

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Advent began on Sunday, November 27, 2022

Advent Giving Trees

Trees are up in the Stewardship Center.
Gifts are due back December 4 or December 11

Reconciliation Service

Tuesday, December 6th at 7 pm

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Thursday, December 8th at 9 am, 11:45 am, & 7 pm

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Monday, December 12th at 7:00 pm **Misa en Español**

Lessons and Carols

Thursday, December 22nd at 7:00 pm

This Weekend!



**A Women's Place?
Where She's Called!**

See page 5

Our Mission Statement

Inspired by our patron,
Francis of Assisi, we seek to
proclaim the reign of God by
growing in Holiness through
our experience of Christ in
word, sacrament, and one
another, offering Hope to those
who hunger for human dignity,
and extending Hospitality to all.



The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi

11401 Leesville Road, Raleigh, NC 27613 919-847-8205 www.stfrancisraleigh.org



GOING, GOING, GONE: THE GREAT DEPARTURE FROM CATHOLICISM, PART VII:

Departures from Catholicism in the U.S. are outpacing arrivals at an estimated 6-to-1 ratio. How do we stop the bleed, especially with regard to our youth and young adults? This is the seventh in a multi-part series describing some of the major factors contributing to this phenomenon, and what are some positive steps we as a community of faith can take to remediate this departure. If you are just joining this series, please refer to my Pastor's Comments in the previous six bulletins for more background.

[Click here for part 1](#)
[Click here for part 2](#)
[Click here for part 3](#)
[Click here for part 4](#)
[Click here for part 5](#)
[Click here for part 6](#)

This week I will present some ways we at St. Francis are having a positive impact on our youth and young adults and attracting growth in general.

We live in a secular world. Some believe that the best way to deal with that world and retain/grow in faith is to inoculate ourselves against the secular world, even withdraw from it. Historically there have always been groups who have chosen that route. History also shows us that the vast majority of people have tried to figure out how to live in a secular world (think about the time of Jesus and the early Church, which existed in a very secular environment). Some churches today, both Catholic and Protestant, are pursuing the inoculate/withdrawal approach. At St. Francis, we have elected to figure out how to live in the secular world. We do not believe the major struggle is between belief and secularism. We believe the major struggle is between cynicism and hope. This is why the environment we have created and are trying to develop takes a more a positivistic approach.

The adults of our community, especially parents, are invited to a collaborative venture with us to approach our faith and how to live it out based on principles that post-moderns, especially our children, youth, and emerging adults find attractive. What does that look like? Ronald Rolheiser, a well-known priest, described this vision based on a conference he was a part of on secularity and faith. I find his insights compelling and highlight some of them now because they capture so well what we at St. Francis are doing.

He says that a vision, attitude, behavior, and language that speaks to post-moderns has at least seven components:

- 1) radically simple without being simplistic;
- 2) deeply personal yet profoundly universal;
- 3) clearly committed yet never hard, judgmental, exclusive, or doctrinaire;

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Please pray for our Elect as we celebrate their initiation into the Catholic Church this weekend.

Xander Quinn-Hoyt Duffey
Ashton Beckett Fitzsimons
Cullen Cade Fitzsimons
Noah Louis Fitzsimons
Krystal Maria Nowak
Judy Bouaphone Vuong

THROUGH BAPTISM MAY
THEY WALK ALWAYS AS
CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT:

Remi Jeanne Branchini
 Daughter of Vincent and
 Rachael Branchini

Elias James Cavanaugh
 Son of Ryan and Carolyn
 Cavanaugh

Donovan Olajuwon Sogbein
 Son of Mayowa and Brittani Sogbein

MAY THEY REST IN
PEACE AND PERPETUAL
LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM:

+Pat Mullen
 Mother of Kathryn Noblitt

Weekly Envelope Schedule

December 4 Weekly
 December 4 Mortgage Sunday
 December 8 Immaculate Conception
 December 11 Weekly
 December 11 Retirement for
 Relig/Aging with Grace
 December 18 Weekly
 December 25 Christmas
 December 25 Diocesan Priest
 Retirement
 January 1 New Year's Day/
 Mary Mother of God

[Click here](#) to view the **St. Francis of Assisi Annual Report**

The parish offices will be closed
from December 24, 2022 through
January 3, 2023

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR DECEMBER 3 TO DECEMBER 11



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday December 3, 2022
Saturday, 5:30
+Celesta Miceli
Requested by Anne Martin & Anne Harvey

Sunday December 4, 2022
Sunday, 7:15
+Paulette Jo Frederick
Requested by Connie Gibbons

Sunday, 9:00
+Tom Dzialakiewicz
Requested by Janet and Charles Gerard

Sunday, 11:45
+Joseph Eck
Requested by Thomas, Karen, and Sara Eck

Sunday, 5:30
For the Parishioners of St. Francis

Monday December 5, 9am
+Kathleen Tierney
Requested by Michele Forde Hertel

Tuesday December 6, 9am
+Catherine English
Requested by Maggie Vadyka

Wednesday December 7, 9am
+Fernando Bernal
Requested by Lucila Bernal

Thursday December 8, 9am
+Veronica Frances Weiland
Requested by The Neal Family

Thursday December 8, 11:45am
+Thomas Jacobs
Requested by Rolina and Julius Farardo

Thursday December 8, 7pm
For the Parishioners of St. Francis

Friday December 9, 9am
+Maria Tarangelo
Requested by Charles Sciara

Saturday December 10, 2022
Saturday, 5:30
+Thomas Casey
Requested by The Fleischmann Family

Sunday December 11, 2022
Sunday, 7:15
+Bach Mai Thi Le
Requested by Gary and Hanh Boyar, Hung and Trinh Pham

Sunday, 9:00
+Jean Castiglione
Requested by The Gerard Family

Sunday, 11:45
+Pablo Marques
Requested by Lillian Glorius

Sunday, 5:30
For the Parishioners of St. Francis

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

+John Jenkins
Requested by Mary Ellen Rogers
Remembrance

Recent Death
+Pat Mullen
Mother of Kathryn Noblitt
Remembrance



Bereavement Ministry:

Good Grief Support Group meeting will be on December 14 at 10:00am. The meeting will be in the large conference room of Anthony Hall. The topic will be Taking Care of Yourself.



Daily Mass at 9:00am is held in the chapel on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The Wednesday Daily Mass is held in the church.



Weekly Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation for individuals is celebrated most Saturdays of the year between 4:00-4:45pm in the main church. There are normally two priests present. We recommend that you arrive well before 4:45pm so we may accommodate you.

Mass Intentions

One of the spiritual works of mercy is to pray for the living and the dead. Requesting a Mass is a most wonderful way to exercise this spiritual work of mercy. Our register for Mass intentions for 2023 is open. You may make your request(s) by going to our website (<https://www.stfrancisleigh.org/mass-intention-prayers/>) or by calling the parish office at 919-847-8205 during normal business hours M-F.

At a Glance

This week's events are shown in red.

December 4

Why Faith

Silent No More, Women and Their Role in the Church
10:15-11:15am in Founders

December 6

Reconciliation Service

7:00pm in the church

December 8

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Mass at 9:00am, 11:45am, and 7:00pm

December 12

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

7:00pm Misa en Español in the church

December 14

Good Grief Support Group

10:00am in large conference room of Anthony Hall. The topic will be Taking Care of Yourself.

December 14

Corral Riding Academy

7:00pm - Learn how to become involved with tutoring and/or other services to at-risk adolescent girls at [Corral Riding Academy](#). Click for [Event Registration](#)

December 15

Coffee with Clay

9:30-10:30am in the Assisi Cafe

December 22

Lessons and Carols

7:00pm in the church

December 25

Christmas

December 25

Oak City Cares

Help during the holiday season.
<https://bit.ly/BreakfastatOCCDecember252022>

January 6-8

Project Rachel

Weekend retreat January 6-8.
www.rachelinc.org. Cost is \$200.

January 17

Book Group Opportunity

Dignity and the Death Penalty: Evolution of Catholic Teaching (Alice Hugh Brown, author) Meets online Tuesday evenings, January 17 through February 21, from 7pm to 8pm. For more information or to register: [Complete this short Google Form](#). Registration is required.

[For a complete list of SFA contacts Group Opportunities, Volunteer Opportunities and Ministries, click here.](#)

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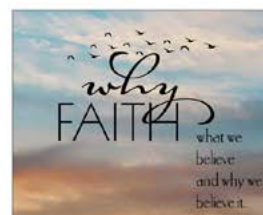
SUNDAY, DEC. 4TH

A Women's Place? Where She's Called!

This Weekend!

“Silent No More: Women and their Role in the Church”

presented by Gladys Whitehouse



10:15AM -11:15AM | FOUNDERS RM | REFRESHMENTS

“Why Faith: what we believe and why we believe it.” Next session: January 8th.



RALEIGH DEANERY ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES

December 6:	11:00am:	St. Raphael, Raleigh
December 6:	7:00pm:	St. Francis of Assisi, Raleigh
December 9:	11:00am:	St. Michael, Cary
December 9:	7:00pm:	St. Eugene, Wendell
December 13:	11:00am:	Our Lady of Lourdes, Raleigh
December 13:	6:30pm:	St. Catherine of Siena, Wake Forest
December 14:	6:30pm:	St. Michael, Cary
December 15:	7:00pm:	Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Louisburg
December 20:	7:00pm:	Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral, Raleigh
December 21:	12:30pm:	St. Catherine of Siena, Wake Forest
December 21:	7:00pm:	St. Raphael, Raleigh

*"It's in pardoning
that we are pardoned"*
St. Francis of Assisi



Reconciliation is God's gift to us. It is the Sacrament of healing. It not only frees us from our sins but it challenges us to have the same kind of compassion and forgiveness for those who have sinned against us.

**Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Tuesday, December 6th at 7pm.**



Our Lady of Guadalupe

Únase a nosotros
el lunes 12 de Diciembre de 2022
a las 7:00 pm
en la misa en español
del tercer domingo de Adviento,
seguido de
Las Mañanitas en honor
a Nuestra Señora la Virgen de Guadalupe.

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

All In the Family

by Jenny Hammond and Lynn Beahm



When Marie Leone first toured The Franciscan School, she knew it was the place for her. What she didn't know was that eventually, each of her family members would join her at the school.

Marie retired from TFS four years ago after 19 years of service. Marie watched the school grow from 300 students to 700 students, and she had the opportunity to work with each principal until her retirement. During her first three years at the school, she served as a teacher's assistant. She also started the before-school program, where she got to spend time with and love on students outside of her own classroom. For the full 19 years of her time at TFS, Marie led this program each day. And as the school continued to grow, Father Mark Reamer asked Marie if she would become the "face of TFS." This meant serving as a permanent receptionist and administrative assistant. After just the first few months in the position, Marie knew this was the position for her. "Becoming the receptionist was something I felt became my calling," says Marie. "I knew I wanted to be there for students and families, guiding them and helping them with whatever they needed."

Screen Shot 2022-11-28 at 1.49.16 PM Marie kept busy. In addition to being the receptionist and leading the before-school program, Marie was a Eucharistic minister at 5:30pm Mass on Saturdays and for every school Mass. Marie gave school tours, handled and distributed all the books and supply orders, answered questions from families, and helped the teachers with various tasks. Pretty much anything on campus, Marie was a part of. When she gave tours, Marie would tell families "If you feel something special, know you are being drawn here. If you aren't sure, come back. And if you feel that warmth, this is where you belong."



One of the factors that led Marie to the school was that her second-oldest daughter, Cristina Leone Gautier, was hired the year before the school completed its build. This is where Cristina started her 23-year teaching career. She first began teaching 2nd grade for four years, then moved to Kindergarten where she taught for 13 years. She currently teaches 3rd grade where she has been for the last six years. Cristina has been the team lead in Kindergarten, second grade and third grade. She was the student council advisor for about 13 years, a faculty liaison for the PAC committee and the HSA committee, and she has served on several curriculum committees, to name a few of the things that keep her busy.

Screen Shot 2022-11-28 at 1.48.58 PM For Cristina, she says, "The proof of how wonderful a school TFS is points to all the alumni who come back after graduating from college to be teachers here." "TFS is such a special place," she adds. "You can feel it as soon as you step on campus, and in the courtyard during Morning Prayer. There is nothing like it."

This infectious enthusiasm from Marie and Cristina pulled in more of their family. Frances Leone Willard, Marie's youngest daughter, joined TFS in 2003 and taught for 11 years. She began as a teacher's assistant for a year, taught Kindergarten for a year, and eventually became the K-8 Art teacher for the next nine years where she taught the children pottery. Frances majored in Art and was thrilled to have the opportunity to teach her passion with the students.

During that time, Marie's son, Joseph (Joe), then a high school student, spent his afternoons starting the TFS after-school Bridges program along with Frances. After several years spent working in the commercial and residential electrical field, Joe was hired to work at

Continue on next page

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Continued from previous page



Joe Leone

Michelle Leone Cash

TFS and the parish. His motivation was that, "Watching my siblings and mother work in a place with such a deep sense of community and family made me want to do something to help keep that going with my own time and talent." For the last 15 years of his service at the school, Joe has primarily served as the Maintenance Technician and Facilities Manager, the position he currently holds. He gets to interact with the community very closely on a daily basis and ensures a safe, welcoming, and well-functioning environment.

Joe also has a passion for coaching youth sports and was given the opportunity to serve as an assistant coach to the TFS varsity girls soccer team in 2021-2022. He shares, "There's nothing quite like seeing the students throughout the day when I'm doing my various jobs and hearing 'Hey, Coach Joe!'" Because of his roles, Joe got an "inside" look at the school, which sealed his desire to raise his two daughters at TFS. "I always knew I would want to raise my own family in the St. Francis community and entrust TFS with my children's education when the time came. I wanted to be confident that the educational environment would

mimic our beliefs and continue instilling good values in my children when they were learning during the day." While his oldest daughter is now in high school, his youngest daughter is still at the school as a 6-year-old.

Screen Shot 2022-11-28 at 1.49.05 PM
And not to leave a family member out, Marie's oldest daughter, Michelle Leone Cash, was the personal chef for the St. Francis friars on and off for 19 years. She graduated from The Culinary Institute of America as a Certified Chef, and she would also do all the school and church catering. A few of the events she helped with were: organizing and serving snacks for the children that attended vacation Bible classes during the summer; cooking and serving meals to the middle school and high school students who attended faith formation classes; organizing the food trucks for the Francis Fest; and working at the church's community center.

At one point, all of Marie's four children were working at the St. Francis or TFS campus! When her husband retired, he also came to the church to run the community center cafe on Fridays after Mass. What's most exciting about this

family's story is that it all began with Marie's parents (her children's grandparents) who first discovered TFS after moving from New York. They were involved at St. Francis, and they first encouraged Cristina to apply as a teacher. From there, each member of the Leone family saw the school and parish through their eyes. "Seeing the way being part of the parish enriched my grandparents' lives gave me a strong desire to give back to the church using the talents with which God blessed me," says Joe.

It's clear to see that the entire Leone family has been captivated by the love at TFS and the church. They all embody a quote that former TFS principal Barbara Polston used to share during morning prayer: "Work hard, play hard, but most of all be kind to one another."

As you explore school options for your child's education next year, we welcome you to become a part of The Franciscan School Family. More information regarding our school and the admissions timeline can be found on our website at www.franciscanschool.org/ or contact Principal Dawn Smith at dawn.smith@stfrancisraleigh.org

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Heidi Hobler, Preschool Director

Baffle Anyone?



As I gathered my thoughts last week for the director letter which I typically send to our families at the end of every month, I reflected on a month full of capturing opportunities to highlight for our children what it means to give thanks. There are a variety of ways in which we teach them about gratitude and how to tell God 'thank you' for all that He has given us. Throughout the month of November, we not only talk about being grateful for what we have, but returning that gratitude by helping others as God asks of us.

For the third year in a row, each preschool classroom decorated a baffle to give to Habitat for Humanity. The first question that might come to mind is, "What is a baffle?". Habitat for Humanity explains the project this way:

"Baffles are installed in the interior of homes between the roof line/eaves overhang and outside wall soffit. They can be made of cardboard, metal, foam or plastic. The baffles our volunteers make are longer than a typical baffle and help keep insulation in place."

This project is a wonderful way to help young children make the connection of helping someone in need not only have a piece for his/her new house, but also to have art that will, hopefully bring a smile. After all, preschoolers generally are familiar with how excited their families are when they bring home something special that they have made.

What an amazing way for our students to practice working together to give back to someone else! As the season of Advent unfolds over the next few weeks, may we all try to show thanksgiving for all that we have been given by sharing a smile and some other kindness with those around us!



Ask Chris



Chris Damico

Director of Stewardship and Engagement

Anticipation

The 1st week of Advent, (the 1st purple candle), symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. The candle represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

How did your 1st week of Advent go? If you are anything like me, getting started with Advent can be difficult, as it requires a mindset change, from being passive (waiting) to being active (to make ready) and anticipating. (expect) The 2nd week of Advent, (the 2nd purple candle), symbolizes faith. During this week, we are longing, preparing and anticipating the arrival, the birthday, of the Prince of Peace.

In anticipating the Prince of Peace and the 2nd purple candle, I leave you with Isaiah 11: 1-10 below. I agree with the reflection that Fr. Alex gave earlier this week on this reading at Daily Mass, this is why I'm both excited about Advent and going to heaven.

Pax et Bonum
Chris



On that day,
A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.
The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:
a Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
A Spirit of counsel and of strength,
a Spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD,
and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.
Not by appearance shall he judge,
nor by hearsay shall he decide,
But he shall judge the poor with justice,
and decide aright for the land's afflicted.
He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.
Justice shall be the band around his waist,
and faithfulness a belt upon his hips.
Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
The calf and the young lion shall browse together,
with a little child to guide them.
The cow and the bear shall be neighbors,
together their young shall rest;
the lion shall eat hay like the ox.
The baby shall play by the cobra's den,
and the child lay his hand on the adder's lair.
There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD,
as water covers the sea.
On that day,
The root of Jesse,
set up as a signal for the nations,
The Gentiles shall seek out,
for his dwelling shall be glorious.

Book Group Opportunity on Catholic Teaching and Death Penalty

Trevor Thompson, Director of Justice and Peace

Starting in January, the St. Francis Office of Justice and Peace is beginning a 6-week virtual study group that turns a spotlight on the death penalty in order to appreciate the evolution of Catholic teaching on this topic.

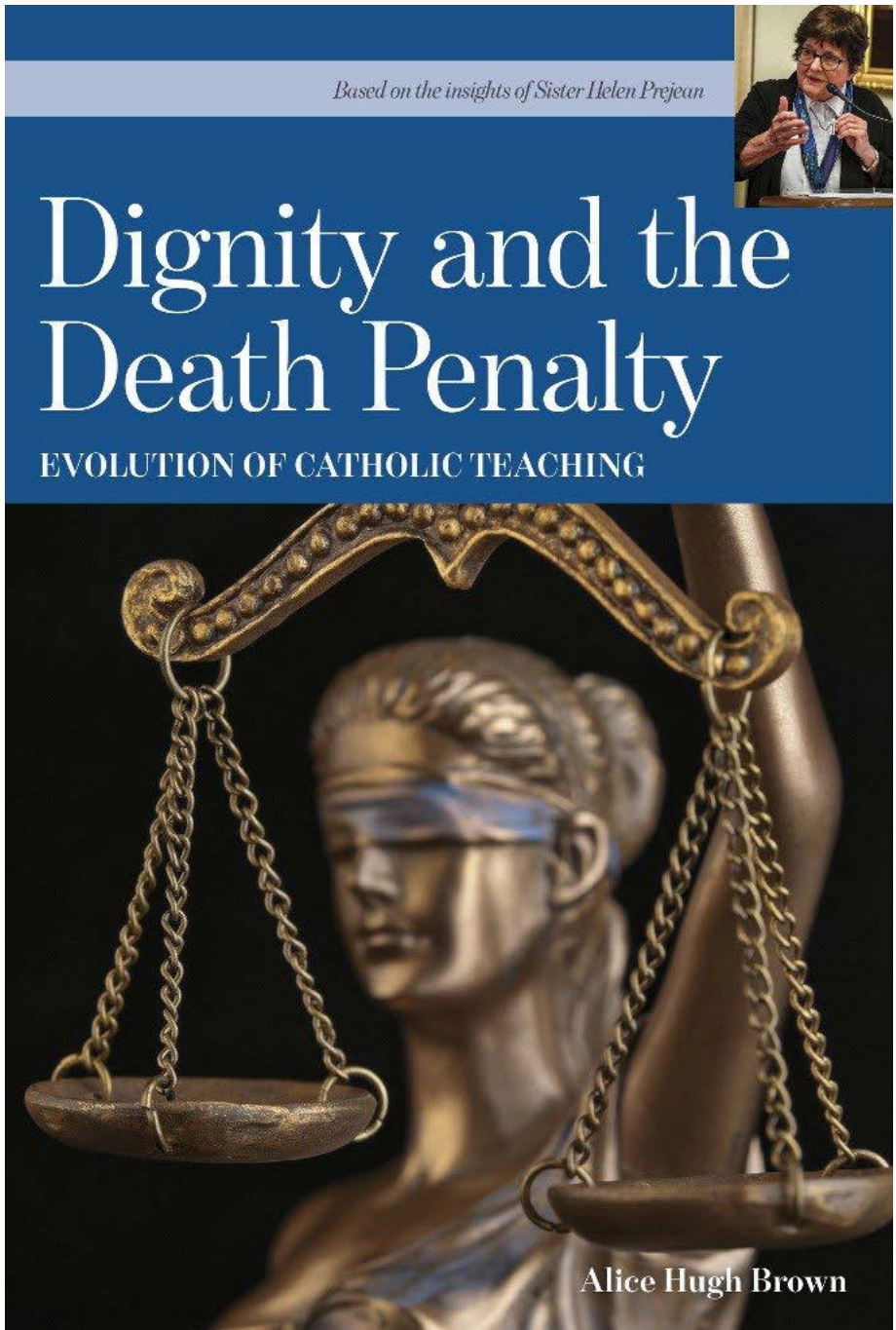
Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*, once wrote, "If we believe that murder is wrong and not admissible in our society, then it has to be wrong for everyone, not just individuals but governments as well." *Dignity and the Death Penalty: Evolution of Catholic Teaching* (Alice Hugh Brown, author) is a 2021 publication based on decades of experience and insights from Sister Helen. This slim volume, heralded by the Catholic Mobilizing Network, is an excellent means of bringing to light the evolution of Church teaching and to illuminate Pope Francis's 2018 statement, "The death penalty is inadmissible, and Catholics should work for its abolition."

Join a parish-wide book group for information and dialogue on this very current topic. We will meet online Tuesday evenings, January 17 through February 21, from 7pm to 8pm. This book study will be facilitated by: Marianne Norris and Ellen Zaytoun, St. Francis parishioners and members of the Raleigh Diocese's Catholics for Abolition in North Carolina.

For more information or to register:
[Complete this short Google Form.](#)

*Registration is required.

This study group, the book, and its subject promise participants a prayerful and perceptive six weeks together!



Project Rachel Post Abortion Healing Retreat

If you desire healing from a past abortion, you are invited to experience the love of Jesus Christ at a Project Rachel weekend retreat January 6-8, 2023, in the Raleigh area. The weekend retreat is strictly confidential, for both women and men and includes discussions, spiritual exercises, the sacrament of reconciliation, a Memorial Service, and a Mass of the Resurrection. Participation offers a beautiful opportunity to experience God's love, forgiveness, and compassion. For more information or to register for the retreat, contact Project Rachel at project.rachel@raldioc.org or call 919-852-1021. The website is www.rachelinc.org. Cost is \$200 for lodging, meals, and all retreat materials. If you have a financial burden, assistance is available.

Advent Giving Tree



Every year, we provide a parish wide opportunity to share the spirit of the Christmas season with families in need through our Advent Giving Trees. There are several St. Francis families and individuals who are recipients of gifts from our Giving Tree, but our primary partners are organizations in the community that work directly with people in need.

There are 2 ways this year that you can support the Advent Giving Tree.

1. Take a paper ornament from the trees in the stewardship center starting on Saturday, November 19th. Then you can bring the gift back to us according to the instructions on the ornament.

Returns Gift by the date on the tag to the Community Center Lobby: Mon-

day-Friday from 8:00am-2:30pm starting November 8th-December 12th OR In the Stewardship Center: Before or after Mass on the weekends and during the week from November 21-December 12.

Community organizations whose families are included on our tree this year include Catholic Parish Outreach, Hispanic Family Center, Emily K Center, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Passage Home, St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia. Parish ministries that benefit include Prayer Shawl, Feed the Need, St. Francis Brown Bag Ministry, and Oak City Cares.

2. You can make a financial donation through Faith Direct to the Advent Giving Tree! (<https://membership.faithdirect.net/givenow/NC674/40890>)

The following organizations will be beneficiaries of our financial donations this year: Duke Children's Hospital, Helen Wright Center, Ronald McDonald House in Durham, Helene Foundation, St. Vincent de Paul Ministry and Support Circle Families.

To learn more about how to donate/support visit our website: <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/adventgivingtree-3/>.

We at St. Francis of Assisi want to thank you on behalf of all our community organizations and ministry groups for helping make someone else's Christmas a little more special. Please don't hesitate to email us if you have any questions: Donation.Drives@stfrancisraleigh.org



Christmas Eve Mass

Únase a nosotros a la misa especial en español el sábado 24 de Diciembre a las 7:30 pm.
Nace Cristo nuestro Salvador!



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist urges us to "Prepare the way of the Lord." This is what Advent is all about, for we are called to help prepare the way of the Lord by making the real meaning of Christmas come alive in our own hearts, in our family and to reach out to those in need.

St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Francis of Assisi works with families who need assistance. The neighbors are the working poor—people who have gotten behind in rent or utility payments because of a layoff, illness, death in the family or an unexpected emergency.

One neighbor got behind in rent when a babysitter problem caused her to leave work to find her three children ages 9, 7 and 4. The babysitter had left the children with someone but was unclear about their whereabouts.

One problem turned into another as the neighbor lost her job because she was unable to find a replacement babysitter. One of her children has heart problems, and she could not find a daycare willing to take her.

Although her job and babysitting situations have improved, she was going to be evicted because of the back rent she owed. This mother has worked since she was 14 years old helping her mother support the family.

Financial help from her mom, the Friendship Fund at First Presbyterian Church, SVdP and some of the neighbor's new income helped her avoid eviction.

Is there a neighbor or friend of yours who is in temporary need because of a loss of a job or an illness? Please leave a message for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at 919-534-484...we want to help!

In addition to providing financial assistance, SVdP members have a large catalog of resource agencies that can help neighbors, such as Legal Aid.

SVdP meets biweekly to discuss and act on how it will assist neighbors.

Volunteers are always welcome to take initial phone calls, follow up with neighbors, update the resource list and more. If you would like to help, contact Cathy Smith at smithctcr@gmail.com.

Register for Cross Step



Cross Step (formerly known as Play N' Pray) is the newest addition to St. Francis' Crosses Faith Formation programs. Our mission is to the development of faith of children, ages one-and-walking through four. The children come to us in Clare Hall during the 9:00 am Sunday Mass. Using Pflaum Gospel Weeklies SEEDS curriculum, the children learn about the weekly Gospel and participate in fun, interactive activities that focus on Catholic doctrine and traditions. Let us help your children to take their first STEPS on their walk with God!

Interested families can register their children for the 2022-2023 year in REALM. Please contact Andrea.Javier@stfrancis-raleigh.org for more information.

Interested in sharing your faith with young children in a fun-filled and loving environment?

The Cross Step program is currently seeking part-time employees to lead our Parish's preschool-aged faith formation classes for the upcoming 2022-2023 year. Our classes occur during the 9:00 am Sunday Mass and consist of playing, praying, sharing a short Gospel-based lesson that is provided in advance, and participating in a related arts-and-craft activity. No teaching experience is necessary, just the desire to have fun and share God's Word. Sharing a couple hours of your time on Sundays can forever transform a child's faith-journey!

Please contact Andrea.Javier@stfrancis-raleigh.org



Have a *GREEN* Christmas!

--Use reusable gift bags – and reuse them!

--Substitute time shopping for things, for times shared together year-round.

--Send email instead of paper cards.

--Have children leave donatable toys for Santa to take when he leaves new ones for them.

For more information on this and other Care for Creation activities visit:

stfrancisraleigh.org/care_for_creation

Or to connect with us go to: stfccreation@gmail.com

Info Session for New Volunteer Opportunity

New Volunteer Opportunity

Looking for a simple way to make a BIG difference?

Virtual Info Session-Dec 14 @ 7pm

Serve at Corral Riding Academy
Tutoring and other opportunities available

Register on Realm or through the link below



Learn more about Corral @ corralriding.org

A faith-motivated nonprofit equipping adolescent girls in high-risk situations through a long-term, holistic program of equine therapy and education.



Are you looking for an opportunity to serve through engagement with others? Do you enjoy teaching, mentoring, or accompanying youth? Are you interested in supporting an organization with a faith-centered mission aimed at “ending the cycle of intergenerational trauma and systemic marginalization in our community?” Would you like to do all of this on one of two beautiful horse farms located in Cary and South Raleigh?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions then please join us at our virtual info session on December 14th at 7pm to learn how you can become involved with providing tutoring and/or other service to at-risk adolescent girls at [Corral Riding Academy](https://www.corralriding.org). It only requires a commitment of two 1.5 hour slots a month with opportunities on weekday evenings and Saturdays. Are you nervous about taking this step? Well don't worry because as a volunteer you will receive all of the training you need!

So please join our info session! There is no commitment to serve by attending, just an opportunity for you to learn more. You can register on Realm or by clicking this link: [Event Registration](https://www.corralriding.org/event-registration)

In Christ,

Tim Fasano
Coordinator - Office of Justice and Peace



Youth Basketball Referees Needed!

We are looking for volunteer Referees for our younger age groups in our Youth Basketball League. Games take place on Saturdays and all training will be provided to you. You must be in high school or older to volunteer. Please contact Mary.Arleth@stfrancisraleigh.org for more information and to sign up.

Youth Basketball Scorekeepers and Time Clock Volunteers

We are looking for volunteer score and time clock keepers for our younger age groups in our Youth Basketball League. Games take place on Saturdays and all training will be provided to you. You must be in 7th Grade or older to volunteer. Please contact Mary.Arleth@stfrancisraleigh.org for more information and to sign up.

Through Faith Direct you can support our parish using an electronic funds transfer from either a bank account or credit/debit card. To access, start here:



You can mail your contribution to us at:

St Francis Of Assisi
11401 Leesville Road
Raleigh, NC 27613

You can give online through:



<https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/faith-direct/>



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GOING, GOING, GONE: THE GREAT DEPARTURE FROM CATHOLICISM, PART VII:

- 4) contemporary without being full of cliché, fad, or hype;
- 5) invitational yet respecting freedom and not proselytizing;
- 6) radiating the joy of the resurrection as it leads us deeper into the fuller mystery of Jesus' passion and death; and
- 7) sensitive to human weakness even as it challenges that weakness and invites us to something better (*Secularity and the Gospel*, 25-26).

The Franciscans who led us for 33 years helped us to develop this vision, attitude, behavior, and language. They called our community to reflect the life of St. Francis, simple and deeply grounded in the Gospel, and to a commitment to inclusion and justice that is never hard, judgmental, or exclusive. We take a contemporary approach to being church, one example among many being our approach to worship, another our emphasis on the role of the laity to live out their priestly, prophetic, and royal offices received in their baptism. We welcome everyone and do our best to radiate the joy of our faith in a positive manner.

As diocesan clergy, we have embraced this worldview and are exploring ways to build upon it. One of those areas is evangelization, awakening those who are part of our community to the invitation from the Lord to a personal relationship that goes beyond what religious instruction generally offers. We are building on a resurrection vision that also acknowledges our ongoing need to embrace the Lord's suffering and death, both redemptive for the world and for us. We remain committed to our community's embrace of Catholic Social Teaching and the outstanding pastoral care we extend to both those within our community and those beyond our walls.

This call extends to the households of our faith community. Look at these seven points and see how you are living them out in your home with those who live with you. Our younger members live in a world filled with cynicism, even despair. We offer hope, encouragement, and relationships that build up rather than tear down. If we can do this in our faith community and our homes, we stand a better chance of attracting and keeping people of all ages closer to the Church.

Fr. Michael

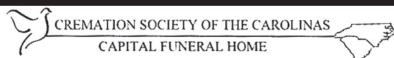


Wedding Coordinator Ministry!

The good news: weddings at St. Francis have picked up! We need more volunteers to help with weddings! If you are interested in assisting the bride and groom at their rehearsal and on their special day, please reach out to Tim Hetzel to learn more: tim.hetzel@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Always God's Children: The monthly AGC ministry meets via Zoom in October through April on the second Sunday of the month. You are welcome to join us online from 3:00 to 4:30 pm. Contact Beth Gaudette, Director of Parish Life, at beth.gaudette@stfrancisraleigh.org if you have any questions and also to request the Zoom link.





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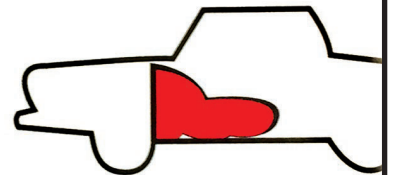
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