The Presentation of the Lord

Mass Intentions

SUNDAY, February 2 – Presentation of the Lord
8:00 A.M. Suzanne Diguglielmo
9:30 A.M. Alex Humen
11:00A.M. Maura O'Keefe
12:30 P.M. Sister Maria Rita Zucchetto
Rosa Soiridliozzi
Rino Del Carro
Carmela Carlino

MONDAY, February 3–Saint Blaise
9:00 A.M. Gregorio Guadalupe

TUESDAY, February 4-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Gertie Nicholson

WEDNESDAY, February 5– Saint Agatha
9:00 A.M. Mary Ellen Citera

THURSDAY, February 6–Saint Paul Miki and Companions
9:00 A.M. Cettina Camenzuli

FRIDAY, February 7-Weekday
9:00 A.M. John Purich

SATURDAY, February 8-Saint Jerome Emiliani Saint Josephine Bakhita
9:00 A.M. Purgatorial Society
Paola Civello
Albert "Jim" Anderson

5:00P.M. Rose Sweeney

SUNDAY, February 9– Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
8:00 A.M. For the People of St. Francis
9:30 A.M. Michael Cilia
11:00 A.M.
12:30P.M. Suzanne Diguglielmo
Rino Del Carro

Today's Readings

The Presentation of the Lord

Malachi 3:1-4
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel,* and the holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:" Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory for your people Israel." **(Luke 2:22-32)**

Readings for the Week

MONDAY: Hebrews 11:32-40
Mark 5:1-20

TUESDAY: Hebrews 12:1-4
Mark 5:21-43

WEDNESDAY: Hebrews 12:4-7, 11-15
Mark 6:1-6

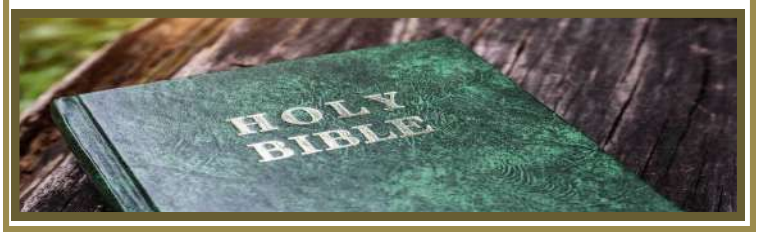
THURSDAY: Hebrews 12:18-19, 21-24
Mark 6:7-13

FRIDAY: Hebrews 13:1-8
Mark 6:14-29

SATURDAY: Hebrews 13:15-17, 20-21
Mark 6:30-34

The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

At first glance, the celebration of this feast in early February may seem rather strange. We have long since taken down the Christmas decorations and put away the nativity creches. Indeed, three Sundays of Ordinary Time have already passed during which we heard about the adult Jesus being baptized, performing his first miracle at Cana and beginning his public ministry of preaching and healing. Then suddenly, in what seems to be completely out of sequence, we are thrown back in time to celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. This is when the child Jesus is taken by his parents to Jerusalem to be presented in the Temple, in accordance with the Law of Moses. If we view our Church calendar historically, however, we will recognize that this feast marked not only the presentation of the child, but also the purification of the mother, which was to take place forty days after the birth. Celebrating Christ's birth on December 25th, it is logical to have the Feast of the Presentation in early February, not out of sequence at all.

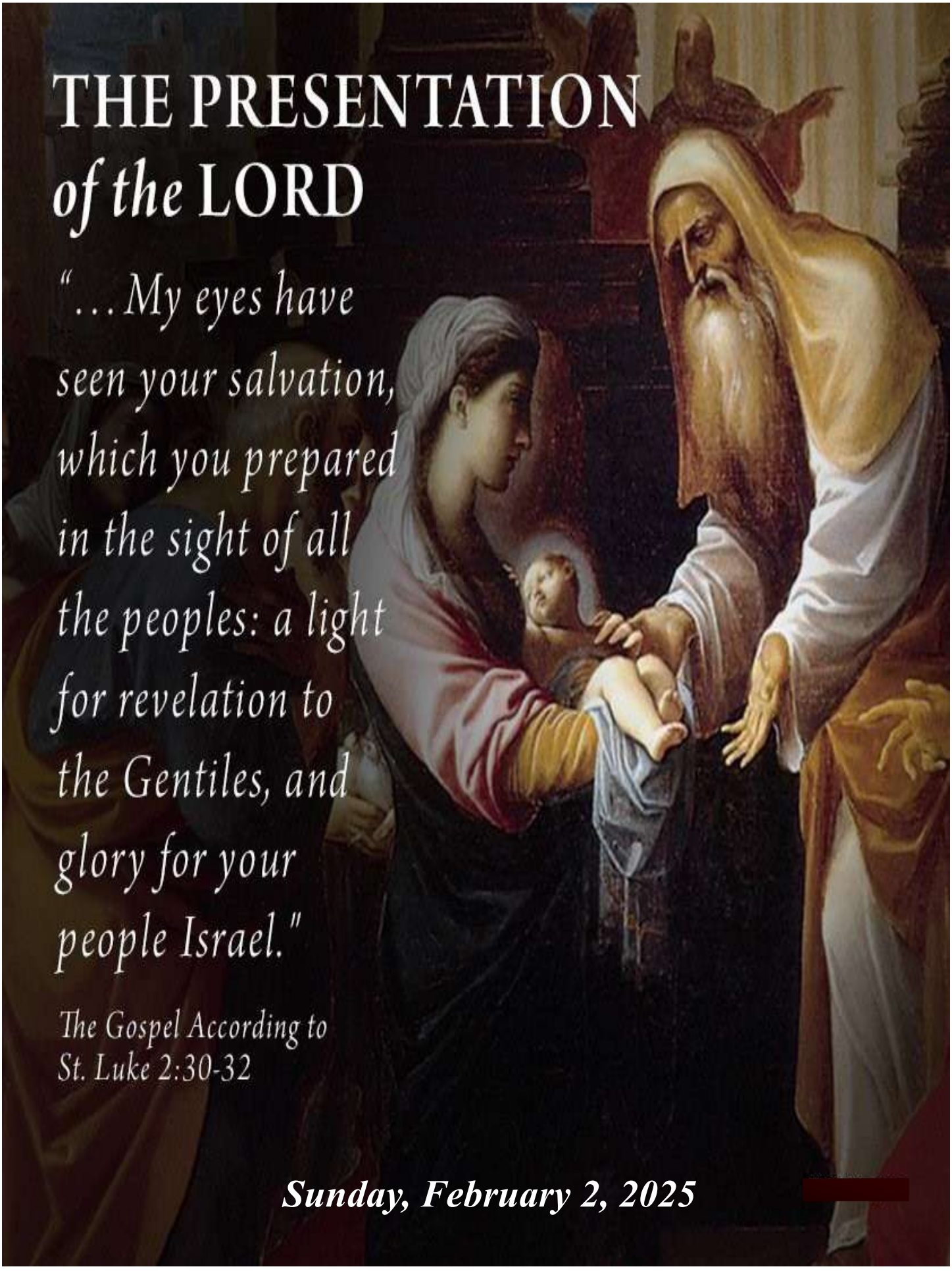
As we celebrate this feast, we are joined not only by the proud and loving parents of Jesus, but by Simeon and Anna. They are just and pious people, whose hearts are full of expectant trust in the promises God had made to Israel about her redemption. Together they represent all who ever longed for the coming of the Messiah, God's mysterious presence in the world.

Yet, what happened to the new born Jesus on this holy day has happened to countless other firstborn Jewish males. Brought to the Temple, Jesus is consecrated to the Lord by an act of sacrifice and purification. For the wealthy this meant the sacrifice of a one year old lamb or goat; for the poor it meant two turtle doves or young pigeons. But, as we read the Gospel, we learn that Jesus is quite unlike the many others who have been dedicated by this simple act of giving. In fact, Jesus is the very gift of God, long promised through the words of Malachi: the one who will fill the Temple with the presence of God. In bringing Jesus to the Temple, his parents bring this about, while giving back the gift that God has given them. This gesture of thanksgiving to God, therefore, reflects the pattern of salvation and the way of all Christian living. This newborn child, the Father's gift to creation, will, in turn, offer his whole life back to the Father in another act of sacrificial self-giving at Calvary.

In identifying him as the revelation of God's glory, Simeon shows that Jesus truly fulfills the title given to him in an earlier part of the Gospel, where he is described as Emmanuel-God is with us. But this divine revelation is even more remarkable because Jesus shares with us our human condition, with all its trials and temptations. This makes him a true light and hope for all humanity.

While those who follow Christ are no longer dedicated according to the Law of Moses, we are presented at Baptism by name, and, through the grace of that Sacrament, caught up in the identity and perfect sacrifice of Christ. The life we have been given by God is, therefore, to be presented back to God. We do this through loving and thankful service to God and to one another.

All God's Blessings,
Msgr. Maresca



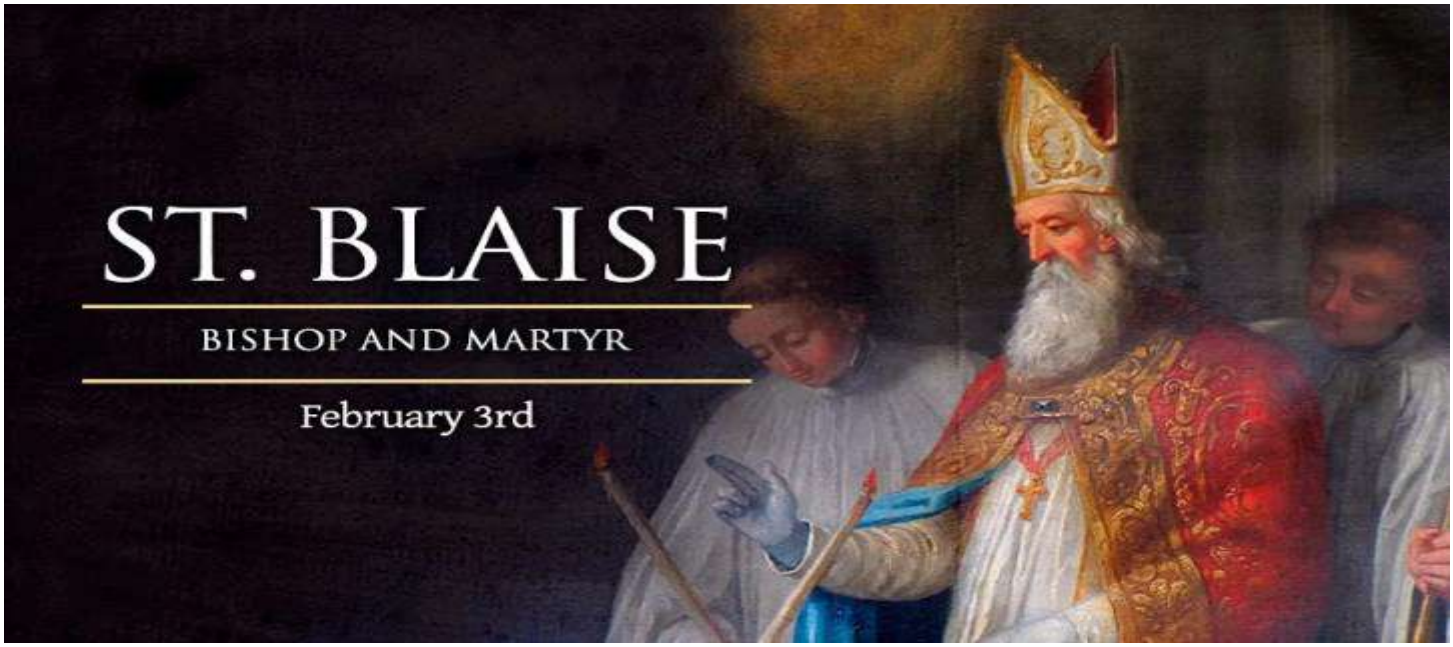
Sunday, February 2, 2025

Congratulations
Msgr. Ralph J. Maresca

On the 47th Anniversary
Of Your Ordination to the Priesthood
on February 4th, 2025

From the Deacons, Staff and Parishioners of

St. Francis of Assisi, R.C. Church
Astoria, New York 11105



Monday, February 3, 2025
Saint Blaise, Bishop and Martyr

St. Blaise was the Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia who suffered martyrdom under Licinius about AD 316. In accord with various traditions, St. Blaise was born to rich and noble parents, and received a Christian education. He was a physician before being consecrated a bishop at a young age.

During the persecution of Licinius, St. Blaise, receiving some divine command, moved from the town, and lived as a hermit in a cave. Wild animals visited, and he healed any that were sick and wounded. One day, a group of hunters gathering wild beasts for the ame in the amphitheater discovered St. Blaise and seized him. As he was being taken to the governor Agricolaus, the governor of Cappadocia and Lesser Armenia, St. Blaise encountered a woman whose pig was being seized by a wolf; St. Blaise commanded the wolf to release the pig, and it was freed unhurt.

While in prison, he miraculously cured a small boy who was choking to death on a fishbone lodged in his throat. Also, the woman whose pig had been saved brought St. Blaise candles so that his cell would have light and he could read the sacred Scriptures.

By the sixth century, St. Blaise's intercession was invoked for diseases of the throat. As early as the eighth century, records attest to the veneration of St Blaise in Europe, and he became one of the most popular saints in the spiritual life of the Middle Ages. Many altars were dedicated to his honor, and even the Abbey of St. Blaise in southern Germany claimed to have some of his relics.
St. Blaise is also venerated as one of the "Fourteen Holy Helpers," a group of saints invoked as early as the 12th century in Germany.

One reason for St. Blaise's popularity arose from the fact he was a physician who cured, even performing miraculous cures. Thereby, those who were sick, especially with throat ailments, invoked his intercession. Eventually the custom of the blessing of throats arose, whereby the priest held two crossed candles over the heads of the faithful or touched their throats with them while he invoked the prayer of the saint and imparted God's blessing. In our present *Roman Ritual*, the priest prays, "Through the intercession of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
While we invoke St. Blaise for his protection against any physical ailment of the throat, we should also ask is protection against any spiritual ailment. St. James reminds us, "If a man who does not control his tongue imagines that he is devout, he is self-deceived; his worship is pointless" (1:26) and later, "We use [the tongue] to say, Praised be the Lord and Father'; then we use it to curse men, though they are made in the likeness of God. Blessing and curse come out of the same mouth. This ought not to be, my brothers!" (3:9-10). Therefore, may St. Blaise protect us from all evil, physical and spiritual, which may attack the throat.

Wednesday, February 5, 2025
The Feast of
Saint Agatha

Saint Agatha was born in either Palermo or Catania, Sicily around the year 231 and died a martyr's death in Catania around the year 251 during the persecution of Christians ordered by the Roman emperor Decius. Early devotion to her is attested to by the fact that she is one of the seven virgin martyrs listed in the Roman Canon. Much of what is written about her life emerged centuries later. According to those later traditions, Agatha was born into a wealthy noble family. At the age of fifteen, she made a vow of virginity, choosing to devote herself solely to Christ, her divine Spouse. The local Roman Prefect Quintianus's unholy desire to possess Agatha's beauty and wealth led him to propose marriage, but she consistently refused him. Capitalizing on the Emperor Decius' decree in 250 that all citizens must offer sacrifice to the Roman gods, Quintianus had Agatha arrested and threatened her with torture and death, hoping she would renounce her Catholic faith and accept his offer of marriage. Instead, she deepened her devotion to Christ and once again refused him. Quintianus next imprisoned Agatha in the local brothel, thinking she would lose her virginity and then change her mind. Agatha, however, remained steadfast in her purity and faith. Deeply angered, Quintianus had Agatha stretched on a rack, her flesh torn with iron hoods, burned with torches, and whipped. He then ordered that Agatha's breasts be twisted and torn and then be cut off. After being sent back to prison in this mutilated state, Agatha saw Saint Peter appear to her and miraculously heal her wounds. When Agatha appeared before him four days later, healed of her wounds, the prefect was shocked but his heart remained obstinate. This time he stripped Agatha of her clothing and made her roll over burning coals and sharp stones. An earthquake occurred, killing two of Quintianus' companions. The people of the town were outraged at what Quintianus had done and blamed him for the earthquake. Again, Quintianus did not budge. After being sent back to prison, Agatha prayed and surrendered her spirit to the Lord, Who received her into her heavenly home.

Thursday, February 6, 2025
The Feast of Saint Paul Miki and Companions

In 1597, Paul Miki and his twenty five companions were crucified for their Christian faith in Nagasaki, Japan. A Japanese layman, St. Paul Miki was born into a Japanese noble family and was heir to a great inheritance and position in Japanese society. He was converted to Christianity by the great Saint Francis Xavier. When Christian missionaries first began to evangelize in Japan, they were not initially met with opposition. Their presence opened the door not only to a new faith, but also to trade and economic expansion. The tide changed in 1596, when Taikosama became the effective ruler of Japan under the emperor. He launched a brutal campaign of persecution aimed not only at curbing the further spread of Christianity, but wiping out any sign of its current existence. This is apparent in the vastly ranging slew of occupations, ages, and nationalities among the twenty six men who were force marched 600 miles over 30 days to meet their death in Nagasaki. The group included Franciscan and Jesuit foreign missionaries and Japanese lay people, several of whom were Franciscan Tertiaries. They were repeatedly offered freedom if they would renounce Christianity; they all declined. When the march ended in Nagasaki, the twenty six martyrs were tied to crosses and the execution notice was read, upon which the men started to pray and sing while Paul Miki began to preach in a loud voice: "Having arrived at this moment of my existence, I believe that no one of you thinks I want to hide the truth. That is why I declare to you that there is no other way of salvation than the one followed by Christians. Since this way teaches me to forgive my enemies and all who have offended me, I willingly forgive the king and all those who have desired my death. And I pray that they will obtain the desire of Christian baptism." The man reading their death sentence sought to paint the killings as a necessary government measure. He told the crowd the martyrs were all men from the Philippines who had come to infiltrate Japanese society and erode their traditions with their lies. Paul Miki spoke above him and told the truth about his Japanese heritage and spoke of the truth of the Gospel that the missionaries had shared and the salvation that could be won by all. These first martyrs of Japan were then stabbed to death while hung on their crosses, but the crowd who heard the testimony of Paul Miki and his companions would immortalize his words and use them to spread Christianity to Japan.

Remember in your prayers all those in our parish who are sick, that they may find health and comfort:

Awyn Profit, Jack Orlando, Steven Joyce, Judy Hanley-Brickner, John Wrenn, Augustin Cisneros, James Nunez, Vincent Wytak, John & Carol Ross, Jeffrey Hyans, Marie LoVolpe, Jessica St. Preux, Al Ciani, Alesha Moses, Nancy McCaffrey, Christopher Wojtalik, Theresa Pacheco, William Goss, Luke Pacheco, Vincenza Papa, Jim Schneggenburger, Anthony Criscuolo, Samantha O'Sullivan, Marilyn Miller, Pat Gravino, John Carmody, Rosario Duran, Vivian Papa, Joel Steinmann, Anna Governali, Tim Graham, Antonio Postiglione, Mario Tamburello, Christopher Araimo, Charles Principato, Jim Kreitler, Humberto Cordova, John Schakir, Margaret Culhane, Benedicto Randazzo, Angelo Niakas, Peter Lopez, Rick Simonsen, Aubrey Madden, Madison Millett, Leonardo Di Marco and Michelle Yashita, the Polychronakis Family & Victor Di Donato.

Also remember in your prayers all the deceased of the Parish. Please remember to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood, religious life, diaconate, and married life.

The Presentation of the Lord
February 2, 2025

Pray
for Vocations

"The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom and the favor of God was upon Him."

Consider a vocation as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life. Contact the Vocation Office at (718) 827-2454 or email:vocations@diobrook.org

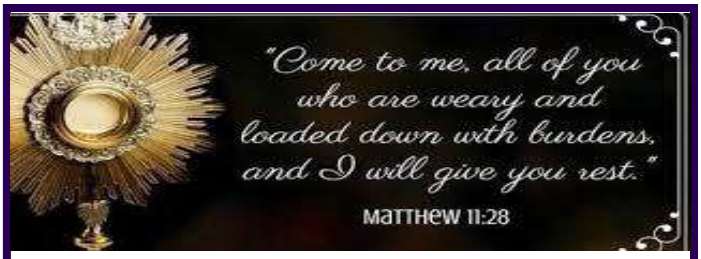
Parish Mission Statement

St. Francis of Assisi Parish is a Catholic community that is centered in Jesus, gathers in worship and witnesses the Gospel message. The parish values and welcomes each person's gift of time, talent and treasure. As a faith-filled community, we are committed to minister to the spiritual, educational and material needs of all people.

FOCUS:

Let us persevere and trust in God.

We can imagine Simeon and Anna might have been tempted to give up hope that the Lord would fulfill His promise. But they persevered and continued to trust in God—continued to listen to the promptings of the Spirit—until the day finally came when Mary and Joseph bought the child Jesus and they recognized Him as the Christ. Let us follow their example and trust in God on our own faith Journey.



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place before the 9:00AM Mass. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed at 8:00AM each morning, Monday through Saturday, giving parishioners an opportunity for private prayer before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. At 8:30AM the rosary will be prayed by parishioners. At 8:50AM the Blessed Sacrament will be reposed. Jesus calls us to perseverance in prayer. "Pray without ceasing." "Watch and pray." Eucharistic adoration helps us discover the Real Presence of Christ.

What a wonderful way to begin our day praying before the Blessed Sacrament in silence or praying the Holy Rosary.

Please make every effort to take advantage of this time with the Lord. We are living in challenging times and we all need the Lord to strengthen our faith and give us the courage to live each day.

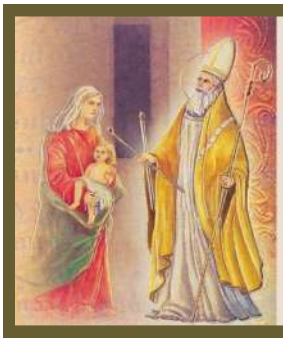
St. Francis of Assisi Parish Weekly Offering

Thank you for your continued generosity of giving each week. Your weekly offering helps us pay our monthly bills.

Sunday 1/18-1/19	**$4,356.00**
2nd Collection-SFACA	*$1,425.00*

School parents must use church envelopes.

A special collection will be taken up on next weekend to aid and support our brothers and sisters in need due to the devastation of the California wild fires.
Asking the Lord to extend His blessings upon our brothers and sisters during this most difficult time.
There is NO envelope for this collection.
The envelope for the Tablet can be put in the first collection.



The Blessing of Throats will take place at St. Francis of Assisi on Monday, February 3, after the 9:00AM Mass.

Part Time Cook
The Blog Of A Full Time Teen

Anyone interested in a cooking position part time, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, just dinner, please contact the rectory at 718-728-7801.

Mass Attendance for January 25/26, 2025

5:00PM	**91**
8:00AM	**39**
9:30AM	**76**
11:00AM	**412**
12”30PM	**42**
	Total: 660

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCRIPTURE STUDY

Blessings to you dear family in our Lord Jesus,

The SFA Scripture Study Group will meet on Thursday, February 6th from 7:20-8:50 in the St. Joseph room of the rectory. We will continue our study of the Letter of James, an Apostle of Jesus. At our meeting, after Prayer, we will share our personal answers to the questions provided in the Study Guide. This will be followed by a visual projection of the same Chapters and a closing Prayer.

May God’s Holy Spirit be with each of you in this process of learning how to become a Disciple of Jesus, for today’s challenging world.

Carmen OFS

The Gospel readings and study will be conducted using the Little Rock Scripture Study program. Study booklets will be provided.

If you are interested in joining the study group or would like further information, please contact us through the Rectory at **(718) 728-7801.** Please be sure to leave your name and contact information.

Grow in Knowledge and Love of Scripture

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THIS WEEK

February 2-February 8

Sunday, February 2
9:30AM Children's Liturgy
9:30AM Pre-Confirmation Mass
10:40AM CCD
10:40AM Confirmation Class

Monday, February 3
12:00-Golden Age
3:00PM Children's Choir
7:00PM Adult Choir
7:00PM CYO Training

Tuesday, February 4
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, February 5
3:00PM Drama Club

Thursday, February 6
10:00AM-Legion of Mary
3:30PM-Jiu Jitsu
6:00PM-IACA
7:30PM-Scripture Study

Friday, February 7

Saturday, February 8
9:30AM-CYO Skill Training-MCH
11:00AM Girl Scout World Thinking Day
6:00PM Youth Group

NEXT WEEK

February 9-February 8

Sunday, February 9
8:00Am Holy Name
9:30AM Children's Liturgy
9:30AM Pre-Communion Mass
10:30AM Parents' Eucharistic Meeting
10:40AM CCD
10:40AM Confirmation Class

Monday, February 10
12:00-Golden Age
3:00PM Children's Choir
7:00PM Adult Choir
7:00PM CYO Training

Tuesday, February 11
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, February 12
3:00PM Drama Club
7:00PM Baptism Class

Thursday, February 13
10:00AM-Legion of Mary
3:30PM-Jiu Jitsu
6:00PM-IACA
7:30PM-Scripture Study

Friday, February 14
1:00PM-Sprinkled With Love-MCH

Saturday, February 15

UPDATED FEBRUARY 2025
LECTOR / MINISTER SCHEDULE

	THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD	FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
	FEBRYARY 1-2	FEBRUARY 8-9	FEBRUARY 15-16	FEBRUARY 22-23
LECTORS				
Saturday 5:00PM	Edward Kubina	Debbi Skinner	Edward Kubina	Dolores Ratkowski
Sunday 8:00 AM	Rob Laucella	Andrew Soltesz	Rob Laucella	Andrew Soltesz
Sunday 9:30 AM	Josephine Corso	Martha O'Toole	Maria Brooks	Patrick O'Toole
Sunday 11:00 AM	Carol Hickey	Carol Hickey	Carol Hickey	Carol Hickey
Sunday 12:30 PM	Anna Marie Del Carro	Jackie Machia	Anna Maria Tenaglia	Maria Bruno
MINISTERS				
Saturday 5:00PM	Ray Conlon	--------	Ray Conlon	--------
Sunday 8:00 AM	--------	Theresa Mincone	--------	Sharon Costanza
Sunday 9:30 AM	--------	Kelsey Mistretta	--------	Kelsey Mistretta
Sunday 11:00 AM	Jane Esposito	--------	Jane Esposito	Minister Needed
Sunday 12:30 PM	--------	--------	Nicolette Cosentino	Antonella Tomosello

*** REMINDER ***

Once you are scheduled, if you cannot fulfill your assignment, please make every effort to call and get a replacement. Thank You

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith. February 2025

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Msgr. Ralph J. Maresca V.F., Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Jerome Emiliani

St. Jerome led a wayward life while a soldier until he was captured in battle and turned back to God. Soon after returning to Venice, he began studying for the priesthood and was ordained in 1518. With the devastation from the war came famine and plague. At his own expense, St. Jerome cared for the victims left behind, especially the children. For this purpose, he and some companions founded the Clerks Regulars of Somasca, in Somasca, Italy.

Imitating Christ in the world

When Jesus said, *"I am the way"* (John 14:6), He meant for us to follow Him and live as He lived. He ate, slept, worked, and cared for friends and family, much like we do. Now, ordinary life, lived in union with Christ, can be an opportunity of grace for us.

"All the feasts in the Church's calendar are events of remembrance and hence events of hope."
Pope Benedict XVI

© Copyright 2025 Success Publishing & Media, LLC All Rights Reserved

"I choose Heaven!"

Our time on Earth is but a fleeting moment compared to the vastness of eternity. Yet, we often prioritize earthly concerns over preparing for Heaven. Jesus reminds us of the right priority: *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you besides"* (Matthew 6:33). When we put God first, He faithfully provides for our every need.

What are your true priorities? Your daily routine is a reflection of your heart. Pause and consider: What consumes your time and energy? The things that dominate your schedule are the true indicators of your priorities. If they are pulling you away from God, it's time to reevaluate and make a change.

Where do you turn for guidance? When faced with decisions, do you seek advice from friends, social media, or colleagues, or do you turn to prayer and Scripture? Aligning our choices with God's wisdom leads to lasting fulfillment and peace. Resolve to trust His direction over the fleeting opinions of the world. When we place our decisions in His hands, we can move forward with confidence.

Do you trust God with your happiness? God's promises assure us of His perfect plan: *"For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe, plans to give you a future full of hope"* (Jeremiah 29:11). If trusting Him feels difficult, invite Him into your doubts and fears. Ask Him to reveal His goodness and faithfulness—He will answer, because He is always near.

Refocus your heart and trust God's plan for your life. Let go of distractions, realign your priorities, and step into the peace that comes from seeking Him first.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why are Catholics only baptized once?

The Catholic Church teaches that Baptism is the gateway to the Christian life, marking the beginning of our communion with God.

Through this Sacrament, we are adopted as God's children and permanently sealed as His own. Baptism transforms us into new creations, opening our hearts to grace, strengthening us against sin, and deepening our love for God and others (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1121).

Because this sacred mark is everlasting, Baptism is received only once, signifying our eternal bond with God and call to holiness.

Trusting God in unexpected moments

Imagine you're at a wedding celebration for your friends. The atmosphere is lively, the music is playing, and everyone is enjoying themselves—until you overhear a troubling conversation. The kitchen has run out of wine. Due to an oversight, the caterers didn't bring enough, and with all the stores closed, the situation seems hopeless. What now?

"They have no wine" (John 2:3). Moments of crisis can catch us off guard, but they don't have to shake us. When Mary encountered this dilemma at the wedding in Cana, she didn't panic or place blame. Instead, she turned to the one she knew could help—her Son, Jesus. With confidence, she simply informed Him of the need, trusting fully in His ability to provide.

"Do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5). These profound words, Mary's last recorded in Scripture, offer us a powerful lesson. When we bring our problems to God, He often invites us to be part of the solution. Trusting Him means being open to His direction, even when it leads to unexpected actions. The servants at Cana likely didn't anticipate filling massive jars with water, yet their obedience led to an extraordinary outcome—the finest wine, far surpassing anything they could have imagined. With God, the impossible becomes possible.

from Scripture — Luke 6:27-38, The demands of merciful love

In this Gospel passage, Jesus challenges our natural sense of fairness by commanding us to *"love your enemies … lend expecting nothing in return … and forgive."* These teachings contrast with the Old Testament principle of *"an eye for an eye,"* which aimed to prevent excessive punishment, and the idea of exchanging favors as a sign of gratitude.

However, human justice can lead to destructive cycles of retaliation and diminish the sincerity of generosity. When giving is tied to expectations, it becomes difficult to discern whether kindness is motivated by love or the hope of something in return.

Jesus invites us to embrace God's justice—one that surpasses human understanding. God's love is not conditional or transactional; it is generous, selfless, and freely given to all, regardless of merit.

As children of God, we are called to reflect His love by extending kindness, forgiveness, and generosity without expectation. In doing so, we move beyond human limitations and participate in God's perfect justice.

Feasts & Celebrations

February 2 – The Presentation of the Lord. In accordance with the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple forty days after His birth, and Simeon praised God for revealing the long-awaited Savior (Luke 2:29-32).

February 10 – St. Scholastica (543). Twin sister to St. Benedict, St. Scholastica established a community of religious women about five miles from her brother's monastery.

February 17 – The Seven Holy Founders (13th century). Seven Italian noblemen who withdrew from the immorality of the times to live in prayer, simplicity and penance. Their order, the Servants of Mary, was later approved by the Holy See in 1304.

February 23 – St. Polycarp (155). Bishop of Smyrna, Asia-Minor, Polycarp was a disciple of the apostle St. John the Evangelist, and a friend of St. Ignatius of Antioch. He faithfully cared for his flock despite being surrounded by pagans and a government opposed to his religion. Before he was martyred, he thanked God for making him worthy of a martyr's death.

Q & A — What do icons offer to our devotional life?

Icons are a revered form of sacred art. These sacred images carry a deep historical and theological significance, rich in symbolism and spiritual depth. Recognizable by their distinctive "flattened" style, vivid colors, and frequent use of gold backgrounds, icons often depict significant events from the lives of Jesus, Mary, and the saints, offering a window into their mystical and spiritual dimensions.

At first glance, the stylized, two-dimensional nature of icons, coupled with the direct gaze of the figures, can feel unfamiliar or even challenging to engage with in prayer. It is often recommended to begin by spending just five minutes a day in quiet reflection before an icon, gradually increasing the duration over time. There is no need to rush—prayer with icons is a contemplative journey, and as we remain open and attentive, the Holy Spirit gradually unveils their deeper meaning to us.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

Success Publishing & Media, LLC
Publishers of *Growing in Faith*™ and *Partners in Faith*™
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
http://www.infaithpublishing.com

(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the *Revised Standard Version* and the *New American Bible - Revised*)

© Copyright 2025 Success Publishing & Media, LLC All Rights Reserved

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
cordially invites you to our
95th Anniversary Dinner Dance
October 19, 2025

Russo's on the Bay
162-45 Cross Bay Blvd.
Howard Beach, NY 11414

Cocktail Hour 12:30pm, Dinner immediately following until 5:30pm
Tickets: Adults: $150, Children: ages 5 to 12- $75, Toddlers: ages 2-4 $30

Please reserve a seat(s) at the Dinner Dance for:

1. _____

or

We would like to make up a table:

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6. _____

Tables of 10 or 12 are available but smaller groups will be accommodated and incorporated.

Please complete this form, enclose your **check** made payable to St. Francis of Assisi Parish and return it to the academy or rectory by September 2, 2025.

Name: _____

Address _____

email_____ Phone # _____

Bus service will be available at an additional cost of $20 per person
Bus departs from the front of school at approximately 11:30am

☐ Yes, I am interested in bus service for #_____ people

95th Anniversary Mass Program

We are offering you an opportunity to have your name, **In Thanksgiving,** or the name of a loved one, **In Memoriam,** printed in our **95th Anniversary Mass Program.**

The cost is $25 **per name**. Please PRINT the names clearly on the lines below and return to the rectory by September 2, 2025.

Please circle

_____ In Memoriam *In Thanksgiving*

_____ In Memoriam *In Thanksgiving*

_____ In Memoriam *In Thanksgiving*

_____ In Memoriam *In Thanksgiving*

Name _____

Telephone Number _____

Email _____

Return form in any collection basket or at the rectory.

Dear Parishioners,

As you know on Sunday, October 19, 2025, we will be celebrating the 95th Anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Our planning committee is hard at work to make this day an enjoyable experience for all.

Our day begins as we gather for the 9:30 Family Mass. During this special Liturgy we will have an unveiling of a statue of Mother Theresa. The statue of Mother Theresa will be hung on the wall opposite the Holy Family by the Baptismal Font. It will be mounted in the same manner as the Holy Family. It is a full body statue and is 36" in length. The total cost of the statue, along with the mounting, shipping and Memorial Plaque is $ 15,000. Opportunities to memorialize the statue will be available. A plaque of donor's names will be placed next to the statue. Donations to memorialize the statue begin at $500.

If you would like to donate kindly stop by the rectory and speak to Marybeth.

125+ YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES

Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens
Administration
191 Joralemon Street, 3rd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

T 718 722-6000
F 718 722-6096
www.ccbq.org

Rev. Msgr. Alfred LoPinto
President & CEO

January 23, 2025

Dear Monsignor/Pastor/Administrator:

I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for your support of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens' 2024 Christmas Toy and Gift Drive. Your generous contributions brought joy to many families this holiday season.

Thanks to your donations, over 3,000 children in Queens and Brooklyn received toys and coats during our giveaways at St. Vincent Ferrer Parish in East Flatbush, Brooklyn, and St. Gabriel's Parish in Flushing, Queens. Our organized "Santa's Toy Shops" allowed parents to select the perfect gifts for their children, with assistance from our dedicated "shopper elves." Your support made this empowering and dignified experience possible for many families in need.

We want to express our deep appreciation for your hard work and dedication, especially as we conclude our Agency's 125th anniversary celebrations. At Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, we are committed to addressing the urgent needs of individuals in every neighborhood. Your support is vital to helping us achieve this mission.

As we welcome the New Year, we pray that God blesses you in all your endeavors. On behalf of the children and families we serve, thank you for embodying the true spirit of Christmas and making a positive difference in the lives of so many.

Peace,

Rev. Msgr. Alfred LoPinto

2024 TAX CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

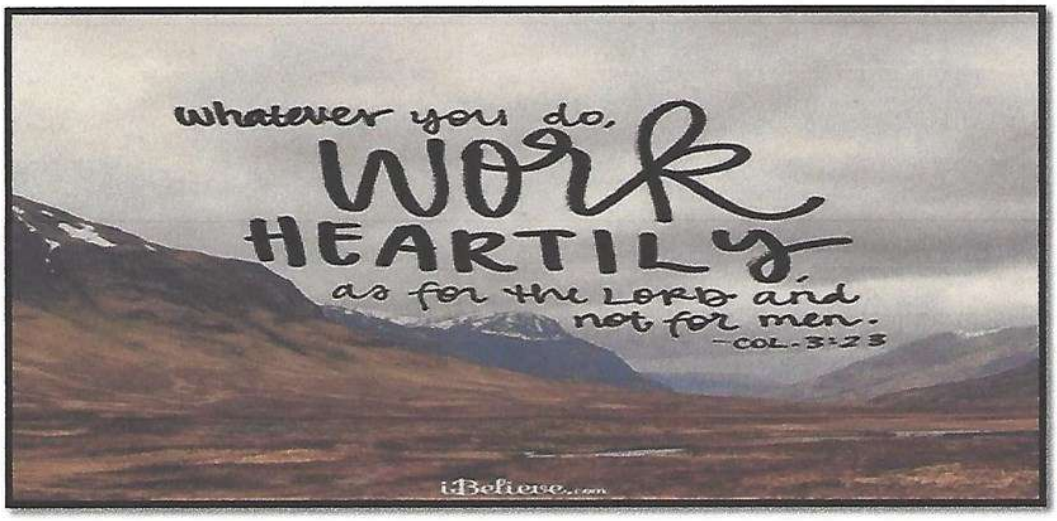
All Parishioners who wish to receive a copy of their 2024 Tax Contribution statement must complete the attached form.

The forms can be returned by dropping them in the contribution basket during Mass or they can be dropped in the box on the front door of the rectory. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

ENVELOPE # _____