Mass Intentions

SUNDAY, March 9 – First Sunday of Lent
8:00 A.M. Holy Name
9:30 A.M. The Dudek Family
11:00A.M. James Power
12:30 P.M. Patricia Donato
Rino Del Carro
Rosaria Guadagnino
Baldassare Pipitone

MONDAY, March 10–Weekday
9:00 A.M. Anna Kanakaris

TUESDAY, March 11-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Frank Gavila Sr.

WEDNESDAY, March 12-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Carmen Gavila

THURSDAY, March 13–St. Weekday
9:00 A.M. The Spicijarie Family

FRIDAY, March 14 –Weekday
9:00 A.M. The Gavila Family

SATURDAY, March 15-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Purgatorial Society
Emil Sorrento
Sean Reddin
Victor A. DiDonato

5:00P.M. The Devane Family

SUNDAY, March 16– The Second Sunday of Lent
8:00 A.M. For the People of St. Francis
9:30 A.M. John Joe Kearns
11:00 A.M. Rita & Ralph Maresca
12:30P.M. Antonio & Guistina DiBenedetto
Rino Del Carro
Patricia Donato
Angelo Rosa Sferrazza

Today's Readings

The First Sunday of Lent

Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Romans 10:8-13
Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time. **(Luke 4:1-13)**

Readings for the Week

MONDAY: Leviticus:19:1-2, 11-18
Matthew 25:31-46

TUESDAY: Isaiah 50:10-11
Matthew 6:7-15

WEDNESDAY: Jonah 3:1-10
Luke 11:29-32

THURSDAY: Esther C 12:14-16, 23-25
Matthew 7:7-12

FRIDAY: Ezekiel 18:21-28
Matthew 5:20-26

SATURDAY: Deuteronomy 26:16-19
Matthew 5:43-48

The First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
Philippians 3:17-4:1
Luke 9:2b-36

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

Never mistake a clever argument for the truth. In today's Gospel the devil argues cleverly in an effort to lead Jesus down an evil path. This tempter uses persuasive language that can sound convincing. Because Jesus knows the truth, though, the devil's appeals are exposed as lies meant to change the world for evil and not for good.

How often today we hear clever arguments to dissuade us from believing basic doctrinal or moral teachings of God's Catholic Church. Sinful behaviors are portrayed as normal, healthy, modern and enlightened. Basic truths are depicted as erroneous, superstitious, old fashioned or worse. Because we know that God can neither deceive nor be deceived, we are confident that in his great love for us he reveals what we need to know for a peaceful earthly journey and eternal happiness in heaven. In sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition, God guides us in the basic doctrinal and moral teachings of his Church, even when voices in our culture try leading us down paths that ultimately end in evil.

The devil quotes sacred Scripture in his attempt to lead Jesus astray. This reminds us that even a so called religious voice, an argument using Scripture and Tradition to justify a sinful behavior or error filled teaching, is ultimately judged in light of our Church's basic doctrinal and moral teachings. If it violates a moral absolute or misrepresents God and his revealed preferences in any way, then no matter how clever an argument is, it leads us away from God and not close to his loving embrace.

God hears our cry of confusion and sin as today's first reading reminds us. God delivers us from evil as we hear in today's Responsorial Psalm and we will also remind ourselves shortly in the Our Father. God saves us as Paul says to the Romans and to each of us.

Trust the Lord. Rely on His strength and love. Let clever arguments against the truth wash over you and evaporate. As Jesus reminds us today, there is no need to put the Lord our God to the test. We can always trust God and his Church to help keep us on the right path, the one leading to happiness forever with him in heaven.

May Our Lenten Journey bring us closer to Jesus,
Msgr. Maresca

Lent

Lent has begun. In the hope of assisting the faithful of the Diocese of Brooklyn to celebrate this season of preparation for Easter in a fruitful manner, Bishop Robert Brennan wishes to call attention to the following:

ABSTINENCE: All the faithful who have reached 14 years of age are required to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday (March 5) and on all the Fridays of the Lenten Season.

FASTING: All the faithful between the ages of 18 and 59 (inclusive) are bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday (March 29) by limiting oneself to one full meal and avoiding food between meals. Light sustenance may be taken on two other occasions during the day.

EASTER DUTY: After having been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, the faithful are obligated to receive holy Communion at least once a year, this precept to be fulfilled during the Easter Season, unless it is fulfilled at some other time for a good reason. In the United States, the period for fulfilling this precept is extended from the First Sunday of Lent (March 9) until Pentecost Sunday, (June 8).

THE SOLEMNITIES OF SAINT JOSEPH AND THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD: The liturgical solemnities of Saint Joseph (March 19) and the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25) are to be celebrated with due solemnity even though they fall within the Season of Lent.

RECONCILIATION MONDAY: Reconciliation Monday is observed in the Diocese on the Monday of Holy Week (April 14th). Observance of this day allows the faithful to experience the grace of forgiveness and mercy in the Sacrament of Penance. Those conscious of grave (mortal) sin are obligated to confess before receiving Holy Communion.

TIME OF CELEBRATION OF THE EASTER VIGIL: Sunset in Brooklyn on Holy Saturday, April 19, is at 7:40 pm. Therefore, the celebration of the Liturgy for the Easter Vigil should begin after that, realistically at 8 p.m. or later, and must end before dawn on Easter Sunday.

Please take note of the following, as well:

MUSIC: During Lent, the "Alleluia" is not sung or said. Musical instruments are to be used at liturgical celebrations only to give support to the singing.

CHURCH DECORATIONS: The church should not be decorated with flowers during Lent.

HOLY WATER: Holy Water is not removed from the fonts during Lent. It is only removed immediately before the Celebration of the Lord's Supper and replaced at the Easter Vigil with water blessed at that celebration.

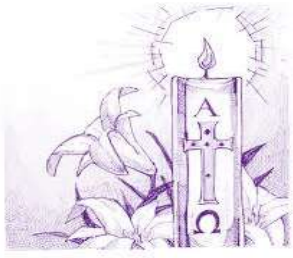
FUNERALS: Funeral masses are not permitted during the Paschal Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday,

What are you doing for Lent?

To help us during our Lenten journey, the following opportunities will be taking place in our parish.

1. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place each morning at 8:00AM Monday through Saturday.
2. Mass is celebrated each morning at 9:00AM Monday through Saturday.
3. Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday during Lent at 7:30PM and will conclude with Benediction.
4. Confessions are heard every Saturday from 4:00 to 4:30PM.
5. Reconciliation Monday is ***April 14th***. Every Church in our Diocese, the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Rockville Centre will be hearing confessions. We will be hearing confessions from
   2:00 to 4:00PM and 6:00 to 8:00PM
   What a wonderful experience to receive the mercy of Christ in this great sacrament.
6. The Saint Francis of Assisi Parish Council will be hosting our Lenten Supper & Stations on Friday March 14th and Friday April 4th. Supper will be at 6:00PM in Msgr. Campbell Hall followed by the Stations of the Cross at 7:30PM in Church. Free will donation.
7. All are welcome to join the St. Francis of Assisi Scripture Study Group on Thursday nights at 7:20PM. The group is for anyone who would like to deepen their understanding of the Bible.
8. Our Parish Lenten Mission will take place from Monday, March 24th, to Thursday, March 27th. The Mission will take place at the 9:00AM Mass in the morning and again at 7:30PM. Fr. Lee Havey will be giving the Mission. All are invited.

Easter Candle



If anyone would like to make a donation or memorialize the ***Pascal Candle,*** please stop by the rectory and speak with Marybeth. As you know, the Pascal Candle is blessed and lighted at the Easter Vigil and remains in the sanctuary until the feast of Pentecost. It is then used for all our funerals during the year.

Please mark your calendars for our **Parish Lenten Mission** which takes place beginning Monday, March 24th, to Thursday, March 27th.

The mission will take place at the 9:00AM Mass in the morning and again at 7:30PM. Fr. Lee Havey will be giving the mission.

All are invited to join us.

Memorials for the Week of March 9, 2025

SANCTUARY LAMP

In Loving Memory of
James Power

Requested by
The Power Family

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, Michelle Yashita, and the Polychronakis Family.

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.

First Sunday of Lent

March 9, 2025

"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Pray for Vocations

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:

Engaging in challenges on our Lenten journey can help us prepare to carry our own cross.

One way Jesus prepared for His public ministry was to go into the desert, filled with the Holy Spirit, *to be tempted by the devil.* We may have to confront a similar experience during Lent. While striving to follow the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, we encounter temptations to abandon our good resolutions. Jesus' example shows us the disposition we must have if we are to triumph over the enemy.

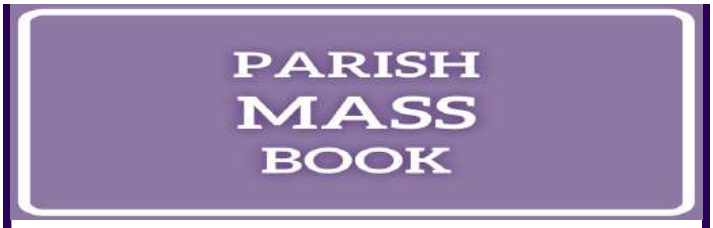
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place before the 9:00AM Mass. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed at 8:00AM each morning, Monday through Saturday, giving parishioners an opportunity for private prayer before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. At 8:30AM the rosary will be prayed by parishioners. 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.

Mass Attendance for March 1/2, 2025

5:00PM	**98**
8:00AM	**44**
9:30AM	**180**
11:00AM	**93**
12:30PM	**38**
	Total: 453



2025 Mass Book

The 2025 Mass Book is now open for the remainder of 2025.

All Announced Masses up to June 30th are $15.00. After July 1, 2025 Masses will be **$20.00.** **Beginning July 1, 2025, the 11:00AM Mass will have multiple intentions.**

Purgatorial Mass Cards are $30.00
Memorials (Altar Bread, Wine, Sanctuary Lamp and Altar Candles) are $75.00
Altar Flowers are $100.00

Welcome to Our Church

If you wish to register as a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi Church, please stop by the Rectory Office during regular business hours. There you can pick up a census card which can be filled out at that time or returned by mail or in the Sunday Collection Basket. You can even download the census card on line. Just check our website at: ***stfrancisofassisiastoria.org***
You will then begin to receive weekly offering envelopes.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCRIPTURE STUDY

"But, you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. On those who waiver, have mercy" (Jude vv. 20-22)

Dear SFA Friends and Family

The SFA Scripture Study Group will meet on Thursday, March 13th from 7:20-8:50 in the St. Joseph room of the rectory. This week's study will be on the Letter of Jude vv. 1-13 and the Second Letter of Peter 1:1-2:16. We hope you will join us.

All are Invited … ALL ARE WELCOME!

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

OCIA
Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Adult classes have begun for those who need the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you need to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation or need to be fully initiated into the Church (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation) please call Sister Francesca Monday or Thursday, from 9:30am to 3:30pm. Her number can be found on the front of the Bulletin.

Thank you.

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 3/1-3/2 **$5,280.00**

School parents must use church envelopes.

The Saint Francis of Assisi Parish Council will be hosting our Lenten Supper & Stations on Friday, March 14th.

Supper will be at 6:30PM in Msgr. Campbell Hall followed by the Stations of the Cross at 7:30PM in Church.

Free will donation.

Do You Enjoy Singing?

Then use your voice to praise the Lord!
Join the St. Francis of Assisi Choir.
We meet every Monday evening at 7:00PM in the choir loft in church.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Annual Catholic Appeal 2025

DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

The Annual Catholic Appeal for 2025 has begun in our Diocese. Our goal this year has been lowered to **$37, 511.** Most of you should have received information regarding this Appeal. This year the theme is: **JUBILEE OF HOPE, RENEWAL OF FAITH AND CHARITY.**

I ask you to prayerfully reflect on what you can contribute to help us reach our goal. The Annual Appeal allows Bishop Brennan to continue to carry out the mission of the Church here in Brooklyn and Queens.

I am grateful to those who have contributed in the past and thank you for your generosity and support. If you have not contributed, I ask to make every effort to help us reach our goal.

I share with you the words of Jesus to his followers: "The measure you measure with will be measured back to you."

Thank you for all your effort.
God Bless,
Msgr. Maresca

Associated Vincentian Charities of Brooklyn

For each car, truck or van, running or not, The Associated Vincentian Charities of Brooklyn will give back to St. Francis of Assisi $50/100 per vehicle. Maybe you don't have a vehicle, but a family member, friend or neighbor has an old or neglected vehicle in their driveway that they would like to dispose of.

Call the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at **(718) 491-2525.**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THIS WEEK

March 9-March 15

Sunday, March 9
8:00AM Holy Name
9:30AM Children's Liturgy
10:40AM CCD
10:40AM Confirmation Class

Monday, March 10
12:00PM Golden Age
3:30PM Children's Choir
7:30PM Adult Choir

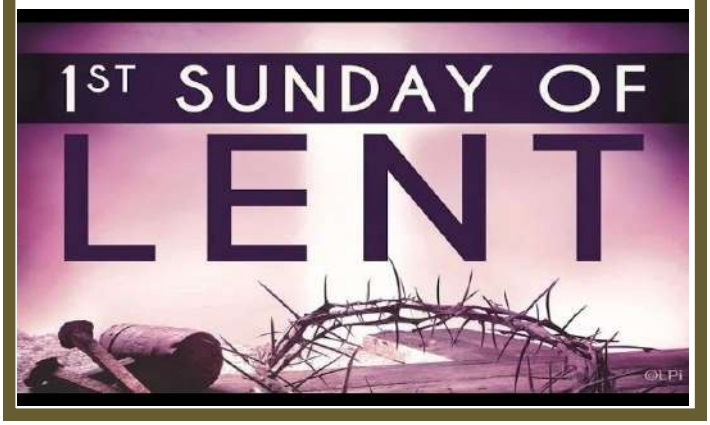
Tuesday, March 11
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, March 12
7:00PM Baptism Class

Thursday, March 13
10:00AM-Legion of Mary
3:30PM Jiu Jitsu
6:00PM IACA
7:20PM Scripture Study

Friday, March 14
6:00PM Supper (Pasta Night)-MCH
7:30PM Stations of the Cross

Saturday, March 15
9:30AM CYO Training
6:00PM Youth Group Meeting



NEXT WEEK

March 16-March 22

Sunday, March 16
9:30AM Children's Liturgy
10:40AM CCD
10:40AM Confirmation Class

Monday, March 17
12:00PM Golden Age
3:00PM Confirmation Rehearsal
3:30PM Children's Choir
7:30PM Adult Choir

Tuesday, March 18
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, March 19

Thursday, March 20
10:00AM-Legion of Mary
6:00PM IACA
7:00PM Confirmation Rehearsal
7:20PM Scripture Study

Friday, March 21
7:30PM Stations of the Cross

Saturday, March 22

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

Lent 2025

= a day of fasting and abstinence from meat

= a day of abstinence from meat

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"Lent is the liturgical season of forty days which begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Easter Triduum). Lent is the primary penitential season in the Church's liturgical year, reflecting the forty days Jesus spent in the desert in fasting and prayer" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*).		**March**	5 *Ash Wednesday* Attend Mass and receive ashes as a sign of penance. Ask the Lord to help you grow closer to Him this Lent.	6 Prayerfully choose meaningful but achievable practices of prayer, penance, almsgiving.	7 Wake up five minutes early to dedicate your day to God's service.	8 Offer to pay for coffee, fast food, or groceries for the person in line behind you.
9 *"Each tree is known by its own fruit"* (Luke 6:44). After Mass, ask God what "good fruit" He wants your life to bear this Lent.	10 Practice true charity: "Have patience with all things, but, first of all with yourself" (St. Francis de Sales).	11 Take fifteen minutes today for silent prayer. Don't worry about finding the right words. Just be still and let Him love you.	12 Enjoy pretzels, a traditional Lenten snack invented by monks. They thought the folded loops resembled arms crossed in prayer.	13 Skim the glossary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* until something strikes your interest, and dive deeper.	14 Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy today, especially for the dying. You can find more information here: https://www.usccb.org/prayers	15 Write a note of encouragement to someone you think needs cheering up.
16 Stay after Mass today to pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.	17 *St. Patrick's Day* In honor of St. Patrick's missionary work in Ireland, offer extra prayers for those who teach the Faith.	18 Listening well is a small but meaningful act of courtesy. Give the gift of your full attention.	19 *St. Joseph's Day* In honor of St. Joseph, focus on the Joyful Mysteries today, reflecting on St. Joseph's role in each event.	20 Lent and Holy Week are busy times in a Catholic parish. Call or stop by your parish office and ask how you can help.	21 "There is no such thing as innocent slander." (Pope Francis). Today, practice the penance of not complaining about anyone.	22 Contact Catholic Relief Services (877-435-7277 or www.crs.org) to see how you can support any of their projects.
23 Write down three points you remember from Father's homily. Choose one you want to put into practice this week.	24 Honor your word, even to yourself. Perform a chore you've been putting off.	25 *The Annunciation* Happy Solemnity! Today, we celebrate that God became man (John 1:14). Attend daily Mass or have a dessert—or both!	26 Make a small sacrifice today: No cream in your coffee, no butter on your toast, no music in the car.	27 Ask God to show you whatever keeps you from fully experiencing His love. Resolve to deal with it before Lent ends.	28 Counter pride with authentic humility. Pray, "O Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything!"	29 *"Return, O Israel, to the LORD, your God; you have collapsed through your guilt."* (Hosea 14:2) Pray the Act of Contrition and ask for forgiveness.
30 *Laetare Sunday* Today marks the halfway point to Easter! Have a dessert to celebrate that you have made it halfway to Lent.	31 Renew your commitment to your Lenten resolutions.	1 **April** Examine your conscience, using the Ten Commandments as a guide (Exodus 20:1-17).	2 Go to Confession and experience God's mercy. Thank Him for His love and resolve to avoid future sin.	3 Instead of spending time on your screen, read a good spiritual classic.	4 Attend daily Mass or visit the Blessed Sacrament sometime today. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice of love.	5 Choose to forego a financial luxury, such as online shopping or eating out. Abstain from it until Easter and donate the extra money.
6 Extend fellowship. Invite friends to brunch after Mass, either at a restaurant or at your home.	7 Loving others well starts with knowing we are loved. Ask God to reveal His love to you today.	8 Read the Passion Narrative from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 22-23). What areas of your life and heart need His grace?	9 Reduce the contents of your closets. If you used or worn something in a year, donate it to charity.	10 Go for a walk and look for signs of Spring.	11 Observe a (recreational) screen fast, from 12:00pm to 3:00pm, the time Jesus hung on the Cross.	12 Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, mediating on Christ's Passion through the eyes of His mother.
13 *Palm Sunday* When listening to the Gospel readings at Mass, imagine yourself in the scene. How would you respond?	14 Pray for all those coming into the Church at Easter Vigil.	15 Forgive anyone who has hurt you. Ask forgiveness of anyone you have harmed.	16 Reflect on your Lent: where did you grow? What graces did you receive? What habits would you like to continue after Easter?	17 *Holy Thursday* Make a Holy Hour today in a church or chapel to console Jesus for the abandonment, indifference, and sacrilege He suffers by us.	18 *Good Friday* Reread Luke 23. Jesus carried His Cross out of love for you. Resolve to imitate Him more faithfully this year.	19 *Holy Saturday* Light a candle and renew your baptismal vows to remain committed to Christ.

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Growing in FAITH™

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

March 2025

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

One Minute Meditations

St. Agnes of Bohemia

Imagine refusing marriage proposals from two kings and the Holy Roman Emperor. For Agnes, daughter of Queen Constance and King Ottokar I, none but the King of Heaven could win her heart. In 1236, after financing the construction of a Poor Clare monastery in Prague, she entered this monastery with seven other noblewomen. Elected abbess, she continued to perform the lowliest tasks in the community. She exchanged letters with St. Clare of Assisi, which survive today.

Scripture is God's love letter

Sacred Scripture isn't just a record of events that happened long ago but is intended for us today. When we read the Bible through the lens of Church teaching, we see God revealing the ways of the love of His heart for each of us, "back then" and still today.

"And what is the secret of perseverance? Love. Fall in Love, and you will not leave him." —St. Josemaría Escrivá

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Cultivate a heart for Lent

Just as an experienced gardener prepares the soil before planting to ensure healthy growth, we must prepare the "soil" of our hearts during Lent. This season invites us to clear away obstacles that hinder our relationship with God and nourish our spirits through prayer and the Sacraments. By doing so, we cultivate the "good fruits" that lead to a renewed and vibrant spiritual life.

Uproot the Weeds: Studies suggest that forming a new habit takes at least three weeks, depending on its nature. Begin by uprooting unhealthy habits and replacing them with holy, life-giving practices. Start small but be consistent — like waking up just five or ten minutes earlier to pray. Even small acts of self-discipline build the spiritual strength needed to face greater challenges, including temptations.

Nourish the Soil: Spiritual growth isn't possible without grace. Mother Teresa, despite her incredible work, insisted on a daily Holy Hour, affirming, "How can we last even one day living our life without hearing Jesus say, 'I love you'—impossible." Follow her example by creating and following a routine of daily prayer, weekly Mass, and monthly Confession.

Preserve the Fruits: Commit to practices that bring new life, like choosing kindness over gossip, and prayer over screen time. By nurturing these habits, you'll encounter Jesus' love more deeply and reflect that love to others.

As we journey through Lent, may our hearts become fertile ground where faith, hope, and love can blossom abundantly.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics give something up for Lent?

Catholics around the world make sacrifices during Lent to remind us that God is greater than anything the world can offer. By giving up small comforts or practicing acts of self-denial, we acknowledge that every good gift comes from Him. The sacrifice serves to remind us.

True love requires sacrifice. God demonstrated this perfectly by giving His only Son for our salvation (John 3:16). Our Lenten sacrifices help us imitate this divine love. By uniting our sacrifices with Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the Cross, we become more like Him.

The virtue that leads to a balanced life

Prudence is the virtue of wise decision-making, guiding us to apply moral principles in everyday life with clarity and integrity. It empowers us to navigate complex situations with fairness and sound judgment.

Act justly and fairly by treating others with justice, free from favoritism or prejudice. For example, when caring for children, prudence ensures we give equal attention to each child, fostering an atmosphere of respect and equality.

Balance courage and caution by finding the middle ground between fear and recklessness. Prudence empowers us to make bold yet responsible choices. For example, taking out a mortgage for a comfortable home is a prudent investment, whereas going into excessive debt to impress others is not.

Master desires and avoid greed to keep from becoming enslaved by life's pleasures. This virtue helps us avoid excessive consumption. Prudence allows us to appreciate good food, fine entertainment, or the latest technology without falling into excessive consumption.

Prudence brings us practical wisdom. When we practice prudence, we not only make better decisions but also move closer to living a balanced, fulfilling life.

from Scripture — John 9:1-41, Faith gives us true sight

In this Gospel reading, Jesus cured a blind man on the Sabbath by making mud and smearing it on the man's eyes. This cure was two-fold; the man received both physical sight and the sight of faith. As he was being questioned by the Pharisees, his understanding of who Jesus was moved from knowing Him as simply a man, to acclaiming Him as a prophet, and finally, to worshipping Him as the Son of God.

While the faith of the cured man progresses, the spiritual sight of the Pharisees does the opposite. In their anger, they were blinded to the truth—that the curing of the blind man was God's work. Furious that Jesus failed to observe the Sabbath, they refused to believe that the man had been blind from birth and had been healed by Jesus.

In Baptism, we are given the gift of faith—the ability to "see" God and our life in relation to him. The longer we follow Jesus and learn from Him, the better we understand Him. However, through sin, we can become spiritually blind.

Feasts & Celebrations

March 6 - St. Colette (1447). St. Colette was born in Corbie, France. She was orphaned at seventeen and gave her inheritance to the poor. She later became a Franciscan Tertiary and later reformed the Poor Clares. She founded seventeen convents under the reformed rule.

March 17 – St. Patrick (493). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited with establishing the Church there.

March 19 – St. Joseph, Husband of Mary. Jesus' earthly foster father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and protector of families.

March 20 – St. Cuthbert (687). St. Cuthbert joined the Benedictines at the Melrose Abbey. For his holiness, fervor and charity, he was made abbot of the Lindisfarne Abbey. He retired to be a hermit.

March 25 – the Annunciation. The angel Gabriel visited the Blessed Virgin Mary with the extraordinary news of her role as the mother of God. Even at her young age, she had complete confidence in God's grace and trusted in his wisdom.

Q & A — Why don't I feel better after Confession?

After Confession, many feel lighter, more peaceful. Other times, we may feel no change, or even sadness. Still, we are forgiven. Here's how to find peace.

Make amends: That lingering unease might be God's gentle nudge to make things right. Forgiveness is given in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but healing continues through restitution. If you confessed to stealing $20, you're forgiven—but you still need to return it. Making amends completes the reconciliation process.

Reject false guilt: "Healthy" guilt alerts us to sin, like a burglar alarm. Once you've confessed, the alarm should turn off. If guilt lingers, recognize it as a temptation to doubt God's mercy. God doesn't hold grudges and neither should you. If you're struggling, seek help from a priest, counselor, or trusted Catholic friend.

Then do what pleases Him most – be still and let Him love you.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.
~ Romans 12:4-7

Sister Francesca Mumbua Simon: Inspiring Faith and Learning in Our Community

Sister Francesca Mumbua Simon, a dedicated and compassionate member of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church community, has been serving as the Director of Religious Education and Faith Formation (DRE) for the past three years. Hailing from Kenya, Eastern Africa, Sister Francesca has devoted 33 years to her religious vocation, encompassing roles in teaching, religious formation, and administration both locally and internationally.

In her role as DRE, Sister Francesca wears many hats. Her daily responsibilities include preparing classes for adults, managing administrative tasks, answering inquiries from seekers, and preparing students from grades 1-8 for the reception of sacraments. She also provides spiritual guidance to parishioners in need. "There is a strong teacher in me," she says, emphasizing her love for reading and researching to stay relevant in the Church.

One of her unique contributions is preparing and leading retreats for students preparing for Holy Communion, which takes place during the spring session each year. As a Sister of St. Joseph, her day begins at 4:00 AM to balance her work with her spiritual and community obligations.

Despite her tireless efforts, Sister Francesca faces challenges, particularly with the low enrollment in the Religious Education program. She has reached out through flyers and announcements at holy masses, but the results have been less than fruitful. "It is frustrating to say the least," she admits.

However, the fulfillment she derives from seeing children and adults receive their sacraments keeps her motivated. "Sharing my faith with the adults, listening to them ask profound questions, noting their innocence with regards to Catholic faith and their readiness to learn more, is to me very encouraging," she shares. She also expresses deep gratitude for the catechists she works with, describing them as her brothers and sisters. "I THANK GOD FOR SUCH A GOOD TEAM!!" she exclaims.

Sister Francesca's commitment to evangelizing through teaching is a calling she recognized as early as fifth grade. Although she is at St. Francis of Assisi for only two or three days a week, she hopes to meet more parishioners and collaborate with various groups within the community.

Her dedication and service have made a significant impact on our parish, and we are truly grateful for all that she does. Sister Francesca's unwavering faith and tireless efforts continue to inspire and uplift our community.

We encourage all parishioners to help spread the word about our Religious Education program. You can support this effort by sharing information with friends and family, distributing notices from the bulletin, and inviting others to attend our classes. For more information or to offer your ideas, please feel free to call Sister Francesca. Together, we can grow our community and deepen our faith.

Have a suggestion for someone we should highlight in this series?
Please send us an email to sfaparishcouncil@sfaacademy.org

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.

ST.FRANCIS OF ASSISI PROUDLY PRESENTS

RADIO BINGO

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025

DOORS OPEN 6:00PM
BINGO STARTS AT 7:00PM

ADVANCED TICKETS SALES ONLY $45

FRIDAY, APRIL 11TH, 6:30-8:30PM & MONDAY, APRIL 13TH, 10:30A-12:30PM
@SFACA MSGR. MARESCA CENTER

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI LOWER CHURCH - MSGR. THOMAS P. CAMPBELL HALL

21ST AVENUE & 46TH STREET - ASTORIA - 718-726-9405

VISIT OUR INSTAGRAM @STFRANCISOFASSISIPARISHASTORIA

Join us for the best party in town! There's awesome music, people, raffles and games that are guaranteed to get you in your party mood . Don't miss out and we will see you there!

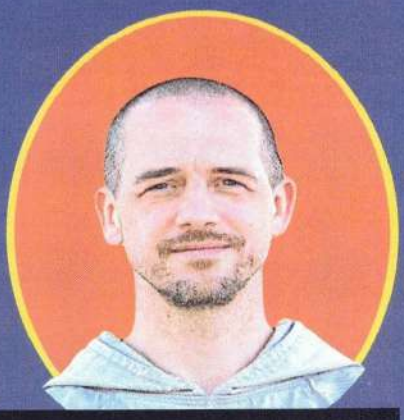
"COURAGE IS CONTAGIOUS" MARCH 25, 2025

Fr Chris Alar, MIC
Hosts EWTN "Living the Divine Mercy", Director, Association of Marian Helpers.

2025 WALK's. GUEST SPEAKER

Rebecca Kiessling
International Pro-Life Speaker and Attorney, Conceived in Rape.

2025 WALK's. GRAND MARSHAL



Fr Fidelis Moscinski, CFR
*General Procurator, among the 23 pro-lifers who were unjustly prosecuted by Biden DOJ who unconstitutionally weaponized the FACE ACT. Pardoned by President Donald Trump Jan. 23, 2025 * LUNCH GUEST SPEAKER*

BROUGHT TO YOU BY PERSONHOODEDUCATIONNY.COM

2 EVENTS-SAME DAY

2025
INTERNATIONAL
GIFT OF LIFE WALK-NYC

REGISTER HERE:

FOLLOWED BY

LUNCH WITH A FRIAR
FR. FIDELIS MOSCINSKI,

RESERVE YOUR early bird SEAT Here:

2025 INTERNATIONAL GIFT OF LIFE WALK-NYC

This year will be the 9th Annual pro-life walk in NYC. Every year we honor the vision of St. John Paul II when he designated March 25, as the International Day of the Pre-born Child. The mission of this Walk is claim the Personhood of all humans at the moment of conception. With that carries the recognition of the worth and dignity of every human being, from conception to natural, true death.

GRAND PRO-LIFE MARSHAL Rebecca Kiessling International Pro-Life Speaker, Conceived In Rape

Rebecca Kiessling has been an international pro-life speaker and adoption speaker since 1995, speaking for various pro-life organizations, including right to life groups, crisis pregnancy center fundraisers, 40 Days for Life events, rallies, churches, high schools, universities, Students for Life, women's conferences, attorney conferences, adoption events, etc., throughout North America, Europe, and Latin America about 50 - 75 times/year. legislators across the U.S., Canada, Europe and Latin America.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER, FR. CHRIS ALAR, MIC is a priest with the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. Father Chris wrote and produced the popular "Divine Mercy 101" and "Explaining the Faith" DVD series. He is an international speaker and is a regular host and guest on EWTN.Watch his talks and programs on DivineMercyPlus.org.

RALLY & WALK LOCATION:
11AM RALLY
FOLEY SQUARE
148-152 WORTH STREET
NYC, NY 10013

LUNCH @ CARRAGHER'S NYC
TIME: **1:30-4:30PM**
LOCATION:
17 John Street, NY, NY 10038

CALL (631) 487-7578 for BUS information*