No one is beyond mercy. No one is excluded from grace. Let us ask for hearts that rejoice in God's generosity - toward us, and toward others. And let us enter the vineyard today with gratitude, knowing that everything we receive from God is not earned, but given.

Lord, make us grateful for Your generosity, and free us from the burden of comparison.

CATECHISM

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BY: Julie Dew

SELECTING A BIBLE

Happy September weekend St. Francis of Assisi! So, you may be asking yourself, "How can I select the best Bible for me?" Let's look at the different study Bibles. I write "study" Bible because aren't we all studying and learning the Word of God? Let's get started!

Choosing a Bible can feel overwhelming, but you don't need to overthink it. The most important thing is to choose a Catholic translation that you will actually read. Some translations are more literal, while others focus on clarity and readability.

Popular Catholic translations include:

NABRE (New American Bible, Revised Edition): This is the translation used in the Mass in the United States. It is widely available and includes helpful footnotes. The NAB was the first Catholic translation made directly from the original biblical languages (rather than from the Latin Vulgate).

RSV-CE (Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition): This translation is known for its clear and dignified language. It is acclaimed by many as the most accurate and most beautiful modern translation of the Bible. If you follow Fr. Mike Schmitz on the Hallow App and listen to his Bible in a Year, this is the translation he uses.

The New Jerusalem Bible (NJB): The New Jerusalem Bible is the 1985 update to the 1966 Jerusalem Bible - which is a translation that itself is based on the French *La Bible de Jérusalem* translated by the faculty of the Dominican Biblical School in Jerusalem. Here's a little tidbit which is very intriguing: in the 1966 translation of The Book of Jonah in The New Jerusalem Bible is J.R.R. Tolkien's translation of the Old Testament Book! Please be aware, though, that his translation was based on a French text and was not a direct translation of the original Hebrew.

NRSV-CE (New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition): This is commonly used in academic settings and offers careful scholarship.

You can also choose between print and digital versions. Some people prefer a physical Bible because it feels more tangible and helps them focus. Others use Bible apps for convenience. Both are fine. The key is to choose a format that encourages you to return to Scripture regularly. Me - personally - I prefer a printed Bible because I like to make LOTS of notes! Just ask Clyde!

In the beginning, consider selecting a Bible with minimal distractions if you are a beginner. Study Bibles with extensive notes can be helpful later, but they may overwhelm you at first. Start with the text itself and allow God's Word to speak to you before turning to commentary. A couple of "things" you should look for at the very front of your Bible is the "*nihil obstat*" and the "*imprimatur*." You may ask, what is that? I'm glad you asked! Because of heresies and misguided beliefs, in 1564, proceeding from the directive of the Council of Trent, the Church issued a series of rules on the oversight or censorship of books with religious content. Then Pope Leo XIII issued various guidelines in 1897 and in 1907 Pope St. Pius X directed all bishops to have qualified theologians review the contents of submitted books with a "*nihil obstat*" in his encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. These qualified theologians are called a Censor Librorum, and this Church-appointed censor reviews the manuscript to ensure it contains no content contrary to Catholic faith or morals and then puts his name to it. *nihil obstat* is a Latin phrase translating to "nothing stands in the way" or "nothing hinders." The *imprimatur* comes from the Latin for "let it be printed." It is an official declaration by a bishop or local ordinary that a book or manuscript is free from doctrinal or moral error and may be published. The *imprimatur* is typically granted after a favorable *nihil obstat* has been issued. I AM VERY glad that this process is in place!

Whichever one you choose, be glad that these good choices exist, and remember that the best Catholic Bible is the one you read! Next week, let's explore "How to read the Bible?" Enjoy our little church on the river by attending daily Mass!



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us a parable to teach us how great God is and how generous he is. He then he calls us to this same greatness and generosity. As you put your gift in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's poor box, know that you are putting your faith into action.

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



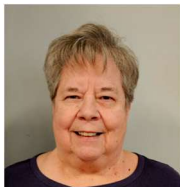
GLORIA PFEIFER
PRESIDENT

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!



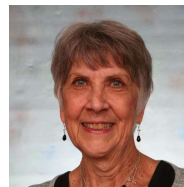
Debbie Eberhardt
Vice President



Sharon McKune
Treasurer



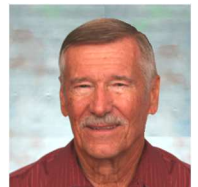
Claire Andersen
Secretary



Ilene Rainwater
Spiritual Advisor



Kathy Meyerkord
Technology Coordinator



Ron Andersen
Food Pantry Manager



ST. FRANCIS WORDS OF WISDOM JUBILEE YEAR 2026



*For it is in giving
that we receive*



*St. Francis of Assisi
1181 - 1226*



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

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



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES TO PROMOTE DEVOTION TO JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*"The Holy Eucharist is a fire that purifies and consumes
all our miseries and imperfections.
Do everything in your power to make yourself worthy of the Eucharist
and this Divine Fire will take care of the rest"*

- St. Hyacinth of Mariscotti
1585 - 1640



Feasting with St. Francis

St. Francis of Assisi
Feast Day
Parish

"Potluck Feast"



10/4/26

Shea Hall 4-7 PM



Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM

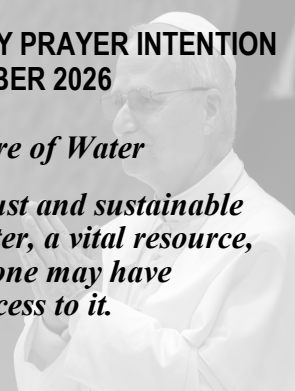
“All Christ's gifts - life and love,
freedom and happiness, truth and
hope - come to us freely from the abundant gen-
erosity of our God. We do nothing to earn God's
grace. We receive it freely because God's very
nature is to give generously, demanding nothing
in return, simply because he loves us.

- Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R
Archbishop of Newark

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.*

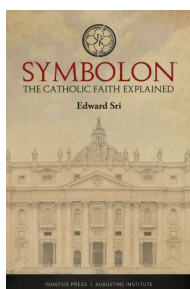




OCIA AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

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!

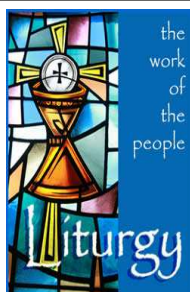
2026-2027 classes are held every Tuesday in the PRC at 6:00 PM.



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	komessenger@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
9/20/26	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



CROSS CATHOLIC OUTREACH CHRISTMAS BOX OF JOY PROGRAM

Our St. Francis of Assisi Council of Catholic Women group is once again sponsoring the Cross Catholic Outreach Christmas Box of Joy project. A Box of Joy is a Christmas shoebox that is donated and packed with toys, clothing, school supplies and other treasured items by U.S. parishes, schools and groups. Each child who receives a Box of Joy also receives a rosary and a booklet in their own language that tells the story of Jesus. Boxes of Joy are sent to children in developing countries like Haiti, Malawi and the Dominican Republic and provide hope to children in need: Each gift represents Christ's love, and may be the only Christmas gift they receive.

You can fill your own Christmas Box of Joy (available in the PRC or at the St. Clare Gift Shop) or purchase a box online at <https://crosscatholic.org/box-of-joy/> and then click on "Donate a Box of Joy Online." If you choose to fill your own box, please return the box to the church by November 1st so that we can get them to the Diocese drop-off point. CCW will pay the \$9.00 shipping fee. If you have any questions, please contact Ilene Rainwater at 865-748-1873.

