

December 27, 2020

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph



## *Mass Intentions and Prayer Requests*

See page 6

### **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 parish will be closed**

between December 24-January 3 except for the liturgies of Christmas (12/24-25), Holy Family (12/26-27), New Year's (12/31-1/1) and Epiphany (1/2-3). Our faculty, staff, and administration at our two schools are enjoying a well-deserved break as well. We will resume our regular rhythms of parish life (i.e., church, pre-school, and TFS) on Monday, January 4.



**The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi**

11401 Leesville Road, Raleigh, NC 27613 919-847-8205 [www.stfrancisraleigh.org](http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org)



#### A TIME OF GRATITUDE:

I'm grateful for all the parish employees (i.e., the church, pre-school, TFS, and contracted workers) who have been nothing less than heroic in helping the parish navigate a new way of being parish this year. Their creativity, flexibility, generosity, and optimism are so impressive and humbling. I'm also grateful for all our volunteers who are such an indispensable part of the parish. They reach into all parts of the parish and beyond as an exercise of their baptismal calling and countless thousands have benefited from their ministry. I'm grateful for those who have financially supported the parish, especially in the midst of a pandemic, so that ministry in all its expressions can continue, particularly to those who have faced and are facing incredible hardships. I'm grateful for all who have been praying us through this year, especially during the transition from Franciscan to diocesan leadership. I shudder to think what things could have looked like without this spiritual accompaniment. Fr. Jairo and I are grateful to be at St. Francis of Assisi and appreciate the ongoing welcome and support we have received from you. We are especially grateful for your patience with us as we learn your ways and introduce some adjustments to help us serve the Lord, you, and those beyond our parish better.

**CHURCH STAFF ON BREAK:** Given the wear-and-tear of 2020 for our employees, I am closing the church side of our parish down to give them a bit of a break between now and January 3 except for the liturgies New Year's (12/31-1/1) and Epiphany (1/2-3). The faculty, staff, and administration at our two schools are enjoying a well-deserved break as well. We will resume parish life (i.e., church, pre-school, and TFS) on Monday, January 4. If you have an emergency that requires a priest, please call the office number and press "2" at the first prompt and then "3" at the second prompt.

**CALLING ALL STEWARDS:** All households registered in the parish should have received communication from me about our annual Stewardship Appeal (if

you didn't please contact the office after the Christmas holidays so we may figure out why you may not have received this request). In this year's appeal, I took this to heart the request to be more inclusive of our children, youth, and young adults and so asked households to address how all its members who have received First Eucharist might participate in sharing their time, talent, and/or treasure with the parish in 2021. I was recently asked by a curious parishioner if those with a relationship to the parish who are not Catholic and/or not receiving Holy Communion are welcome to participate. Absolutely! We are happy to have everyone affiliated with the parish in some way to consider how they may share the blessings God has given to them with the parish and through the parish to the larger community.

#### REVISED POLICY ON PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL AND MASS INTENTIONS:

Beginning Monday, January 4, we will adjust the way we set up requests for remembering family, friends, fellow parishioners, and others in both the Prayers of the Faithful and Masses. For the Prayers of the Faithful, we will mention only the names you submit in the petitions that are read aloud at Mass. To maintain our longstanding practice, we will also place those names and those related to them, who are affiliated with St. Francis, on our parish website. The current tradition will continue, just in a different way. In addition, we will also inaugurate a formal Mass Intention process on the same day. Requesting Masses specifically for someone, living or deceased, is a venerable tradition and an exercise of your baptismal priesthood, something you received at your baptism, that calls you to pray and intercede on behalf of others to the Lord. There are many ways to exercise this expression of your baptismal priesthood, but requesting a Mass to be celebrated for someone is a venerable tradition since the Mass is our highest form of prayer and worship. Please see the parish website beginning January 4 for how you may request Masses to be celebrated for a particular intention. A link will appear very soon for both types of requests.

*Msgr. Clay*

#### THROUGH MARRIAGE MAY THEIR LIVES ALWAYS BEAR WITNESS TO CHRIST'S LOVE:

**Kiara McNeil**, daughter of Patrick and Cheryl McNeil, and  
**Mark Lassiter**, son of Ken and Mary Beth Lassiter

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

+ **George Freeman**  
Husband of Jane Freeman  
+ **Charleen White**  
Mother of Alan White

You can mail your contribution to us at:

**St Francis Of Assisi**  
**11401 Leesville Road**  
**Raleigh, NC 27613**

You give can Online through:



**Faith Direct:**

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



**Text-to-Give: 919-629-1199**

**Additional Online Giving Methods:**  
[www.stfrancisraleigh.org/treasure/](http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/treasure/)

#### December Envelope Schedule

December 27 Weekly  
January 1 New Year's Day/  
Mary Mother of God



# Shepherding in Christmas



Once again, there is a magnificent tree with thousands of lights, that enhances the celebration of Christmas Mass at St. Francis. What most don't realize is that the Christmas tree is a gift to the parish from Shepherd's Way Farms, owned by Tim and Bonnie Moser. This is the fourteenth year that the Mosers have been delivering the Christmas tree, along with wreaths, garland, and flowers.

Tim and Bonnie have been growing Fraser firs for over 40 years in Laurel Springs, NC on their fifth-generation farm. Bonnie's family has farmed the land since before the Civil War. The farm now focuses primarily on Christmas trees and pumpkins.

Tim and Bonnie's generosity to our parish also include gifts of flowers, garland, and wreaths. The lilies at Easter and the mums for the feast of St. Francis are also gifts generously provided by Tim and Bonnie's family to our parish family.

*"My prayer is that each and every tree that goes into someone's home reminds them of God's everlasting love for us. Growing Christmas trees enables me to share the evergreen as a symbol of God's love through His gift of Jesus Christ. That's why I do it, and that's why I love it so much. My favorite Christmas tree every year is the last tree that I cut. I put it in St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, and it is always the biggest and the most beautiful." ~ Tim Moser*





**Closed Until  
January 4, 2021**

**Feed the Need  
and Caring Casseroles  
have moved to the  
Community Center**



Bring all meals to the center door  
9am-4pm, Monday-Friday

**Caring Casseroles & Feed the Need:**

Caring Casseroles & Feed the Need will take a break from December 21st thru January 4th. Both ministries and those who they serve would like to extend a heartfelt "Thank You!" to all our parishioners who have continued to cook delicious and nutritious meals that benefit members of our St. Francis Community who are in difficult situations. Your generosity nourishes not only the body but also the souls of those you serve.

May you and your families have a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. Please watch the bulletin for the latest updates with Caring Casseroles and Feed the Need in January!





# JUSTICE AND PEACE MINISTRIES

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 16

- Diocesan Mass for Life at 11am, at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral (Rosary begins at 10:30am)
- NC Rally and March for Life, 1pm to 4pm, at Bicentennial Plaza, in front of the General Assembly

## January 28 and 29

- January 28, 8:30pm, National Vigil-Mass for Life, streamed on EWTN
- January 29, beginning at noon, National Rally and March for Life, at 12th St. on the National Mall, Washington DC

For all of these in-person events, appropriate precautions for the safety of all participants are encouraged.

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 John Allen, [john.allen661@gmail.com](mailto:john.allen661@gmail.com), by December 27. If you have any questions, please call John Allen at 919-306-1011 or via the email above.

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](mailto:trevor.thompson@stfrancisraleigh.org)

# PARISH LIFE MINISTRIES

Kathleen Owen, Director of Parish Life

## Mass Intentions and Prayer Requests

As you have seen in Msgr. Clay's column, we are adjusting our processes related to requesting Mass intentions and placing names in the weekend Prayers of the Faithful. Beginning January 4, we will begin accepting a Mass intention for each Mass. Some of the changes will be as follows:

### Mass Intentions:

- One person will be able to request Mass intentions for each parish Mass with the exception of the 5:30pm Mass on Sunday, which This Mass will always be pro populo or 'for the people of St. Francis parish' as required by Canon Law.
- A maximum of six (6) intentions per year from any one individual may be scheduled at the parish with no more than two (2) scheduled for a weekend Mass. All other requests will be scheduled for the parish daily Masses.
- A maximum of six (6) Masses per year may be scheduled at the parish for any one intention in consideration to others who wish to request a Mass intention. Additional Masses may be requested; however, these will be reviewed by the pastor for a final decision.
- A Mass intention may be requested for: a deceased loved one,
- a living person who is sick or suffering, a living person who is celebrating a birthday, anniversary or other special moment in their life, in thanksgiving to God (including the Lord Jesus or the Holy Spirit), in thanksgiving for a favor received through the intercession of a Blessed or a Saint, or for a personal prayer intention (so long as the intention does not contradict Church teaching).
- Requests will be honored on a first come, first served basis in the order in which the request is received at the Parish Office.
- A minimum \$10 stipend, as determined by diocesan policy, is to accompany each Mass request. Intentions will not be recorded until the stipend is received. Canon Law requires that all Mass Intentions be celebrated for the intention as designated when accompanied by a stipend.
- Mass requests will be granted as close to the requested date and time as possible. If it is not possible to comply with the primary request, the next closest date and time will be scheduled.

### Prayers of the Faithful:

- Beginning January 4, 2021, family connections (e.g., mother of Mary Jones, etc.) to our recently deceased parishioners will no longer be read as part of the Prayer of the Faithful petition, only the name(s) of the deceased. However, the names of the immediate family members who are parishioners will be listed with the name of the deceased on our website.
- We will no longer offer cards for Prayer of the Faithful requests. Cards will now only be available when requesting a Mass Intention.
- Prayer requests will be accepted up to 1:00pm on Thursday for the upcoming weekend Masses. We cannot guarantee names will be recorded/logged for requests received after 1:00pm on Thursday for the upcoming weekend liturgies. These requests will be listed the following weekend.

To request either a Mass intention or a Prayer of The Faithful, visit these two webpages:

<https://form.jotform.com/203295445422150>

<https://form.jotform.com/203356470379157>

### Seasons of Hope 2

A six-week series that offers hope through the grief of losing a loved one. We will gather virtually beginning Tuesday, January 12th at 10am. Each meeting will last between 60 to 90 minutes. Registration fee is \$10 per person which includes a participant's journal. The group offers a safe place to share your own journey with grief and to learn from others. We learn to let others into our struggle and to enter gently into theirs, to take strength and to give it. For information, and to register, please visit:

<https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/seasons-of-hope-2/>

After registering, you will receive a link for the weekly virtual meetings.

### Divorce Care

Join us in February for our next session via Zoom on Tuesday, February 2nd to May 11th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Fee is \$20.00 per book. Registration link coming soon. We do ask that everyone (new and past participants) register for this event. Each week is different, so you can join anytime. All are welcome! For more information, please contact Bill Morgan at [dejanuts@yahoo.com](mailto:dejanuts@yahoo.com) or Sue Ward at [ward.sueward@gmail.com](mailto:ward.sueward@gmail.com)

# EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Mike Watson, Principal TFS

## Celebrate Family



On this Feast of the Holy Family, we at The Franciscan School recognize not only all the families that make up our community, but also the family that we have together at the school. While we honor Mary, Joseph and Jesus as family, and recognize all Mary and Joseph did as parents to care for God's son, we also understand the trials and tribulations, successes, and failures that all families experience. From an inauspicious start being born in a manger, Jesus, with the continuous support of Joseph and Mary, thrived and fulfilled God's plan for all of us here on Earth. The wonder of all of this was that Jesus began this great work through the loving family presence provided by Mary and Joseph throughout his life.

Much as Jesus needed Mary and Joseph for guidance and support growing up, we need each other to form a community of faith and learning at The Franciscan School. We are family because we celebrate together our successes, lift up

each other in the trials we all face, and support each other through all aspects of a changing world. Once you are a member of a family, you always remain an important part of that family; and the same is true at The Franciscan School, especially this year.

The pictures here show us at a time before the pandemic altered our daily existence at school. We went from the normal world we were used to living in, to a virtual world of increased isolation and separation last spring. We came back this year with a plan for the successful return to academics in a safe environment, and our students have achieved great things. We know we will be able to continue that success as we navigate through this year together, and, hopefully, return to a world we are more used to, one that is more "normal", and achieve even greater success together. That is what families do; they bond together, face the challenges, and celebrate the

triumphs of one another. It is what Mary and Joseph did for Jesus, it is what each of our families do in their homes, and it is what we do together as The Franciscan School family. We take inspiration and guidance from the Holy Family and celebrate them today!

The Franciscan School wants to collaborate with you to achieve the academic and spiritual support you want for your child and their educational experience. Join us for one of our upcoming virtual information sessions to learn more on how we can support your family's goals for your child through the love and support provided by our TFS family. More information can be found on our website at [www.franciscanschool.org](http://www.franciscanschool.org) or contact Principal Mike Watson at [michael.watson@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:michael.watson@stfrancisraleigh.org).



## Crissie and Her Son

*"So they went with haste and they found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in the manger." Luke 2:16*

The Feast of the Holy Family is an important one in our faith. To me, it means many things one of which is to emphasize the significance of God sending His Son to the world. We also know that the Holy Family provides a model for how we should trust and follow the Lord, even when we are unsure of what the future will bring. The Holy Family also inspires us to share God's message of love onto our children. We not only bring this lesson to our children at preschool, but look to partner with our families to support this at home as well. One of the things that makes our preschool so special is this partnership and support that come from our families.

Our preschool families contribute to the richness of what we offer not only by sharing their precious children with us, but also in all that they do and say in support of our program. They demonstrate their commitment and love of our school in so many ways- with notes, time, donations, and gifts to the preschool and our teachers. Despite the limitations from COVID, our families have continued to make sure that our teachers feel cared for and appreciated. We have been blessed in both big and small ways and everywhere in between! From sweet cards, to special birthday videos, to boxed lunches, to a very sizable financial donation for our playground....we feel the love of our families, both past and present, who contribute to the creation of our preschool feeling like one giant family which reflects God's love in so many ways.



I continue to give thanks for my preschool family made of the children, their parents, and our staff. Let us all remember to share our gratitude for all of our families, no matter if big or small, rich or poor, long-distanced or close by and to remember God's gift of His presence and grace within them.

Wishing you and your family many blessings and much joy in the new year!

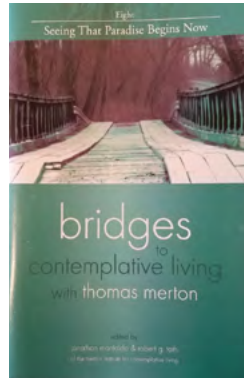
Registration for the '21-'22 school year will open early in January. To learn how to join our amazing preschool, please visit our website at: [preschoolatstfrancis.com](http://preschoolatstfrancis.com) or contact Shelley Freeman at: [shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org)



# This Week and Next



St. Francis will be providing meals to homeless families who are in the program of Family Promise. Normally these families would be sleeping on our campus and having meals the week between Christmas and New Year's. Currently, however, because of COVID-19, they are being temporarily housed in an apartment. Thus, our ministry will be providing supplies and preparing and delivering meals from December 27 to January 3. If you are willing to help with this, you can contact our ministry leader directly at [stfa.fp@gmail.com](mailto:stfa.fp@gmail.com) to secure the link for the on-line sign-up.



## Contemplative Spirituality

On Jan 6th and for 8 consecutive Fridays from 1 to 2:30 pm, we will be beginning the New Year by dialoging on Thomas Merton's insights with Book # 8, on "Seeing that Paradise Begins Now". If you have questions or are interested in joining, contact Tracy Hurley at [da-nandtracy@hotmail.com](mailto:da-nandtracy@hotmail.com) / (828-773-3152) or Deacon Steve at [stephenwandrews@outlook.com](mailto:stephenwandrews@outlook.com) / (732-213-0104).



The Pastor's Parishioner Outreach Project is reaching out to parishioners to make sure we have your current contact information. We're looking for volunteers to help reach out to parishioners. If you would like to make phone calls or send cards to help update parishioner contact info, please contact [kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org)



## Accepting Applications



**TFS**  
THE FRANCISCAN SCHOOL  
— FAITH — KNOWLEDGE — SERVICE —

Virtual Information Session  
January 13th  
9am  
[www.franciscanschool.org](http://www.franciscanschool.org)

## Weekend Masses

Up to 200 people are welcome to attend the Sat. 5:30pm, Sun. 9:30am, and Sun. 5:30pm Masses. To sign up, visit our website at 12 noon the Wednesday prior.

## 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: The monthly support group meeting for LGBTQ+ people and family and friends. To receive an invite to the online meeting, email Chuck Small at [chuck.smallsfa@gmail.com](mailto:chuck.smallsfa@gmail.com).

**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](mailto:ltucker40@nc.rr.com), 937-478-9537.  
**Centering Prayer:** Thursdays, 9:35am or 7:30pm in St. Mary of the Angels Chapel.

**Community Center Classes:** Regular exercise classes and parent/child classes run weekly, September-May. [www.stfrancisraleigh.org/programs-and-classes](http://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](mailto:mpmkelly@hotmail.com), or just drop by.

**Divorce Care:** Divorce Care – Our next session will begin meeting virtually via zoom from February 2 to May 11 from 6:00 – 8:00pm. For more information contact Bill Morgan at [dejanuts@yahoo.com](mailto:dejanuts@yahoo.com) or visit <https://www.divorcecare.org/about>.

### Grief Support Group

Contact Marsha Riely at [marshariely@mac.com](mailto:marshariely@mac.com) or Marlys Varga at [marlysvarga@hotmail.com](mailto:marlysvarga@hotmail.com).

### GriefShare

Contact Kathleen Owen at [kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto: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](mailto:sfa.jcm@gmail.com).

**Men's Ministry:** Breakfast, Padua Room of the Assisi Community Center. Visit <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/mensministry/> for details.

**Padre Pio Secular Franciscans:** Learn more about living Franciscan spirituality in the secular world. Monthly Gatherings the 4th Sunday of the month, 1-3 Founders Room.

Contact: Ellen Ferrone - [ellen.ferrone@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.ferrone@gmail.com).

**Peace Pole Prayer:** Join us after the 9:30am 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](mailto:ianmar94@aol.com).

**50+ Adults Group:** Monthly potluck luncheons throughout the year and monthly game days, September through May in Clare Fellowship Hall. Contact Angela Azzopardi, 919-848-1347.

### Women's Ministry:

- Tue Evenings with Anna Fowler – [annafowler@nc.rr.com](mailto:annafowler@nc.rr.com)  
- Friday Morning with Celesta Carlson – [ccarlson210@gmail.com](mailto:ccarlson210@gmail.com)

## Volunteer Opportunities

### To all our volunteers:

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

### 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. At this time all other volunteer opportunities are suspended until it is safe for us to come together again. Please check your weekly bulletin for updates. Stay well.

## Employment Opportunities at TFS

Part time Music Teacher

Full time Teacher Assistant

Full time Maintenance Tech

[www.stfrancisraleigh.org/jobs](http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/jobs)

**TFS**

THE FRANCISCAN SCHOOL

— FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE —

[www.franciscanschool.org](http://www.franciscanschool.org)

## SCAM ALERT

Scammers are at it again sending malicious emails to parishioners. You will NEVER get a solicitation email from our pastor or bishop asking for "a favor", or for emergency help in the form of money. Please do not open or click on them. Simply trash them. They could cause havoc on your computer and your pocket book.





# Bringing Home the Word

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (B)  
December 27, 2020

## Family Peace

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

In his painting, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* by Federico Flori, the artist captures details of the Holy Family's escape. Although they are refugees in a dramatic, stressful situation, he chooses to show the delightful communion among them. Mary sits comfortably in the center of the family, busily collecting water. Perhaps she will wash the cherries or the toddler's dirty hands. Her face, full of serenity and joy, is lost in thoughts that go beyond the work of the present. She is the model of so many mothers who, in spite of challenging

circumstances, focus their energy on loving their children and creating an oasis of peace.

Saint Joseph stands behind the Madonna and reaches up into the tree to pull off a branch for the child Jesus. His strong arm and hand extend straight down toward the child as they both grasp the wood from opposite ends—one giving and the other receiving. This simple domestic gesture of providing for the son is strongly symbolic of what so many husbands and fathers do on a daily basis. Alongside their wives, they care for their families with hard work.

Jesus is next to Mary and reaches out to Joseph. He receives love from both parents while returning that love with joy and gratitude.

The Holy Family reflects the divine family. One day the heavenly Father will also extend a piece of fruit—this time the bitter passion and the wood of the cross. Although it costs his human nature, Jesus accepts it, thanks in part to the strength he finds in Mary. +

*In spite of challenges,  
mothers focus their energy  
on their children and  
creating an oasis of peace.*

## A Word from Pope Francis

Instead of returning home with his family, he stayed in Jerusalem, in the Temple, causing great distress to Mary and Joseph who were unable to find him.... Returning home, Jesus surely remained close to them, as a sign of his complete affection and obedience. Moments like these become part of the pilgrimage of each family.

—Feast of the Holy Family,  
December 27, 2015



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Does my family know how to gracefully encounter trying times?
- What attitudes allowed the Holy Family to have peace amidst the crosses?

## Sunday Readings

**Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 or  
Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3**

Those who honor their father will have joy in their own children, / and when they pray they are heard.

**Colossians 3:12-21 or  
Colossians 3:12-17 or  
Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19**

And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.

**Luke 2:22-40 or  
Luke 2:22, 39-40**

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH Office of Communications  
7200 Stonehenge Drive Raleigh, North Carolina 27613 919-821-9730 [www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org)

**Project Rachel Support Group** - Abortion is experienced by millions of women, many of whom are Catholic. The Project Rachel ministry assists women and who have been wounded by abortion to find healing and peace. There is a support group beginning in the Triangle area in January 2021. If you have experienced an abortion and would like (confidential) information about the support group, contact Project Rachel at (919) 852-1021, or email: [project.rachel@raldioc.org](mailto:project.rachel@raldioc.org) or the website: <http://projectrachelinc.org/>. Calls and appointments are kept strictly confidential.

# We Can Save Each Other

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

There is something peculiar about the birth of Jesus, our Savior. God becomes small, a tiny infant-God. Think about it for a moment. Who really needs to be saved?

The kind innkeeper saves Jesus from being born in the street by providing a stall, straw, and a crib. The angels save him from the silence of night and lull him to sleep singing songs of "joy to the world." The animals breathe warmth over the newborn Jesus, saving him from the cold. The star shines brightly overhead, saving Jesus from the darkness. Mary saves him from hunger. The kings come from afar to share their gifts, saving Jesus from the pain of need and poverty. An angel comes to Joseph in a dream, saving the Baby Jesus from jealous Herod's wrath.

## *Jesus uses small things to make a big point.*

Of all of the figures in the story, the only one who is helpless, vulnerable, frail, and in need of saving is Jesus. What's peculiar about the birth of our Lord is that we are given a Savior who needs to be saved! Everyone comes to his rescue, giving him what he needs.

Jesus always uses small things to make a big point—salt, a coin, a mustard seed, yeast, a lamp, wineskins, and a splinter—all small and seemingly insignificant



until Jesus wraps them up in a parable and delivers them as the centerpiece of a big message. God becomes small to make a big point. God gives us a Savior who needs to be saved to teach us what salvation means.

I remember standing in line at a corner store in East Harlem waiting to buy milk. A rough-looking teenager came up to me and said, "Pastor, my mother says, 'Never buy milk here. It's always spoiled.'" I looked and, sure enough, the milk was past the expiration date. The young man saved me from spoiled milk and a return trip. Salvation can mean so many things. The parish food pantry...you saved me! A ride to

the doctor...you saved me! A few dollars when I was short...you're my salvation! We've all been there. I'll bet you've said it to someone who has been there for you in your time of need: "You're my only hope. You're my salvation. You saved me!"

And it's Jesus, tiny and frail in the manger, showing us how we can be salvation for each other. Our Savior is born needing to be saved, and in doing so, teaches us that we can be "salvation" for each other. +



*Lord, Mary and Joseph helped you to grow in love and wisdom. Surround me with loving and caring people to help me to be a wise, loving, and caring person.*

—From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*,  
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

December 28–  
January 2

**Monday, Holy Innocents:**  
1 Jn 1:5–2:2 / Mt 2:13–18

**Tuesday, Christmas Weekday:**  
1 Jn 2:3–11 / Lk 2:22–35

**Wednesday, Christmas Weekday:**  
1 Jn 2:12–17 / Lk 2:36–40

**Thursday, Christmas Weekday:**  
1 Jn 2:18–21 / Jn 1:1–18

**Friday, Solemnity of Mary:**  
Nm 6:22–27 / Gal 4:4–7 / Lk 2:16–21

**Saturday, Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen:** 1 Jn 2:22–28 / Jn 1:19–28

Bringing Home  
the Word   
December 27, 2020

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

### Welcome

New Parishioner Registration	Toni Hammes	847-8205x265
Becoming Catholic	Jenn Fiduccia	847-8205x238
Get Involved!	Deb Royals-Mizerk	847-8205x222

### Priests and Deacon

Pastor	Msgr. Michael Clay	847-8205x224
Parochial Vicar	Fr. Jairo Maldonado	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
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### Sacraments

Baptism	Tim Hetzel	847-8205x244
First Reconciliation	Sarah Bowser	847-8205x496
First Eucharist	Sarah Bowser	847-8205x496
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		847-8205x249
RCIA	Jenn Fiduccia	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](mailto: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	Jenn Fiduccia	847-8205x238
Children's Faith Formation	Sarah Bowser	847-8205x496
Coordinator of Youth Ministry	Marisa Ferrara	847-8205x223
Middle School Faith Formation	Thomas Bulick	847-8205x239
Play and Pray (Sunday Nursery)	Tara Moore	847-8205x489

### Parish Operations

Communications and Webmaster	Diogenes Ruiz	847-8205x271
Director of Facilities	Marc Kieley	847-8205x227
Director of Finance	Rob Neppel	847-8205x243
Director of Stewardship	Deb Royals-Mizerk	847-8205x222
Human Resources	Trish Adamkowski	847-8205x236
Parishioner Records	Toni Hammes	847-8205x265
Safe Environment Specialist	Trina Sugrue	847-8205x245

## Get Care!

### Care

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
Prayers	Jackie Adamo	847-8205x268
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
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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	847-8205x222
Lectors	Mike Wrzesien	919-624-1592
Master of Ceremonies	Michael & Julie Ducatte	919-622-8883
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Parking Ministry	Steve Burdett	919-845-2714
Ushers	Troy Chaput	troy.chaput@gmail.com
Weekend Receptionists	Kathleen Owen	847-8205x241
Weekend Welcome Hosts	Deb Royals-Mizerk	847-8205x222
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
Jobs for Life Dinners	Ellen Ferrone	ellen.ferrone@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 / WHIN Hosts	Ron Smith	919-455-7786
Gabriel Project	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Migrant Ministry	Bruce Cartier	bcartier7@gmail.com

### Prison Pen Pal

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
St Francis Builds / Habitat	Diane & Bob Steinbeiser	919-846-8026
St Vincent de Paul Ministers	Cathy Smith	419-348-8843
Support Circles Kat and Ferrel Guilroy	ferrel.guilroy@gmail.com	
Whitaker House	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270

### St Francis on Mission

International Mission Trips	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Sister Parish - Guatemala	Carie Gunnells	carie.gunnells@gmail.com
St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia	John Budway	305-205-5104

### St Francis Learns

Catholic Social Teaching	<a href="http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/">http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/</a>	
Care for Creation	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Community Conversations	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Engaging Spirituality	Becky Cawley	847-8205x267
Just Faith	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270
Justice Theater Project	<a href="http://www.thejusticetheaterproject.org/">http://www.thejusticetheaterproject.org/</a>	
Peace Pole Prayer	Ben Whitehouse	whitehouseben5@gmail.com
Study Circles	Trevor Thompson	847-8205x270

## Get Involved!

### Parish Life Ministries

Director of Parish Life

### Pastoral Presence Ministries

Caregivers

Centering Prayer

Emmaus Ministers

EMs to Abbotswood

EMs to the Homebound

EMs to the Magnolia Glen

EMs to the Meadows

EMs to Rex Hospital

EMs to Springmoor

Prayer Line Ministers

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Rosary Ministry

### Ministries of Support & Care

Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers

Caring Casseroles Cooks

Feed the Need Cooks

Job Connections Mentors

Medical Facility Visitors

Transportation to Mass Drivers

Weekday Volunteer Receptionists

### Social Groups

AAMEN Ministry

Always God's Children

LGBTQ+ Ministry

Men's Ministry

Young Adults

Women's Ministry

50+ Adults Group

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Kathleen Owen

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Athletic Programs

Mary Arleth

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Assisi Café

Ashley Watson

847-8205x444

Parish Events (FrancisFest)

Ashley Watson

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Summer Camps (Camp Francis)

Ashley Watson

847-8205x444

### Community Organizations

Girl Scouts of USA

Melissa O'Connor

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BSA Scouts:Troop 352 (6th-12th, boys) Mark Priest scoutmaster352@gmail.com

BSA Scouts:Troop 219 (6th-12th, girls) Scott Cash scoutmaster219tfs@gmail.com

BSA Cub Scouts: Pack 352 (K-5th) Rebecca Brooks

membershipack352@yahoo.com

Knights of Columbus

Bryan Kozak

gk@kofc9709.org

Secular Franciscan Order

Ellen Ferrone

http://ofscentralinc.org

### Faith Formation Ministries

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Jenn Fiduccia

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Baptism Ministry

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

Marriage Ministry

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

Confirmation Sponsors

Thomas Bulick

847-8205x239

Children's Formation Group Leader

Sarah Bowser

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Family & Marriage Enrichment Team

Tim Hetzel

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Middle School Formation Group

Thomas Bulick

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Faith Formation Regist. & Events

Patti Panizza

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Youth Ministry Group Leader

Marisa Ferrara

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RCIA Team & Sponsors

Jenn Fiduccia

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Play and Pray (Sunday Nursery)

Tara Moore

847-8205x489

Young Adults Bible Study Group

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

### Stewardship Ministries

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Deb Royals-Mizerk

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Stewardship Committee

Deb Royals-Mizerk

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Way of Francis Ben Whitehouse whitehouseben5@gmail.com