

December 26, 2021

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

January 2, 2022

The Epiphany of the Lord

Merry Christmas



See page 9

MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKEND MASSES*
Saturday: 5:30pm
Sunday: 7:15am, 9:00am (also livestreamed), 11:45am, 5:30pm
WEEKDAY MASS*
9:00am

*Masks are required for ALL over the age of 4,
regardless of your vaccination status,
in all public areas of our campus.



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.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULES

See page 3



The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi

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



How We Can Celebrate Christmas in a Covid-19

World: We have just concluded 20 months living in a pandemic. Our world is turned upside-down and for many of us so are our lives. We have had brief windows of relief such as several weeks last summer when masks became optional and a vaccination became available that offers significant protection but we're looking straight in the eyes at the incoming omicron variant as we still struggle with the delta version. Many ask, "Will this ever end?"

In the midst of this, we now arrive at the birthday of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and welcome the beginning of a new year, traditionally a day to make resolutions and pray for a better year (which we could certainly use).

At Christmas, we celebrate God breaking into human history, changing our histories forever by his passion, death, and resurrection some 33 years later. This "in-breaking" was unprecedented and pivotal as the inauguration of God's great plan to re-gather all God's people, the human race, who had become scattered because of sin and its tragic consequences. In the midst of our increasingly fractured and wounded world, I find it important to remember that God decided to cast God's lot with the human family instead of letting us go our own way. This gives me hope, something I really need in the midst of a pandemic and an increasingly fractured and wounded world. I pray it gives you hope as well.

Then comes January 1, the beginning of a new year. Having celebrated the anniversary of the birth of the One who restores our hope, we begin a new year one week later by worshiping God and praying as a community of faith for a better year. This rhythm makes so much sense to me. Having celebrated divine love made visible, born into a poor family in No-Where's-Ville who will become our Lord and Redeemer, we then take time to pray that this gift will again bear good fruit in our world, this time in 2022.

I am reminded of words Pope St. John Paul II once said about the Eucharist that could apply to these feast days. Paraphrasing the words to fit our feasts, he said, "I wonder what our world would look like if every Catholic in the world believed this. It would certainly make a difference."

I invite you to believe in God's great plan to re-gather all of us, that was inaugurated by the One who is divine-love-made-visible, this Christmas. I also invite you to join us in worship on January 1 to pray that our world will look better than it did in 2021 because of our belief in the One who continues to change us and our world today through his passion, death, and resurrection.

God is with us (the meaning of the word "Emmanuel"). The Lord is in our midst. May this truth keep you strong and lift your weary spirit. This belief keeps me in the game we call life. I hope it does for you as well.

Fr. Michael

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

Riley Elizabeth Archambeault

Daughter of Brian & Mikaela Archambeault

Camille Elizabeth Cain

Daughter of Brendan and Veronica Cain

Dylan Joseph Cassidy

Son of Devin and Susann Cassidy

Luca Andres Nicolsen

Son of Vincent and Erika Nicolsen

Calloway Graye Poe

Son of Carson Poe and Claire Sanderson

Ronin Marlo Saavedra

Son of Ron and Darin Saavedra

Nora Virginia Vermeylen

Daughter of Christophe Vermeylen and
Wynne Buckner

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE AND PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HER:

+Mary Elizabeth Nolan

Mother of Ryan and Chris Nolan

Weekly Envelope Schedule

December 25 Christmas

December 25 Diocesan Priest Retirement

December 26 Weekly

January 1 New Year's Day/

Mary Mother of God

Holiday Closures and Daily Mass Schedule:

Parish offices will be closed December 24 through January 2. If you have an emergency and need to speak to someone, please leave a voicemail message on the main line and your call will be returned as soon as possible. During this time, please note that the 9am daily Mass will occur only on Wednesday, December 29 in the church. Please see the "Season of Christmas" liturgy schedule for more information.

Saturday, December 25th Christmas Day

9 am and 11:45 am Mass in Church

No Saturday evening Mass

THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 26th: 7:15 am, 9 am, 11:45 am, 5:30 pm

Daily Masses for December 27 - 31: Wednesday only at 9 am

Mary, Mother of God

Friday, December 31st Mass at 5:30 pm

Saturday, January 1st Mass at 9 am

Epiphany

No Saturday evening Mass

Sunday, January 2nd: 7:15 am, 9 am, 11:45 am, 5:30 pm

**Masks are required for ALL above age 4
regardless of vaccination status.**

Donating and Volunteering for Disaster Recovery



In light of the destructive tornados that devastated parts of our country last weekend, we are collecting donations for Catholic Charities. Funds collected in this special appeal will be used to support the pastoral and reconstruction needs of the Church and local agencies as they respond to immediate emergency needs and aid in long-term recovery. You can give a check or cash noting "Disaster Relief" in the memo line or on the envelope, or you can make a gift via St. Francis Faith Direct by noting "Disaster Relief" as the beneficiary of your donation.

In addition, If you are interested in being part of a team that would assist with in-person disaster recovery efforts in partnership with other on-the-ground organizations, please contact Trevor Thompson, trevor.thompson@stfrancisraleigh.org.



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office of the Bishop

7200 Stonehenge Drive Raleigh, NC 27613

984-900-3103

Christmas 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This time of year can be very comfortable for us. We hear familiar stories of God's Word and of our own family histories and memories. While Jesus comes to us and lives among us in human nature, what he brings is new and different, even challenging.

I invite you to take time to embrace this challenge that God presents to us. Listen intently to God's Word and hear familiar readings in a new way. Let us be more open and accepting of the friends and family we gather with and listen with love to their stories and their struggles. And let us find quiet time during this busy season to listen more carefully to what the Holy Spirit is asking of each of us in our own lives.

And in this great time of challenges, uncertainties, and doubts may we remember that God works by little and by little, revealing glory in the what the world may overlook and find of little account. Let us especially accept this challenge to recognize God's hidden glory as a great gift and celebrate the joy of life.

Please know that I will keep you in my prayers in the Masses I offer on Christmas. May our Holy Family, Mary and Saint Joseph, and their Son, our Lord Jesus bless and make holy our family at Christmas and throughout the New Year.

In Christ,

† Luis Rafael Zarama, J.C.L.
Bishop of Raleigh

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR DECEMBER 25 TO JANUARY 7



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 25, 9am
+Faith Mallare
Requested by Jessie Mallare

Saturday, December 25, 11:45am
For the Parishioners of St. Francis

Sunday, December 26, 2021
Sunday, 7:15am
+Marge Mollen
Requested by Sharon Foster

Sunday, 9:00am
+ Christopher Golonka
Requested by Ann Skinner

Sunday, 11:45am
+Ryan Lynch
Requested by Stephanie Lynch

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

Wednesday December 29, 9am
+William Brooke
Requested by Patricia Brooke

Friday, December 31, 5:30pm
(ill) Ricky Santamaria
Requested by Mary Cockrill

Saturday January 1, 2022
Saturday, 9am
+Renee Whitmore
Requested by The Miranda Family
Remembrance of 1st Anniversary

Sunday January 2, 2022
Sunday, 7:15am
+Narcisa and +Froilan Ferrer Sr.
Requested by Maricon Ferrer

Sunday, 9:00am
+Joseph Berberian
Requested by Constance Berbeian

Sunday, 11:45am
+Rudolph Sagers
Requested by Yvonne Sagers

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

Monday January 3, 9am
+Lucy Modolo
Requested by Stephanie Modolo Burrell

Tuesday January 4, 9am
+Dana Valeriano Quinanola
Requested by Elsa Bagnulo

Wednesday January 5, 9am
+Rand Klink
Requested by Patricia and Ronald Coulson

Thursday January 6, 9am
+Steven Gibbs
Requested by Richard and Alma Hammer

Friday January 7, 9am
+Fred Dick
Requested by Mary O'Neill

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

(ill) Daniel Maldonado
Requested by Msgr. Clay
Health & Wellness

(ill) Clarence Dordulaw
Requested by Venerichs Dordulaw
Health & Wellness

(ill) Jim Buckley
Requested by Kerry Regan
Health & Wellness

(ill) Ricky Santamaria
Requested by Mary Cockrill
Health & Wellness

+Gilbert Mundela
Requested by Beatrice Bukasa
Remembrance

(ill) Carol Gault
Requested by Tim Tetzel
Health & Wellness

+Mary Elizabeth Nolan
Mother of Ryan and Chris Nolan
Remembrance

+Josephine Morse
Requested by David Crout
Remembrance

+Leland Morse
Requested by David Crout
Remembrance

+Lucien Croteau
Requested by David Crout
Remembrance

+Anna Croteau
Requested by David Crout
Remembrance

+Gail Embser
Requested by Tresa Pickup
Remembrance

+Adonna Evers
Mother of Kent Siefkes
Remembrance



- Buy locally grown and produced food.
- Focus holiday gatherings on relationships rather than the food, and be thoughtful about food waste

For resources: stfrancisraleigh.org/care_for_creation
Connect with us: stfcreation@gmail.com



why FAITH

what we
believe
and why we
believe it.



ADULT FORMATION • ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI • RALEIGH

Why Faith: What we believe and why we believe it

10:00am

Jan 9: How do I pray? (Clare Hall)

Jan 23: Children and Faith: How to evangelize our children? (Clare Hall)

Feb 6: Conscience Development (Clare Hall)

Feb 27: LGBTQ+ & the Catholic Church (Clare Hall)

Mar 27: Redemptive suffering (Clare Hall)

April 3: Women in the Church (Clare Hall)

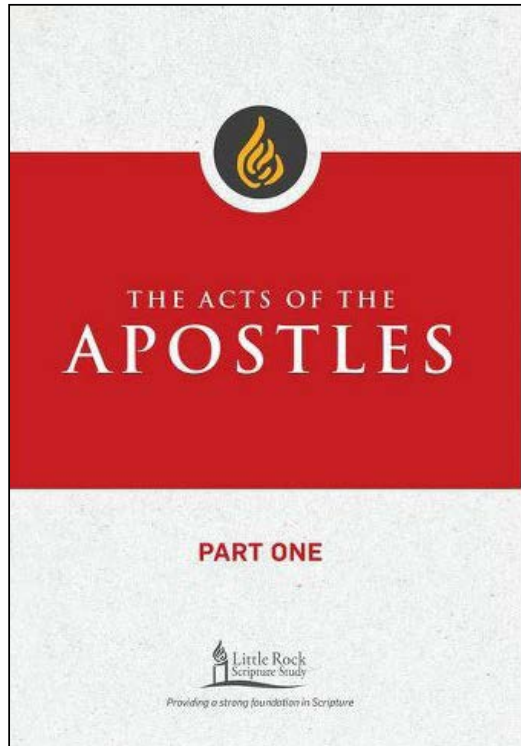
April 24: What is Catholic Social teaching? (Clare Hall)

May 1: Pro-Life & Abortion (Clare Hall)

May 15: Eucharist and Service (Clare Hall)

FAITH FORMATION MINISTRIES

Acts Of The Apostles, Part I & II Registration is Open via Realm



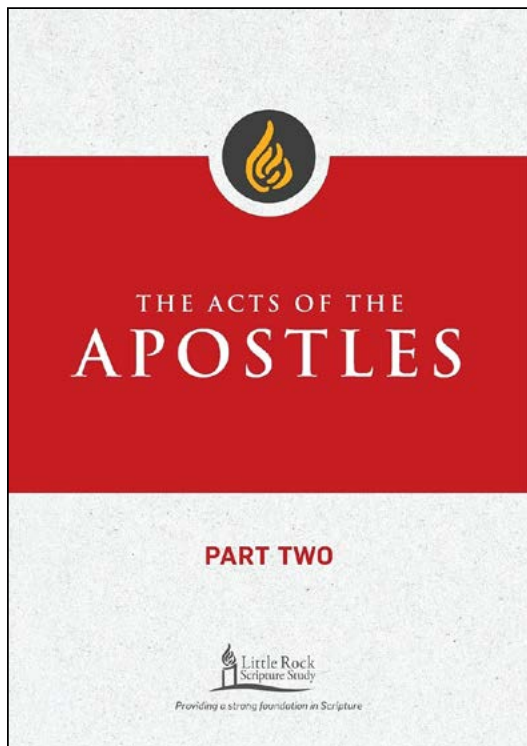
This is an "in-person" Bible Study, which will meet for a total of 10 sessions on Wednesday mornings from January 26 through April 6, 2022, from 10:00-11:30am. (There is no class on March 2 in honor of Ash Wednesday). Registrants will meet in the Padua Room (in the Community Center) beginning at 9:30 AM for light refreshments and coffee and class will begin promptly at 10:00 AM. Masks are required. (If deemed necessary, this study may convert to Zoom format.) Study, reflection questions, prayers, and access to online resources are included.

Cost is \$30.00 per person. Books will be available at the first meeting.

Registration limited to first 20 registrants.

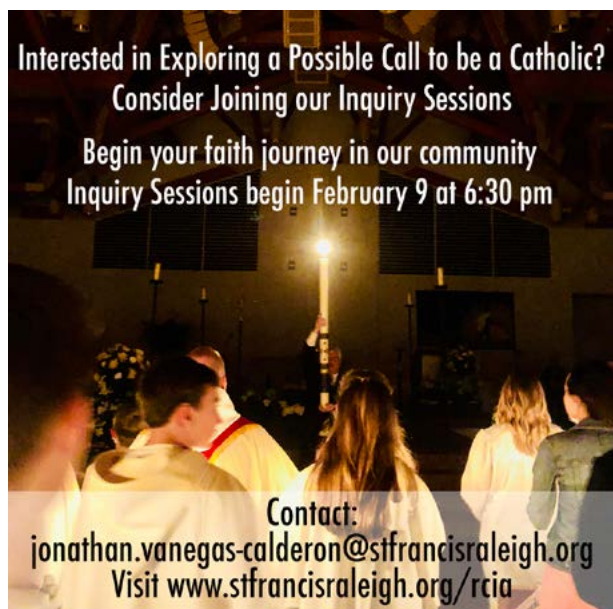
Acts tells the story of how the Gospel was spread and explains the Church's growth from its beginning at the time of Jesus' ascension at Pentecost. Acts describes the Holy Spirit's empowerment of Peter, Paul and other disciples' preaching, and details how they brought the Faith from Jerusalem, Judea, throughout Samaria and, ultimately, to the ends of the earth. Acts records the conversion of Paul and the momentous decision of the Church to welcome Gentiles as well as Jews into the Church. Acts is the second volume of literary work begun in the Gospel According to Luke.

Facilitator: Cindy Cardello



Interested in Exploring a Possible Call to be a Catholic?
Consider Joining our Inquiry Sessions

Begin your faith journey in our community
Inquiry Sessions begin February 9 at 6:30 pm



Contact:

jonathan.vanegas-calderon@stfrancisraleigh.org

Visit www.stfrancisraleigh.org/rcia

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

The HOPE of those who BELIEVE

Mike Watson, TFS Principal



Father Jim's homily at the Community Mass on December 15 focused on how we should take this time to realize how much we are surrounded by people who are here helping us to be successful. These are teachers, friends, parents and others who BELIEVE in our potential. They are here to help us realize and recognize that potential, because they are people filled with faith and HOPE in us.

Jesus was sent here by God to show His love for us, to demonstrate that love through the keeping of God's covenant with His people, and to endure and sacrifice so we could have eternal life with Him. That all started with Jesus humbling Himself to be born and become human because he BELIEVED in us and had HOPE for us! We celebrate that fact at Christmas and we can all feel what that belief does for us.

It is this special time of year where the HOPE of the "Christmas Spirit" pervades all that we do, if we are open to it. I know that I feel a special "spirit"... a sense of anticipation and excitement, a HOPE, and it's not about the secular Christmas of giving and receiving. It's a sense of wanting to do for others, a joy in the gift



we receive by giving of ourselves to others, and a realization of all that we have been given through our Faith and the strength that comes from knowing God and His love for us is real. This is the feeling of HOPE that pervades this season, a feeling that there is potential and a better world just ahead of us if we try to achieve it. We see it in the kindness, the service, and the moments of friendship directed towards others. So why do we BELIEVE and why do we have HOPE for the future?

Because in this season the everyday kindness and gentleness of people, especially at Christmas, is seen through the generosity and care shown to others. That care has no tangible benefit to those offering it, especially since many deeds are done anonymously or through organizations that do not offer a face-to-

face connection, but these connections still happen. If self-interest was an overriding innate concern of people, as it is in the natural world, because self-interest is a natural tendency, none of this would happen. In fact, cruelty, callousness, and envy are the natural tendencies of self-interest we must overcome to love others, even our enemies. So yes, we BELIEVE and have HOPE for a better world, especially given all the kindness and joy seen in our students and their families during Christmas, but, more importantly, throughout the year!

So BELIEVE in God's love for you individually, HOPE that you are able to help others BELIEVE through all your good works performed as the personification of God's HOPE for us as a people, and BELIEVE in the faith we all share exemplified by the sacrifice Jesus made for us beginning with his birth.

More information about our parish school, The Franciscan School, can be found on our website at www.franciscan-school.org/ We are accepting applications for next year and have seen great demand. Join us!

Have a Merry Christmas!

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Heidi Hobler, Preschool Director



And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. Luke 2:16

Like many, my very early school years are a bit blurry in my mind. I do, however, have a few vivid memories. One includes a time from my year in Kindergarten. I attended the Catholic school associated with our local church. To this day, I very clearly remember sitting in a circle with my teacher, Mrs. Gagen, and my classmates while we patted our knees to the Little Drummer Boy song which we were practicing. I recall trying to match my tapping to the beat of “rum pum pum pum”. Along with “Oh Come All Ye Faithful”, this song is still one of my favorites today. Both of these songs remind me about preparing for and finally seeing the Christ Child.

At preschool, many of our students prepared for Jesus’ arrival by crafting mangers and nativities. I loved how the children so earnestly put their heart into each one of these activities. They so lovingly held their sock babies of Jesus while using markers to put on a face. They painted shoeboxes and stuffed them with shredded paper for “hay”.

They wrapped felt blankets around clothespins and toilet paper tubes to make other figurines. Some classes used pieces of brown or blue cloth to dress up like Joseph and Mary in their pretend center. The 2-year old classes wrapped jingle bells onto pipe cleaners to make noisemakers to use while singing happy birthday to Jesus.

While there might have been some glittery stars on top of stables, there wasn’t a lot of pomp and circumstance surrounding these creations/projects. None of their activities required flashing lights, high tech equipment, or a huge amount of set-up. This simplicity reminded me of one of the songs that our 5-year olds were singing this month. It was a song about all of the nativity animals and how their bleating, crowing, neighing, and mooing noises created a lullaby for Christ. It also reminded me of the little drummer boy visiting the stable in Bethlehem with the special gift of his music.

While we will celebrate the expensive gifts of the Magi in a couple of weeks,

Jesus did not require such extravagance. While their gifts were meant to honor Him so too was the music of the drummer boy or the soft hay in the manger. I look at the things which our preschoolers made in much the same way. I like to think that God sees their simple creations and the enthusiasm behind them and surely smiles.

Perhaps during this final part of the Christmas season, we can take a minute to remember that God gave His Son to us in a very humble and simple way. He gave us a tiny helpless baby who was born in harsh conditions. In doing so, He gave us a magnificent gift who would continue to remind us that being His follower does not require wealth or anything fancy. It only requires that we share the love given to us with all whom we encounter.

Registration for the 2022-2023 school year will begin online on January 12th for the parish! Please see the preschool website for details: www.preschoolatst-francis.com.

JUSTICE AND PEACE MINISTRIES

Marching for Life, Dignity, and Justice

Trevor Thompson, Director of Justice and Peace



We are celebrating the great mystery of when God became flesh as a vulnerable child within an empire of great violence. The witness of Jesus' life pointed to the reality that no matter what the political realities are, all of God's children, made in God's image and likeness, are worthy of respect, love, dignity, and justice. Thus, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to continue to bear witness to the dignity of human life at all stages.

Throughout the year, we lift up many varied opportunities for parishioners to bear witness to life, justice, and peace rooted in our Catholic values. We write, call, and meet with policy makers and legislators; we demonstrate, pray, and protest; and we envision and organize together to bring about a world where every life is celebrated, valued, and protected. This work directly confronts a range of issues from racial injustice to protection of the environment, from lack of affordable housing to lack of health insurance, and from the tragedy of abortion to the tragedy of executions of prisoners. Pope

Francis continues to invite us to a vision of faith and church that is not exclusively a private affair but is engaged in the public work of loving neighbor, works of mercy, solidarity with the poor and marginalized, and political work for justice and peace.

In January, as a way to call attention to the 1973 Supreme Court decision that made abortion legal in our country, people have been gathering together to demonstrate, pray, protest, and celebrate life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death, and every moment in between. These gatherings speak to a vision of world where these moments of life are celebrated, valued, and protected by everybody—both in the private sector and in the public sphere. Despite the current COVID-19 pandemic, these gatherings will carry on in modified ways, and we want to invite you to participate in some capacity, whether that is through prayer, celebration of liturgy, or in attending one of the marches.

January 15 - in Raleigh

- Diocesan Mass for Life at 11am, at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral (Rosary begins at 10:30am)
- NC Rally and March for Life, at Bicentennial Plaza, in front of the General Assembly, rally and speakers begin at 1:15pm and March at 2:30pm

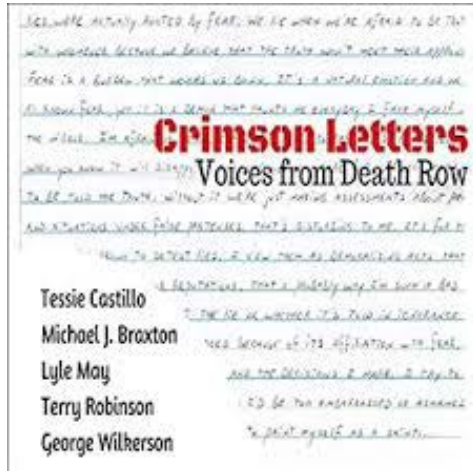
January 21 - in Washington DC

- North Carolina Mass for Life in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC beginning at 11:30am with Bishop Zarama presiding
- National Rally begins at noon and March for Life begins at 1:00pm, at 12th St. on the National Mall, Washington DC. You can also watch the live-streamed event this [YouTube channel](#).

If you are interested in joining others in the Raleigh area in the annual March for Life in DC, the Raleigh Deanery Respect Life Committee is reserving buses so that people can travel together who are comfortable with this option. The cost of the bus trip is \$60 per person. To reserve your spot, email blk4jmj@gmail.com by December 29th. To guarantee your seat, **reservations are required** and payments are due no later than Wednesday, December 29 (**post dated checks will be accepted**). Reservations after 12/29 will be put on a waiting list. If you have any questions, please call Kathy Klein at 919-815-1369 or via the email that is listed.

If you are interested in providing more leadership at St. Francis around our pro-life formation and advocacy, contact Trevor Thompson, trevor.thompson@stfrancisraleigh.org.

JUSTICE AND PEACE MINISTRIES



Sharing Seasons Greetings with those on Death Row

Trevor Thompson, Director of Justice and Peace

In September 2020, we hosted a virtual discussion with North Carolina Death Row inmate Lyle May, one of the authors of *Crimson Letters: Voices from Death Row*. Lyle is one of the Catholic men on Death Row at Central Prison in Raleigh, and St. Francis has been supporting him and his continuing education efforts for the past twelve years. Tessie Castillo, the editor of *Crimson Letters*, has organized virtual events around the country over the last year with Lyle and the co-authors of this book. On January 2nd, we have another opportunity to reconnect with Lyle and the co-authors and share how much we've appreciated hearing their stories.

Long-term confinement and a death sentence can lead to a sense of despair for many on Death Row, especially around the holidays, but the conversations and relationships that we have begun have given so much hope and confidence to these men. Please join us to reconnect and to remind George, Chanton, Alim and Lyle that they are seen and appreciated and loved!

We will meet over Zoom on Sunday, January 2 from 3:30pm to 5:00pm EST.

<https://zoom.us/j/7083779545>

George, Chanton, Alim and Lyle will call in for 15 minutes each to hear from us. For those who attended our last virtual event or have read *Crimson Letters* - let's tell them about the impact they've made this year. What do you remember most about your conversations with them? How have they inspired action and change in your life? For those for whom this might be the first foray into the work of mercy called "visiting the prisoner," you are welcome to join and be a part of this exchange of life and love.

On our call, we will also have an opportunity to hear more about the latest developments with the co-authors. They've been hard at work in 2021! Alim released the first ever music single from Death Row. George completed his first book of poetry, *INTERFACE*, which will be published with Bleakhouse in 2022. Lyle has published over a dozen new articles on criminal legal reform, and Chanton is wrapping up a memoir 10 years in the making. And together, they've written a second edition to *Crimson Letters*, coming soon in 2022 with new essays and stories from the lives of these remarkable men.

PRAYER:

Lord of heaven and earth,

We pray You would have

mercy on all those who

despair amid calamity. In

these days, tornados have

devastated communities

and taken lives. Empower Your

Church to love with

Your love as we serve our

neighbors in their need.

Let us all turn to You in

this time in waiting, repentance,

and faith, as Christ is exalted as

Lord of all. Lord, in Your

mercy, hear our prayer.

Amen

JUSTICE AND PEACE MINISTRIES



Joy to the World and Peace on Earth

St. Francis Parishioners, Ben and Gladys Whitehouse

Christmas is a time when we all rejoice to the refrains of **Joy to the World** and **Peace on Earth** as we again welcome our Lord Jesus into our lives and prepare for his future coming. We reflect on the possibility and potential for a new year in which our shouts of **JOY** and **PEACE** can become a reality. It is a time of **Hope** that the anger, frustration and division of the previous year will give way to friendship, good will and a united purpose.

World Peace Day is one week after Christmas, and it becomes a stark reminder of how we have failed to live up to our Christmas refrains of Joy, Peace and Hope. One response to this chaos and division in our hearts, country and world is **PRAYER**. For the past five years (less the pandemic) a small group of parishioners have been gathering after the 9:00 AM Sunday Mass outside Clare Hall to pray for Peace. We meet at the Peace Pole which declares in 8 languages **May Peace Prevail on Earth**. In about five minutes we share a prayer for peace, offer our intentions and close with Francis' prayer that we become instruments of peace.

We know that God longs for the time when his people will learn to live in unity and peace. Our weekly prayer is our small way of helping to build that kingdom.

You and your family are welcome to join us after the 9:00 AM Sunday Mass at the Clare Hall Peace Pole. We look forward to seeing you there.

*Merry
Christmas!
And 2022
Dreaming!*

From the Office of Justice and Peace, we extend our warmest of Christmas blessings to you and your family and wish you a Happy New Year!

We are also dreaming about 2022 and our work for justice and peace. We are planning in 2022 a series of justice formation opportunities around topics such as depolarization, racial justice, creation care, and justice spirituality. If you are interested in these topics and want to be part of a small group study, contact Trevor Thompson, trevor.thompson@stfrancisraleigh.org. In addition, we are excited about many 2022 charitable service opportunities and mission trips: serving at food pantries, soup kitchens, and outreach centers for those experiencing homelessness including a mission trip to Philadelphia; a civil rights pilgrimage; working in our community garden; accompanying migrants and refugees; building homes with Habitat; befriending prisoners through pen pal relationships and experiencing solidarity with our Sister Parish in Guatemala. If you are interested in ministry beyond the walls of the church, contact Becky Cawley, becky.cawley@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Peace to you and yours,

*Trevor Thompson and Becky
Cawley, Office of Justice and
Peace*

PARISH LIFE MINISTRIES

Bringing Joy to others thru the Advent Giving Tree

Ashley Watson, Coordinator of Community Programs



I remember growing up in this parish and my family choosing items off the Advent Giving Tree, but I never truly grasped the depth of that gesture. Even as adults we do not always understand how great the needs are for those in our greater community especially at this time of the year. I have been blessed the last two years to help support the Advent Giving Tree here at St. Francis of Assisi in a different way than I ever have.

The one thing my heart felt many times over was Joy. The joy on the volunteers' faces when they picked the gifts up to take to those that they minister to. For me the thought of the children who would

get to experience our love on Christmas when they opened these wonderful gifts brought such Joy. I thought back to the conversation I had last Christmas with my son about how this is a wonderful reminder to us that everyone should be able to experience Joy at Christmas time even if they are going through a tough time.

Our Community continues to amaze me repeatedly and I am so thankful to be a part of such a compassionate parish. We collected 800+ gifts, 150 gift cards, and over \$13,000 to support many different organizations that are part of our Annual Giving Tree. In addition the Knights of

Columbus raised \$2,000 for Duke Children's Hospital. In the past they passed out gift cards to the children at Duke Children's Hospital, but due to COVID they instead took that money and shopped off of Duke's Amazon Wishlist and were able to bring joy to many children at Duke. On behalf of the organizations and individuals who benefited from our Advent Giving Tree this year, thank you once again St. Francis of Assisi Community for all your love and support for our greater Community. It's because of all of your generosity that so many people have the opportunity to experience a little bit of Joy this Christmas.



Sharon Winzeler

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

St. Vincent de Paul exists to help neighbors who fall on tough times. Take, for instance, one woman whose car was rear-ended in an accident in May. She was diagnosed with a severe concussion and whiplash. By June her head and ears were still hurting. Doctors diagnosed bacterial meningitis caused by hitting the steering wheel in the accident. Her eyeglasses were forced into her nose and caused a tear and a small leak into her brain. She spent a week in ICU and was on an IV at home for another 10 days. Unable to work she quickly went through savings.

Her husband is a legal immigrant from Mexico awaiting a work permit. Unfortunately, since the system is backed up, so is his permit. The accident victim has been the only one who could work to pay the bills.

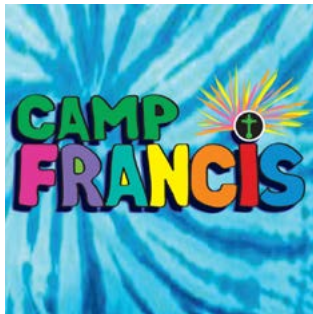
Her children are grown and have families of their own and have tried to support them financially as much as they could. Still, the lack of a paycheck caused the older couple to get behind in rent, and they faced eviction.

So the neighbor turned to SVdP.

Thanks to a reduction in rent by the landlord and help from SVdP and other churches, they were able to make ends meet.

The SVdP Helpline temporarily closed for the holidays on Dec. 23 but will re-open on Jan. 2 and be ready to help more neighbors.

If you have experience writing grants, SVdP needs your help. Grants from nonprofits can provide SVdP with funds to help more neighbors. If you can assist, contact contact Ann Bingham at stfrancisvdp4444@gmail.com.



Camp Francis:

Registration will be available late January. We have lots of really cool opportunities in athletics, technologies, arts, and various enrichment areas! Kids can join us for half day or full day. All camps have min and max number of students so camp availability is based on enrollment. For questions contact: Ashley.Watson@stfrancisraleigh.org.

For more information: <http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/camp-francis/>.



High School Basketball:

The Parish High School basketball league registration will open late January! This parish league is open to both parishioners and non-parishioners of the community. The boys league is for grades 9-12.

For questions contact: Mary.Arleth@stfrancisraleigh.org.

For more information and registration, please see: <http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/high-school-basketball-leagues-2/>.



St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia

Teen Delegation registration is officially OPEN!

June 20-June 24, 2022

For more details and to reserve your spot, click [HERE](#).

Group Opportunities

Due to the changing nature of reopening our doors, please check the group opportunity to confirm whether it is held in a virtual format or in-person.

AA Meeting: For our Alcoholics Anonymous friends whose meetings have been cancelled. The Internet is full of online recovery resources. Online meetings like this one - you can belong to more than one, or two, or three. AA.ORG main website has a list. There are private Facebook groups, endless websites, and speaker tapes. It's all there.

Al-Anon Meetings: Sun. 7:00pm, LaVerna, lower level.

Always God's Children: Always God's Children: Meets on the second Sunday of the month. A support group for LGBTQ+ people and family and friends. To receive an invite to the online meeting, contact Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241.

Adult Open Play Nights: Assisi Community Center Gym. Visit <http://stfrancisraleigh.org/adult-open-play> to contact the ministry leaders for each of our adult open play nights.

Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Support Group: The first Wednesday of the month, 1:00-3:00pm and the third Wednesday of the month, 7:00-9:00pm, in the Padua Room of Assisi Community Center. Linda Tucker, ltucker40@nc.rr.com, 937-478-9537. Centering Prayer: Thursdays, 9:35am or 7:30pm in Laverna.

Community Center Classes: Regular exercise classes and parent/child classes run weekly, September-May. www.stfrancisraleigh.org/programs-and-classes.

Community Garden: Saturday mornings, 10:00am. Call Pat or Paul Kelly at 919-413-8833, email mpmkelly@hotmail.com, or just drop by.

Divorce Care: Divorce Care - Our next session will begin meeting from September 7-December 14, 2021 from 6:00 - 8:00pm. For more information contact Bill Morgan at dejanuts@yahoo.com or visit <https://www.divorcecare.org/about>.

Grief Support Group: Contact Marsha Riely at marshariely@mac.com or Marlys Varga at marlysvarga@hotmail.com.

GriefShare: Contact Kathleen Owen at kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org.

Job Connections: We provide tools and advice on how to stay motivated and on target. To enroll, contact Mary Horner at sfa.jcm@gmail.com.

Men's Prayer Breakfast: We will resume sessions on Monday September 20. The ministry meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month from 7 to 8 am via Zoom. Contact Deacon Steve Andrews at 732-213-0104 or stephenwandrews@outlook.com.

Padre Pio Secular Franciscans: Learn more about living Franciscan spirituality in the secular world. Monthly Gatherings the 4th Sunday of the month, 1:00-3:00pm Founders Room. Contact: Ellen Ferrone - ellen.ferrone@gmail.com.

Peace Pole Prayer: Join us after the 9:00am Mass on Sundays to pray for peace in the world and our country. Meet in front of Clare Hall for a few minutes of prayer.

Prayer Shawl Ministry:

Contact Cindy Cardello, 919-846-8825 or Diane Rotunno, 919-844-7153 for details.

Rosary Ministry: Mondays, 7:30 - 8:30pm, St. Mary of the Angels Chapel, Marian Monti, ianmar94@aol.com.

50+ Adults Group: Monthly potluck luncheons throughout the year and monthly game days, September through May in Clare Fellowship Hall. Pat Gerney, 919-803-8276.

Women's Ministry:

- Friday Morning with Celesta Carlson - ccarlson210@gmail.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

To all our volunteers:

Here are a few ways you could help members of our parish:

Caring Connections

We are looking for a volunteer ministry coordinator for Caring Connections. The duties would be to add/edit/delete tasks in our lotsahelping-hands.com app, create announcements to the ministry, monitor that tasks are being picked up, and if not, notify me. Training is provided. Total weekly time commitments - 1 hour. If you're interested, contact Kathleen Owen at kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org or 919-847-8205x241.

FaceTime and Zoom

If you'd like to learn how to use FaceTime or Zoom or be connected to watch our daily and Sunday programs, or if you'd like to teach someone over the phone, please visit our <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/offer-or-receive-help/>.

Cards and Artwork

If you'd like to send or receive cards to/from fellow parishioners and establish a connection with other folks who are sheltering in place, or if you have kids who would love to send their artwork to brighten someone's day, or if you'd like to receive some artwork, visit <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/offer-or-receive-help/>.

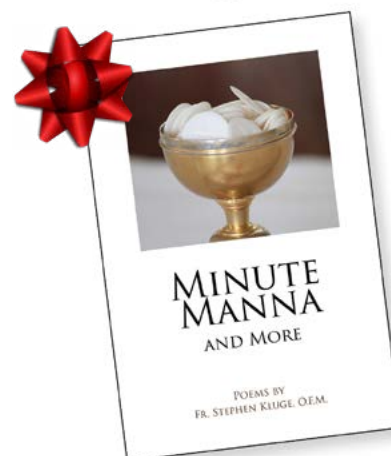
Make a Meal and Deliver Groceries

If you would like to make a meal or help deliver groceries to those in need, please visit: <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/offer-or-receive-help/>.

Thank you!

All of our Parish Life Ministries and the Community Center would like to thank you for serving the St. Francis Community. Please check your weekly bulletin for updates. Stay well.

Fr. Steve Kluge's New Book



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www.grateful-leper.com

Contact Us! Parish Office: 919-847-8205 fax: 919-870-1790

Welcome		
New Parishioner Registration	Toni Hammes	847-8205x265
Becoming Catholic	Jonathan Vanegas-Calderon	847-8205x238
Priests and Deacon		
Pastor	Msgr. Michael Clay	847-8205x224
Parochial Vicar	Fr. Jairo Maldonado-Pacheco	847-8205x226
In Residence	Rev. James Sabak, O.F.M.	919-832-6281
Deacon	Stephen Andrews	732-213-0104
Director of Pastoral Ministries	Kathy Sales	847-8205x488
Administrative Assistant	Stacey Shine	847-8205x249
Sacraments		
Baptism	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
First Reconciliation	Marisa Ferrara	847-8205x223
First Eucharist	Marisa Ferrara	847-8205x223
Confirmation	Thomas Bulick	847-8205x239
Matrimony	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
Holy Orders	Msgr. Michael Clay	847-8205x224
Anointing of the Sick	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Reconciliation Appointments		919-847-8205
RCIA	Jonathan Vanegas-Calderon	847-8205x238
Sacraments Administration	Martina Dumberger	847-8205x264
Funeral Planning	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Columbarium Niches	Trish Adamkowski	847-8205x236

Staff email: firstname.lastname@stfrancisraleigh.org

The Franciscan School		
Principal	Mike Watson	919-534-4840
Receptionist (Main Number)	Katie Hall	919-534-4837
Assistant Principal, K-5	Dawn Smith	847-8205x254
Assistant Principal 6-8	Colette Dziadul	847-8205x651
St. Francis Preschool		
Director	Heidi Hobler	847-8205x240
Assistant to the Director	Shelley Freeman	847-8205x262
Faith Formation		
Director of Faith Formation	Jonathan Vanegas-Calderon	847-8205x238
Administrative Assistant	Janie Hebert	847-8205x237
Coordinator of Elementary		
Formation and First Sacraments	Marisa Ferrara	847-8205x223
Coordinator of Youth Ministry		847-8205x496
Middle School Faith Formation	Thomas Bulick	847-8205x239
Play and Pray (Sunday Nursery)	Andrea Javier	847-8205x489
Parish Operations		
Director of Facilities	Marc Kieilty	847-8205x227
Director of Finance	Rob Neppel	847-8205x243
Human Resources	Trish Adamkowski	847-8205x236
Parishioner Records	Toni Hammes	847-8205x265
Safe Environment Specialist	Trish Adamkowski	847-8205x236
Communications and Webmaster	Diogenes Ruiz	847-8205x271

Get Care!

Care	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Home Eucharist Visits	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Feed the Need (meals)	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Medical Facility Visits	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Transportation to Mass	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Stephen Ministry	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
St. Vincent de Paul	Leave Voicemail	919-534-4842
Good Grief		
GriefShare	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241

Prayers

Prayer Line	Paul Wilson	wilsonpf99@gmail.com
Mass Requests and POTF	Stacey Shine	847-8205x249
Receive a Prayer Shawl	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Support Groups		
Divorce Care	Bill Morgan	dejanuts@yahoo.com
Job Connections	Mary Horner	610-755-5392
Seeing God in your Cancer	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
AA Daily Reprieve Group	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Al-Anon	Madelaine Horrigan	919-923-1234
Alzheimer's Caregivers Support	Linda Tucker	937-478-9537

Get Involved!

Worship Ministries

Director of Liturgy and Music	Jim Wahl	847-8205x230
Coordinator of Liturgical Ministers	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
Altar Servers & Thurifers	Joanie Madormo	rmadormo@sbcglobal.net
Children's Liturgy of the Word	Jackie Kelly	203-512-8807
Church Keeping	Beverly Saunders	919-846-5795
Cross Bearers Joseph Randazzo	josephjrando1@gmail.com	
Deaf Ministry	Jean Cooke-Byrne	919-412-8365
Environment & Art	Theresa Baumgartner	919-848-3383
Eucharistic Ministers	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
Funeral Ministers	Lisa Gianturco	919-845-9718
Hospitality Hands	Deb Royals-Mizerk	debaroyals@gmail.com
Lectors	Mike Wrzesien	919-624-1592
Master of Ceremonies	Michael & Julie Ducatte	919-622-8883
Medical Presence at Mass	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Music Ministry	Joyce Petzka	jepetzka@gmail.com
Parking Ministry	Steve Burdett	919-845-2714
Ushers	Troy Chaput	troychaput@gmail.com
Weekend Receptionists	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Wedding Directors	Carol Ricotta	919-554-8896

Outreach Ministries

Director of Justice and Peace	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
St. Francis Feeds	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267
Brown Bag Ministry	Mailbox	stfrancisbbm@gmail.com
Oak City Cares	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267
Catholic Parish Outreach	Sue Hand	919-846-7954
Panera Food Pick Up	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267
Ronald McDonald House	Mailbox	stfrancismhministry@gmail.com
Our Lady of Rosary Food Pantry	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267
Interfaith Food Shuttle	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267

St Francis Serves		
Community Garden	Pat & Paul Kelly	919-413-8833
Curbside Care	Lori Piraino	lpiraino7@gmail.com
Duke Children's Hospital	Joe and Geanie Slifer	919-870-6993
Family Promise	Ron Smith	919-455-7786
Gabriel Project	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Migrant Ministry	Bruce Cartier	bcartier7@gmail.com
Prison Pen Pal		sfapenpal@gmail.com
R.A.R.E. Tom Zimmerman	thomaspzimmerman@bellsouth.net	
Red Cross Blood Drive	Bryan Kozak	910-728-9200
Refugee Resettlement	Aggie Dalton	aggiedalton@gmail.com
Habitat for Humanity	Trevor Thompson	stfa.fp@gmail.com
St Vincent de Paul Ministers	Ann Binghamstfrancisvdp4444@gmail.com	
Support Circles Kat and Ferrel Guilroy	ferrel.guillory@gmail.com	
St Francis on Mission		
International Mission Trips	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Sister Parish - Guatemala	Liz Mosler	lizmosler4@gmail.com
St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia	John Budway	305-205-5104
St Francis Learns		
Care of Creation		stfccreation@gmail.com
Engaging Spirituality	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267
Just Faith	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Justice Theater Project	http://www.thejusticetheaterproject.org/	
Peace Pole Prayer	Ben Whitehouse	whitehouseben5@gmail.com
Racial Justice	Becky Cawley	becky.cawley@stfrancisraleigh.org

Get Involved!

Parish Life Ministries	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241	St. Francis of Assisi Community Center		
Director of Parish Life			Coordinator of Community Center	Ashley Watson	847-8205x444
Pastoral Presence Ministries			Athletic Programs	Mary Arleth	847-8205x358
Caregivers	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241	Assisi Café	Ashley Watson	847-8205x444
Centering Prayer	Kathleen Owen	919-781-5860	Parish Events (FrancisFest)	Ashley Watson	847-8205x444
Emmaus Ministers	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241	Summer Camps (Camp Francis)	Ashley Watson	847-8205x444
EMs to Abbotswood	Anita Misko	630-699-0519	Community Organizations		
EMs to the Homebound	Melanie Fraites	mjpfraites@gmail.com	Girl Scouts of USA	Melissa O'Connor	847-8205x296
EMs to the Magnolia Glen	Jacob House	919-449-7634	BSA Scouts: Troop 352 (6th-12th, boys)	Robert Sadler scoutmaster352@gmail.com	
EMs to the Meadows	Andrea McVerry	amcverry@yahoo.com	BSA Scouts: Troop 219 (6th-12th, girls)	Scott Cash scoutmaster219tfs@gmail.com	
EMs to Rex Hospital	Edward Gilmartinedward.gilmartin@gmail.com		BSA Cub Scouts: Pack 352 (K-5th)	Rebecca Brooks	
EMs to Springmoor	Janice Horner	484-949-1417	membership352@yahoo.com		
Prayer Line Ministers	Pauk Wilson	wilsonpf99@gmail.com	Knights of Columbus	Steve Becker	gk@kofc9709.org
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Cindy Cardello	919-846-8825	Secular Franciscan Order	Ellen Ferrone	http://ofscentralinc.org
	Dianne Rotunno	919-844-7153	Faith Formation Ministries		
Rosary Ministry	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241	Baptism Ministry	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
			Marriage Ministry	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
Ministries of Support & Care			Confirmation Sponsors	Thomas Bulick	847-8205x239
Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers	Linda Tucker	937-478-9537	Children's Formation Group Leader	Tara Moore	847-8205x489
Caring Casseroles Cooks	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241	Family & Marriage Enrichment Team	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
Feed the Need Cooks	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241	Middle School Formation Group	Thomas Bulick	847-8205x239
Job Connections Mentors	Mary Horner	610-755-5392	Youth Ministry Group Leader	Marisa Ferrara	847-8205x223
Medical Facility Visitors	Sharon Holland	hollandbozo@yahoo.com	RCIA Team & Sponsors	Jonathan Vanegas-Calderon	847-8205x238
Transportation to Mass Drivers	Stephanie Smith	919-302-0080	Play and Pray (Sunday Nursery)	Andrea Javier	847-8205x489
Weekday Volunteer Receptionists	Toni Hammes	847-8205x265	Young Adults Bible Study Group	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
Social Groups					
AAMEN Ministry	Leon Cooke	919-740-7515			
Always God's Children	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241			
LGBTQ+ Ministry	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241			
Men's Ministry	Norm Tuomi	norman3722@att.net			
	Ralph Guenther	rguenther2@nc.rr.com			
Young Adults	fb.me/YoungAdultsofStFrancis				
Women's Ministry	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241			
50+ Adults Group	Pat Gerney	919-803-8276			

MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKEND MASSES*

Saturday: 5:30pm

Sunday: 7:15am, 9:00am (also livestreamed), 11:45am, 5:30pm

WEEKDAY MASS*

9:00am

***Masks are required for ALL over the age of 4, regardless of your vaccination status, in all public areas of our campus.**



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 look down from heaven and see;
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 and protect what your right hand has planted.
 — Psalm 80:15–16



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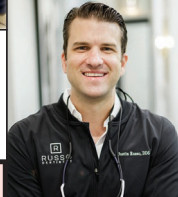
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