

January 7, 2024

The Epiphany of the Lord



DIOCESE BEGINS CENTENNIAL YEAR: On December 12, 1924, the Diocese of Raleigh was established. It covered the entire state and numbered only 6000 Catholics. Today, we number over 500,000 Catholics in the eastern 54 counties of the state. Charlotte was established in the western half of the state as a diocese in 1972 and has a comparable number of Catholics. We've come a LONG way since 1924!

We will celebrate our centennial year in several ways, culminating with a Mass on Friday, November 8, at the Cathedral. This month begins with a diocesan-wide spiritual focus on the source and summit of our Christian life, the Eucharist. Bishop Luis has asked all pastors to receive a monstrance that is traveling throughout the diocese this year and to invite people to come and spend some time before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer and adoration. "Monstrance" is the name of the vessel in which a consecrated host is placed that can be viewed by people during a period of time that is called "Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament."

The diocesan monstrance will be at St. Francis on Friday, January 12. We will begin the day with Mass in the church at 9am followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at the end of the Mass until 6:30pm. At that time, we will celebrate Benediction, a liturgy in which the priest will bless all present with the Blessed Sacrament. We will have short prayer services throughout the day while people are gathered in the church in prayer before the Holy Eucharist. The children in our schools will come for a visit during the day.

Because of the reverence due the Blessed Sacrament, we need to have someone in the church at all times while the Holy Eucharist is in exposition. There will be a sign-up in the Stewardship Center this weekend where you may sign up for a 30-minute slot. I hope many of you will sign up or at least stop by for a visit.

Parishes are doing a variety of things during the time they have the Holy Eucharist in exposition that reflects their values, customs, and needs. Given our strong emphasis on justice and peace issues at St. Francis, I ask all who will come to use the time to pray for peace in our world, especially for the ongoing conflicts in Gaza, Israel, Sudan, and Ukraine. You may also use this time to pray for any number of personal concerns you may have as well as simply be present with Jesus Christ who is with us body, blood, soul, and divinity in the Eucharist and enjoy the graces he wishes to impart to you.

-Fr. Michael

A Dragon's Tale



Did you ever wonder what happened to the old preschool playground equipment and the iconic green dragon? The stalwart equipment and the grounds that had served St. Francis so well needed renewal.

[more...](#)

Volunteer Spotlight: Emma Dempsey

A click away  If you are receiving a paper copy, visit the parish website at www.stfrancisraleigh.org.

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The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi - 11401 Leesville Rd - NC 27613 - Tel: 919-847-8205

Jan 6 - Curbside Care Ministry Care Packages

Our Curbside Care Ministry provides Care packages you can keep in your car to hand out when needed. Pickup from the Stewardship Center the first full weekend each month. Donate supplies to this ministry at St. Francis serves. Contact Alyson Zwerneman, alysonzwerneman@gmail.com.

Jan 7 - Why Faith? Adult and Family Formation,

God's Favorite Gift to Give: Forgiveness

Come explore why forgiveness is such a powerful gift from God and how four of our seven sacraments offer this gift to us. Join us on Sunday, January 7th at 10:15am in Founders Room. Refreshments will be served. No Registration Required.

Contact Kathy.Sales@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Jan 8 - Prison Pen Pal Ministry meeting, 7:00pm.

For over twenty years, the Prison Pen Pal Ministry has been connecting with men on Death Row who often express hidden talents in art, crafts, poetry, prose and music. We will meet January 8, 2024 at 7:00pm in Anthony Conference Room or to learn more please email Ellen, sfapenpal@gmail.com.

[Prison Pen Pal Community Story.](#)

Tuesdays Jan 9-March 12 "THE CHOSEN" 9:45am

The weekly viewing of The Chosen in the Padua Room will resume on Tuesday January 9th with Season 3. Angel Studios: "The Chosen is the first ever multi-season series about the life of Christ. It's the free show that tens of millions of people won't stop talking about."

Contact Tina Morgan, tandmmorgan@earthlink.net.

Jan 10-Feb 21 - Winter Parent Child Classes

Music and Sign Language are fun ways to connect with your child. Join us for these fun, low pressure, hands on parent/child courses (0-5 years of age). Join us on Wednesdays for Making Music Praying Twice and/or Sign Language at the Community Center. For more Information and to register! For more Information and to register: <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/classes-and-programs/> Contact Jess Kelly, info@signsoflearning.com

Jan 14 - Pax Christi - Learn & Discern, 1:00pm.

A Pax Christi USA chapter is being launched in our parish! Join our "Learn & Discern" event on January 14th, in Founders Room, to hear more about our mission to reject violence, racism, and war through peace and justice efforts. Email Nancy Jones if you plan to attend! Contact: Nancy Jones, prayerfulheart3@gmail.com

Jan 14 - Always God's Children, 3:30pm

A confidential setting for those who identify as LGBTQ+, along with family and friends. This gathering provides a safe place to pray together, share our experiences, and talk over our concerns. Contact Kathy Sales, kathy.sales@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Jan 14 - Fiat Franciscus Official Launch and Discussion! 3:00pm

Join the Young Adult Ministry (on January 14th, 3-5pm in Founders Room) for the official launch of our new ministry name Fiat Franciscus. We'll learn about St. Francis' life and ministry! Refreshments will be provided. All persons in their 20s and 30s (as well as young family members) are welcome! Contact Brian Herhold, Brian.Herhold@gmail.com.

Jan 19 Regular Registration Deadline: 2024 High School

Basketball Season We are now accepting registrations for the 2024 St. Francis Boy's High School Basketball League. The league runs from February-May. The league is opened to High School Boys in grades 9-12. Regular Registration runs until Jan. 19 and then late registration runs until Feb. 8. For More Information including registration: <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/athletics/> Contact Mary.Arleth@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Jan 20 and 21 Get Connected: Understanding Realm,

St. Francis Serves, and Faith Direct - Join us after each Mass in the Stewardship Center. Staff will be on hand to go over the multiple uses of Realm, St. Francis Serves, and Faith Direct. They can help set up your account login and navigate sign-ups and registration. Contact JaVon Hansknecht and Ashley Watson javon.hansknecht@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Diaper Collection Through Jan 20 - Did you know that 1 in every 3 families in the country struggle to afford diapers? The Women's Ministry is collecting Diapers (Size 5) for the Diaper Bank of NC. Please drop off diapers in the bins in the Stewardship Center before January 20. Contact Donna Schwede, donna.schwede@gmail.com, or Anne Martin ajmartin929@gmail.com with questions.

Jan 20 - Women's Ministry - Diaper Bank of NC Wrapping Event

Join us January 20 to learn about the Diaper Bank of NC and wrap collected diapers! Refreshments will be available at 9:30am, speaker and wrapping start at 10:00am in Clare Fellowship Hall. Register via Realm. Contact Donna Schwede or Anne Martin, donna.schwede@gmail.com. [Parishioner Registration](#) / [Non-Parishioner Registration](#)

Jan 23 - Mar 13 Adult Virtual Bible Study - Isaiah Part 2, 10:00am.

Join us for our next VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY- ISAIAH PART 2- as we continue to reflect on the majesty of God and the divine plan for Israel's restoration. Part Two of our study covers Isaiah 40-66, emphasizing the majesty of God and the divine plan for Israel's restoration. [Information link](#). Registration: [Tues PM Virtual](#) / [Wed, AM Virtual](#) Contact Barbara Efrid, Cindy Cardello and Diane Rosendahl, Sunshine27915@gmail.com

Jan 25 - Coffee with Clay, 9:40am, Padua Room. Contact Shannon Hoffman shannon.hoffman@stfrancisraleigh.org 919-847-8205x296

Feb 1 - The NC Opportunity Scholarship has expanded

A loving, Christ-centered education just became more affordable for all families. Families can apply now at any income level to receive awards varying in amounts from \$3,000 to \$7,000 to use towards tuition in our Catholic schools. Registration will be open February 1 through February 28. <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/opportunity/>. Contact Dawn Smith, dawn.smith@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Parishioner Owned Businesses Ad Page

Support our local parishioner-owned businesses

To advertise email: diogenes.ruiz@stfrancisraleigh.org

Link: <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/parishioner-businesses/>

Feb 10 - Franciscan Day of Reflection

Join us on Saturday, February 10, 9:00am-3:00pm. for a Day of Reflection with Archbishop Joseph Marino. He will speak on Pope Francis' Vision for the 21st Century Church: A Charge to the Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi. Registration will open on Tuesday, February 16 in Realm. Contact Stacey Shine, stacey.shine@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Prayer Shawl Ministry Do you know that the Prayer Shawl Ministry is here for you and our Church Community. If you know of someone who is ill, in the hospital, homebound or nursing home, he or she is entitled to receive a shawl or lap robe. These are made with love by the members, a cross sewn on and Blessed. Please call Cindy Cardello at 919-846-8825 or Diane Rotunno at 919-844-7153. Contact Cynthia Cardello, cjcardello@yahoo.com

Feed the Need - Our Feed the Need ministry provides temporary meal assistance to members of our community who are facing life transitions including job loss, new baby, grief, hospitalizations, illness etc. If you (or someone you know) would benefit from meals made with love during a life transition, please [click here](#) to complete the form, or email feedtheneedsfa@gmail.com and a ministry member will be in touch.

Stephen Ministry - The upcoming holidays can be filled with stress and anxiety. Stephen Ministers offer prayerful and emotional support by listening with their ears and hearts to your concerns.

Email stephenministry@stfrancisraleigh.org or

call 919-847-8205 x234 and leave a message.

Contact Kathy Sales, kathy.sales@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Become a part of the TFS School Community: As you explore school options for your child's education next year, we welcome you to become a part of The Franciscan School. 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.

Preschool 2024/2025 Registration

Saint Francis of Assisi Preschool will begin enrollment for the 2024/2025 school year on January 8 for current preschool families, siblings of current students, and staff; January 16 for preschool alumni, The Franciscan School siblings and parish; January 22 for the community. More information can be found on our website.

<https://www.preschoolatstfrancis.com/> Contact Shelley Freeman, shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Nursing room available during Mass. A space has been created in Anthony hall, room 401 (down the hall from the bathrooms) for nursing mothers to have privacy while they feed their babies. The room has been equipped with a rocking chair and changing table for this purpose. Please feel free to use this during Mass!

Employment Opportunities:

Director of Liturgy/Sacraments, Director of Formation-Full Time, Administrative Assistant for Pastoral Ministries (Full time- 40 hours), Fourth Grade Instructional Teaching Assistant-Full Time.

See our website: <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/jobs/>



Centennial TRAVELING MONSTRANCE

January 12

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Click image to view video

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THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE of RALEIGH



dioceseofraleigh.org/centennial

Christmas Mass Highlights with Fr. Jim



Photos courtesy of Mae Villanueva

Volunteer Opportunities

Eucharist Ministers

We need Eucharist Ministers to join our EM to the Homebound Ministry. If you are an EM and would like to volunteer to bring communion to Homebound Parishioners or would like to find out more about this ministry please contact Shannon Hoffman.

shannon.hoffman@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Funeral Mass Coordinators Needed

We are in great need of additional Mass Coordinators for funerals. The commitment is 1-2 times a month for approximately 2 hours to set up and assist during and after funerals. This is a daytime commitment that volunteers can do according to the needs of their schedules or calendars.

All volunteers must be trained Eucharistic Ministers. No mass coordination experience is necessary, and 1-2 training sessions are provided. For more information please contact Dina DaRe at dina.dare@stfrancisraleigh.org or 919-847-8205 ext. 242.

Explore all the volunteer opportunities at St. Francis through St. Francis Serves



[Click here for a walkthrough on how to use our website for volunteer ministry and service, St. Francis Serves.](#)

Click here for [mobile training](#) on St. Francis Serves. Contact Dina DaRe at dina.dare@stfrancisraleigh.org.



There are many ways to give to St. Francis.

Use the QR code for e-giving made simple through Faith Direct.

To learn about all our giving options, [click here](#).