



SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 26TH 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

PASTOR	Fr. Antonio Giraldo	GARDENS & GROUNDS	Ilene Rainwater
DEACON	Dc. Jim Schmall	FACILITIES	David Girard
OFFICE MANAGERS	Katrina 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
OCIA	Dc. 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 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 9/28 8:30 AM Normand Messier +
Tue 9/29 8:30 AM Dan & Norene O'Donnell
Wed 9/30 **NO MORNING MASS**
Thu 10/1 8:30 AM Armando Rodriguez +
Fri 10/2 8:30 AM Norman L. Weiland
Sat 10/3 4:00 PM Joe & Samantha Eberhardt
Sun 10/4 9:00 AM Ashford Kurbanali +

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 the Girard Family given by parishioners.* 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 9/28 9:00 AM Church and Hall Cleaning
Tue 9/29 6:00 PM OCIA - PRC
Wed 9/30
Thu 10/1
Fri 10/2 9:00 AM 1st Friday Adoration
Sat 10/3 10:00 AM Pet Blessing - Behind PRC
 4:00 PM Vigil Mass
Sun 10/4 9:00 AM Sunday Mass
 4:00 PM Parish Pot Luck

WEEKLY OFFERTORY

Week of 9-20-2026

Actual Weekly Offertory	\$ 2,154.25
Budgeted Weekly Offertory	3,634.62
Weekly Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,480.37)
YTD Actual Offertory	47,925.70
YTD Budgeted Offertory	43,615.44
YTD Surplus/(Deficit)	4,310.26



WHAT KIND OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS ARE WE?

In today's first reading from Ezekiel, God addresses the Jews in exile instructing them that their own refusal to hear God's prophets and to follow God's laws led them to the disaster they were suffering. But, God says, the situation was not hopeless. They could always turn back to God if they wanted. This reading prepares us for the gospel where we hear a similar message. If we have damaged our relationship with God, we can always turn back.

Jesus asks for our thoughts about the story that we just heard in St. Mathew's gospel. "What do you think of this? A man had two sons." I find some similarities with another parable in Luke's gospel, "The Prodigal Son." There are two sons. In Mathew's story the father had a problem with both of his sons. However the son who said "no" to his father realized he made a mistake and changed his mind. This is key to understanding both parables. The prodigal son and the son who told his father "I will not" in today's gospel both had a change of heart. The son in today's parable who said "no" to his father wasn't as bad as the son who blew away half of his father's money. It may not sound like a big deal in today's culture – a lot of kids have no trouble saying "no." But when I was growing up my parents would not take "no" for an answer. It was very different. After his change of heart, the son was soon working side by side with his father in the vineyard and was back in his father's good graces.

Jesus' point, in both of these parables - as in everything he taught us - is that it's never too late to change our mind if we have not been living the way God wants us to. Ezekiel had the same message in today's first reading. He told the Jews in exile to take responsibility for what they did and stop making excuses or blaming someone else.

God wants us to be responsible, hard-working, obedient, and faithful, and we will be blessed. He wants us to say "yes" and be willing to follow him when he calls, that is the point of today's gospel. He wants us to have a compassionate heart as well: "have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus," St. Paul tells us in today's second reading. When Jesus asks in today's gospel: "What is your opinion?" he is asking what kind of son or daughter are you and am I. Are we like any of these sons we heard about today. Or are we like Christ, the faithful son who always says "yes" to the Father and goes to work doing what he asks of us.

If we've said "no" to the Father, we can change our mind. If we feel we've been pretty faithful to God throughout our lives, trying to always say "yes" and doing what God wants, then there are a few things we need to pray for: pray to be humble, thank him for the graces he's given us, pray for the grace to remain close to him, pray for those who have forgotten about God and ask for a heart that does not grudge.



Yours
THE HEART GOD DESIRES

MATTHEW 21:28-46

CATECHISM

CORNER



BY: Julie Dew

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

Happy Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time! St. Francis, there is so much to write about the topic – on “How to read the Bible?” I’m going to try, in the space here, to give you a clear muddled understanding! If you catch my drift? Let’s get started!

I am excited to share with you in this Corner on how to read the Bible in chronological order. In the Gospel of Matthew 22:34-40 Jesus is challenged by none other than the Pharisees. Jesus had just silenced the Sadducees, so now “the other guys” are going to try and trick Jesus about His knowledge of scripture which I think is incredibly interesting because they are challenging the Word made flesh to provide an answer from the Word! If they only knew! Jesus demonstrates a masterful grasp of scripture, and I know that’s the understatement of all time, but I think that most Christians wish they could wrap their minds around the entire story of the Bible. Demonstrating the ability to navigate scripture and find the text you wish to read is really something that you must be taught. I feel badly for people who try to figure out the Bible, but nobody sat down with them and showed them actually how to do it. After you gain a basic understanding of the broad structure of salvation history then it’s up to you to achieve a working knowledge of the Bible as life goes on. For many Catholics along with other Christian denominations, the Bible can be chronologically confusing and its meaning hard to grasp. How tragic this is in light of the fact that as Pope Leo the 13th said, “Scripture is a letter written by our heavenly Father to His children for the purpose of revealing Himself to them.” There is a really good book by Dr. John Bergsma called *Bible Basics for Catholics. A New Picture of Salvation History*. This is an excellent book on salvation history written at my level! Oops! I digress!

It is important for the modern Catholic to understand that although the Bible is a mystery on one level, it is also a book of history. There should be no misunderstanding, it is a true history as opposed to cleverly devised tails. Pope Paul VI said, “The history of salvation is being accomplished in the midst of the history of the world.” The difficulty facing Bible readers is how to make this personal, yet ancient story of salvation history – come alive! They must discover the critical plot and through the guidance of the Church understand its meaning in order to make it their own story.

The first step to understanding the Bible chronologically is to identify which of the 73 books are of a narrative or historical nature. The term historical refers simply to those books that keep the story moving from one event to another. The historical/narrative books provide us with continuity or an ordered account of connected events from Genesis to Revelation. There are 14 narrative books, historical books. But in the Old Testament there’s 12 and for the sake of simplicity two historical books in the New Testament.

If you read these, you’re in for a big story. Starting with Genesis, then Exodus, then Numbers. You may have noticed that we skipped some books! We go on from Genesis, Exodus, Numbers to Joshua, Judges, then First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah and First Maccabees – that’s the Old Testament and then in the New Testament: Luke and Acts. By reading these 14 books continuously you’re going to get a big picture of the big story. By reading about four chapters per day from the 14 narrative books the reader can go through them in about 3 months. The New Catechism of the Catholic Church is the perfect companion to read along the Bible because Sacred Scripture along with Sacred Tradition makes up the full deposit of faith. When questions of faith and morality come up – the index of the Catechism is valuable for finding the official Church teaching. Once you familiarize yourself with the big picture of salvation history you can build upon this framework for the rest of your life. This will result in a more profound appreciation for scripture and a deeper understanding of the master plan contained within it. It took time for mankind to realize that the earth wasn’t flat and today Catholics and others around the world are learning that the Bible is not flat as some would believe but a multi-dimensional multi-layered revelation of truth, love, wisdom, and a complete true story.

Continued on next page



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

On September 27, the Church celebrates the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, who knew that "God had sent him to bring good news to the poor." Together with your gifts, the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul continue his work and mission in our parish.

This month, through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was able to "bring good news to the poor," by assisting local families in providing them with food from our Neighbors In Need Food Pantry, and with financial assistance for utility and rent bills, etc. Thank You!

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 OCTOBER "PRODUCT OF THE MONTH" PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY



Catechism Corner - continued from previous page

If you're interested in learning more, here are some suggestions from Jeff Cavins: First, get the Bible timeline Chart, The Great Adventure. It will lay out for you the 73 books of the Bible and how to read them in chronological order. Secondly, get a Bible you can live in. Naturally, Jeff Cavins would suggest The Great Adventure Bible because Jeff helps Father Mike Schmitz on the Hallow App with "The Bible in a Year" podcast. But there are several good ones (Remember I gave you some great suggestions last week!). Third, get involved in a good Bible study, there are many available on the Hallow App. Lectio Divina is a beautiful way of reading Scripture, and we have offered this in the past during Advent and Lent here at St. Francis and we plan on offering it again this year late fall during the Tuesdays of Advent.

One last thing, if you've ever started reading the Bible and stopped, now's a new beginning. Now is the opportunity for you to dive into the story by going through those 14 books and if you get the chart, and you get the Bible, you'll see it visually come alive. I can think of no better thing in life right now than getting a hold of **THE** story. When you look at everything Catholic, it all springs from this amazing story. It's an investment in your eternal life.

Please note: portions of this Corner were taken from a talk about Bible Study by Jeff Cavins. Have a glorious week St. Francis!!!

SAINTS BE PRAISED!

September 28

St. Wenceslaus, Martyr

September 29

St. Lawrence Ruiz and Companions, Martyrs

September 30

Sts. Michael, Gabriel & Raphael, Archangels

October 1

St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor of the Church

October 2

St. Therese of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church

The Holy Guardian Angels



ST. FRANCIS WORDS OF WISDOM
JUBILEE YEAR 2026



*If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures
from the shelter of compassion and pity,
you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men.*



*St. Francis of Assisi
1181 - 1226*



PRC Back Lawn

Pet
Blessing

10/3/26
10 AM

Feasting with St. Francis

St. Francis of Assisi
Feast Day
Parish



"Potluck Feast"

10/4/26
Shea Hall 4-7 PM



Daily CATHOLIC WISDOM



*Yesterday is gone.
Tomorrow has not yet come.
We have only today.
Let us begin.*



*- Mother Teresa
1910 - 1997*



ST. CLARE GIFT SHOP

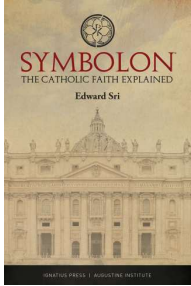
OPEN
after weekend Masses
and by request/appointment
after daily Mass



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.



SECOND COLLECTION - OCTOBER 10 & 11 DIOCESAN DEACON FORMATION PROGRAM

Please be generous in supporting our Diocesan Deacon Formation Program on October 10th and 11th. Our diocese is greatly blessed with over 100 deacons, 24 of whom were ordained in 2022. Your donation will assist not only with the ongoing formation and development of our deacons now serving in the diocese, but will also help with funding the instruction of the 13 men who began their five-year process of formation in

2022 and will be ordained, God willing, in 2027.

Deacons are ordained to the service of the Bishop, his priests, and the people of God. They are a bridge between the sanctuary and the world in which they love. They bring the altar to the neighborhood and bring the needs of the neighborhood to the altar. They teach and help organize charitable resources within the parish and diocese. They bring the Gospel and the gift of themselves to the soup kitchens, the food banks, prisons, hospitals and wherever else a need exists as well as to the parish they are assigned to. Thank you for your support and generosity.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
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



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.



FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION - 10/2/26

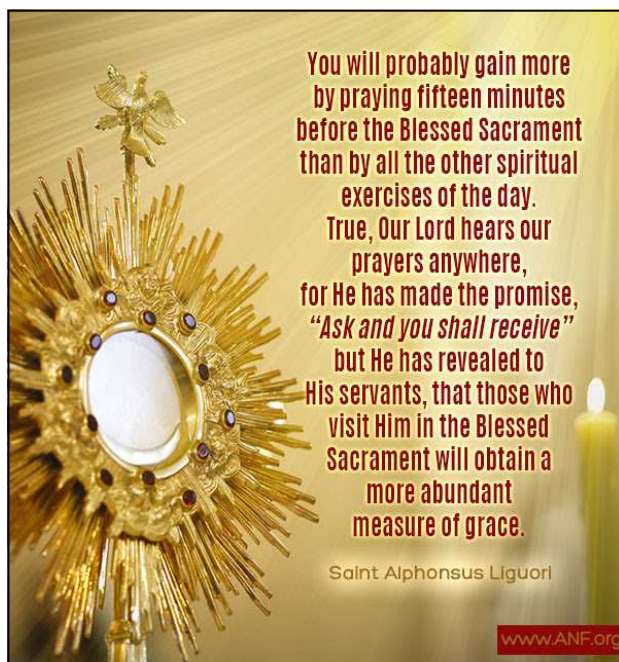


*"Always remain close
to the Catholic Church,
because it alone
can give you true peace,
since it alone possesses
Jesus in the
Blessed Sacrament,
the true Prince of Peace."*

- St. Padre Pio

Mass: 8:30 AM
Adoration: 9:00 - Noon
Healing Service: 9:00 AM
(in Shea Hall)
Benediction: Noon

If you are interested in committing to a Holy Hour,
please contact Jackie Wagner at 330-807-8663.



You will probably gain more
by praying fifteen minutes
before the Blessed Sacrament
than by all the other spiritual
exercises of the day.
True, Our Lord hears our
prayers anywhere,
for He has made the promise,
"Ask and you shall receive"
but He has revealed to
His servants, that those who
visit Him in the Blessed
Sacrament will obtain a
more abundant
measure of grace.

Saint Alphonsus Liguori

www.ANF.org



HEALING MINISTRY AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH

Our healing ministry here at St. Francis of Assisi complements our First Friday of the Month Mass and Adoration.

The healing service is offered concurrently in Shea Hall while adoration is being held in the church. When you would like Healing Prayers after the 1st Friday Mass, please come into Shea Hall and a prayer minister will pray for you individually in the Sacristy.

Our Healing Ministry is made up of lay ministers who have been trained to pray for your needs and healing. During our time with you, you will be advised that this is NOT a Sacrament (such as Anointing of the Sick). You will be asked for permission to lay hands on your shoulders while being prayed for and you will be offered Holy Water to use for blessing yourself and then faithfully receive our healing prayers. Healing prayers will be for emotional, physical and/or spiritual healing.

If you would like to be trained to be a part of the healing team, please call Darlene Leitz at 574-238-1705 or email darby321@comcast.net for more information.

*"Heal me, Lord, that I may be healed; save me, that I may be saved, for you are my praise."
(Jeremiah 17:14)*



BECOMING A DEACON – CHURCH HISTORY

We had the pleasure of covering 2,000 years of Church history over two formation weekends. We had already learned a good deal about the Church Fathers from our Patristics weekends so this part of Church history basically covered from 350 AD to current times. We went through each of the Church Councils as well as the wars that plagued the Papal Nations. We of course spent a good bit of time on the Reformation movement. We paid particular attention to the Church's history in the United States. We saw the growth of the Church from the eastern portion of the US into the mid-west and west as the nation expanded and missionaries wanted to expose more people to God's Mass. We finished with a focus on Vatican II, the last council the Church has conducted. It was unique in that it was not convened to battle any sort of heresy but to address the Church's role in modern society. There are key documents that came out of Vatican II, like Lumen Gentium and Dei Verbum, which reemphasized the Church's key beliefs.



**Pope's Worldwide
Prayer Network**

'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 each month of the year.

POPE LEO'S MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION OCTOBER 2026

For Mental Health Ministry

*Let us pray
that the mental health ministry
be established throughout the Church,
helping to overcome
the stigma and discrimination
of persons with mental illnesses.*



Occasionally, we run out of paper bulletins after our weekend Masses. If we have run out of bulletins, you can always request a paper bulletin from the church office or access our bulletins online at our website

stfrancistownsend.org.

Simply click on the "Bulletin" icon/button on our website's home page and then select the week you wish to view. Additionally, you may choose to receive the weekly bulletin as an e-mail attachment simply by sending an e-mail with "E-Bulletin" in the subject line to:

SFBulletin7717@gmail.com.