

March 22, 2020

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT



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.



See page 3 and 4

All Masses, meetings, gatherings, and events are cancelled until further notice.

This includes daily and weekend Masses as well as confessions

We invite you to watch our live online streaming of Sunday, 9:30 am Mass



The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi

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



Greetings from a very quiet St. Francis campus, in these days in which everything seems different and changed, and each day seems to bring some new announcement, some new prediction, some new rumor. These are unsettling times in which normalcy has given way to uncertainty, and we don't know for how long. The streets are quieter, traffic is less, we don't see as many airplanes from nearby RDU flying overhead. We keep our distance, which seems a cruel twist especially in a time in which we want to gather. In the morning I sit in the empty church to pray, and I imagine what it looks like on a typical Sunday morning, full, lively, preparing to hear the word, preparing to receive communion as the Body of Christ gathered. It's all different now.

As you know, all masses and all events and activities have been cancelled here until we hear further notice from diocesan and government authorities. As you see on our parish website, we are moving, in these strange and different times, to becoming a virtual church until the day comes when we can once again gather in our church sanctuary. We will continue to live-stream our 9:30 mass on Sunday morning. The friars will continue to film a short daily reflection. There is a 12 noon "lunch break" with Jim Wahl, and evening prayer at 7pm. Continue to check our website for anything new.

We friars subscribe to a monthly prayer book called "Give Us This Day" which provides the daily mass readings, reflections, and also morning and evening prayer. We have heard that Give Us This Day is offering free access to a digital version of their content: go to www.giveusthisday.org and click on the "digital" button on the upper right side and it should come up. You can see the daily readings and also pray along with the morning and evening prayers. The psalm from morning prayer this morning, psalm 86, reads in part "In the day of distress I will call to you, and surely you will answer me." A line from a psalm, a voice that calls out from a place of distress, confident faith in God. This is where we are right now.

Thank you to our staff which has rallied in unsettled times to help keep our church community as normal as possible in these far from normal times. Perhaps, these "far from normal times" are inviting us into a deeper sense of God's presence in an otherwise frantic and distracted world. As we continue adjusting to this new sort of normal, I will continue to write in this space on different topics. In the words of St. Francis, may the Lord give you peace!

Fr Steve

Coffee and Donuts resume on April 26 after 9:30am and 11:30am and will be hosted by the Knights.

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.

April Envelope Schedule

April 5 Weekly
 April 5 Mortgage Sunday
 April 5 Palm Sunday/Catholic Parish Outreach
 April 10 Good Friday/Holy Land Ministries
 April 12 Easter
 April 12 Priest Welfare & Retirement
 April 19 Weekly
 April 26 Weekly

Weekly Financial Update

Did You Know?

In order to maintain our current levels of operation, it costs \$12,600,000 per year across all areas of the Parish (Church, TFS, Pre-School, Columbarium)

- OR, an average of \$1,050,000 per month
- OR, an average of \$242,308 per week

Parish income and expenses must balance every year. We plan our budgets based upon conservative assumptions of Offertory generosity, expected school enrollments (tuition), and other income sources (program fees, fundraising, etc.)

- Tuitions 38%
- Offertory 28%
- Program Fees 12%
- Capital Income 7%
- Other Sources 15%



Ways to Give

We commit to being fully engaged in the St. Francis Family.

We will:

☐ Pray for our community in this way.

☐ Sign up for recurring giving through FaithDirect by 4/15/20.
www.stfrancisraleigh.org/faithdirect

☐ Increase offertory giving by 2% by 4/15/20. www.stfrancisraleigh.org/treasure

☐ Join a new ministry, tell us which one.

www.stfrancisraleigh.org/talent

☐ Volunteer my time by:

www.stfrancisraleigh.org/time

☐ Perhaps you have a unique idea. Share this with us.

☐ Although we have not actively participated in offertory in the past, we commit to contributing \$_____ per month.

(If you have never participated in offertory, please remember that even \$5/week goes a long way to helping our parish. Currently 40% of our parish families do not contribute to offertory. Help us reach our parish goal of 100% participation.)

Questions, Contact Deb Royals-Mizerk
919-847-8205x222



Answer the Call!

Each of us is called by God. At Baptism we became a part of the Body of Christ and following Christ is the work of a lifetime!

Contact Deb Royals-Mizerk to learn how.
919-847-8205x222



THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



Come and See

Everyone is invited to be a part of this passionate steward community - a community that recognizes that all we are, have and will ever be, is God's.



Getting Our House in Order

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Envelope Number (if applicable) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email 1 _____

Email 2 _____

Cell Phone _____

Home Phone _____

*We are updating our records.
Please fill out and return this form
with any corrections to confirm
that you are an active member
of the St. Francis community.*

Please return by March 31, 2020

*Place form in an envelope and mail it to:
The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi
11401 Leesville Road, Raleigh NC 27613*

*or
Bring to any Mass the weekend of March 7/8
and place it in the second collection for our
Annual Commitment Weekend*

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Matthew 6:21

Giving is Receiving



*Thank you to all
those who faithfully
contribute to our
parish offertory.*

- Registered, engaged members who make regular identifiable contributions, receive the stewardship rate at our schools.
- Registered, engaged members who make regular identifiable contributions, can purchase niches in the Columbarium.
- Registered, engaged members who make regular identifiable contributions reap the benefit of their generosity through our many available ministries.

Not registered? Not sure? Visit
<https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/register/>
and register on line as a member
of The Catholic Community of
St. Francis of Assisi.
Or call 919-847-8205x222

Dear St. Francis Family,

As faithful stewards, we **MUST** take care of our faith home and that means every person of this parish needs to prayerfully consider their commitment to our church. Consider how you are sharing your time and talent. Consider increasing your offertory today. If you are not contributing at all, there are many ways to give. We need the **entire** St. Francis family to responsibly give back so that we might continue to promote God's kingdom on earth. May God, through the Holy Spirit, guide each family here to give back to this community remembering that making this commitment impacts the future of our church.

Here is the link to the ways to give:

www.stfrancisraleigh.org/treasure/.

Please contact Deb Royals Mizerk at 919-847-8205x222 if you need assistance.

Peace and blessings,
Deb Royals Mizerk,
Director of Stewardship

Outreach Ministries

Justice and Peace Formation and Advocacy Opportunity



Are you interested in:

- * addressing root causes of social problems in our world?
- * helping political policies better reflect our Catholic values?
- * the work of social justice, advocacy, and community organizing?
- * moving the needle of systemic wrongs and not just doing charity?
- * building the Kingdom of God here on earth?
- * making a real difference in people's lives?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, we have a new opportunity to invite you deeper on your journey of discipleship.

We are looking for people interested in and passionate about the following issue areas:

- * Racism
- * Climate change
- * Immigration
- * Pre-born and end-of-life (abortion, euthanasia, and death penalty)
- * Mental Health
- * Peacemaking/nonviolence
- * Affordable/Sustainable Housing in Wake County
- * Education in Wake County
- * Wages and Jobs in Wake County

Our founding Franciscan friar, Fr. David McBriar O.F.M. often asked the question, “What does the city need, and how can we help?” We are still being led by this question.

So if you are curious, passionate, or puzzled, Sign up at <http://bit.ly/jpformationadvocacy> to RSVP for this meeting, and please designate about which issue you feel most passionate.

With the parish now closed with COVID-19, this meeting is likely to be on-line – To Be Determined.
Join us in this holy and important work!

Educational Scholarships for Youth in our Sister Parish Community



We have had a long-term relationship for over 25 years now with a village in the far ends of Guatemala. The community is called Las Margaritas II and is a rural village of about 100 indigenous Mayan families. Our founding Franciscan pastor Fr. David McBriar, OFM and a handful of parishioners established this partnership in conjunction with the organization Sister Parish, Inc. to foster awareness and understanding of the plight of many in Central America for the sake of greater solidarity, justice, and peace in our world. Through shared prayer, mutually supporting each other in a variety of efforts, and exchanging visits, this “sister parish” linkage has allowed us to put ourselves in the reality of others and, thus, experience the profound gift of human solidarity across the many kinds of borders that divide us. Experiencing a real and profound connection of brotherhood and sisterhood is one of the most treasured gifts we can encounter in our lives.

Along the way, our relationship has open up many avenues of mutual work and support. One manifestation of this was the development of



a scholarship program for youth of the village to continue their middle school education. Education in the village is (required) up to 6th grade. There are around 100 students with 4 teachers and limited resources and infrastructure. After 6th grade, school is no longer free, so with limited resources in this village, each family has to navigate the decision around further schooling for their children. Because of this situation, middle school is not something everyone has access to, and high school education is even less common. Our scholarship fund helps underwrite some of the costs for middle school.

These are two pictures sent from the village with a message that says, “Many thanks to all of St. Francis for your continuing support!!”

Faith Formation Ministries



First Communion Parent Meetings

If you have a child completing Kindergarten this academic year, please attend one of our First Reconciliation/First Eucharist parent meetings for more information on enrolling your child in sacramental preparation. During the meeting, information on the sacramental preparation process will be provided and enrollment forms will be available. Please bring a photocopy of your child's baptism certificate (unless he or she was baptized at St. Francis) and payment for sacramental prep fee of \$75 in the form of a check or the exact amount of cash.

Information/Registration Meeting Dates:

Monday, May 4 at 6:30pm in Anthony Hall Founders Room

Thursday, May 7 at 6:30pm in Clare Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, May 26 at 6:30pm in Anthony Hall Founders Room

To register for one of the meetings, RSVP at <https://form.jotform.com/62304764767160>.

*Registration forms for Sacramental Preparation enrollment are available ONLY at the meetings.

If you have any questions about First Eucharist/Reconciliation preparation, please contact Sarah Bowser, Coordinator of Children's Formation, sarah.bowser@stfrancisraleigh.org, 919-847-8205x496.



Youth Confirmation Preparation Meetings

Prayerfully discerning celebrating Confirmation? Thinking about completing your Christian Initiation?

Interested youth who are currently in 7th grade through high school and at least one parent must attend one of the offered information/registration meetings listed below. Confirmation preparation is a two year long journey, can start as early as 8th grade, and will culminate with the celebration of Confirmation in the fall of 2022.

Information/Registration Meeting Dates:

Sunday, April 19, 3:45pm in Anthony Hall Founders Room

Tuesday, April 21, 7:00pm in Anthony Hall Founders Room

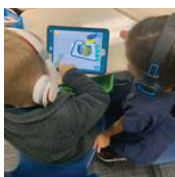
Thursday, April 23, 7:00pm in Anthony Hall Founders Room

To register for one of the meetings, RSVP at <https://form.jotform.com/60824762171152>.

If your family is planning on participating in the 2020-22 Confirmation preparation process, you MUST register at one of these meetings! Please understand that due to the program starting in October, we will not be able to facilitate any meetings in the fall.

Questions? Please contact Martina Dumberger, martina.dumberger@stfrancisraleigh.org, 919-847-8205x264.





The Franciscan School has Curriculum Grounded in Innovation



Finding the ideal Catholic school for your child

can be an extensive process. Does the coursework provide your child with a faith-filled education while challenging them academically? Will they receive the academic support that they need?

At TFS, in addition to general science courses for grades K-8, curriculum combines the traditional religion course learnings with the application of technology, extracurricular education, and professional academic support. Your child will participate in integrated Information and Technology in their classes to provide opportunities for students to apply what they've learned in our digital world, and ensures awareness of the ethical and societal issues involved with technology. Our middle school students also have the opportunity to participate in the TFS and NC Regional science fairs, STEM electives, and the Student Technology Ambassador and Mentor Program (STAMP). The students utilize technology to connect learning points and develop the skills needed to complete their assignments. From K-8th grade, students have access to classroom devices to practice their skills. For instance, students in grades K-2 have iPads; grades 3-4 utilize portable Chromebooks, while students in grades 5-8 receive 1:1 Chromebooks.

In response to growing trends, some schools and districts have opted to restructure their budgets and curriculum to meet the growing demand for academic classes. Un-

fortunately, many elective programs have been cut and are at risk of being pushed out. However, at The Franciscan School, we understand the short and long-term benefits of extracurricular learning. For instance, art, music, and physical education electives improve student attendance, and one study even found that students who took four years of art scored 91 points better on the SAT exams. We strive to provide our students with a holistic learning experience. All students participate in art, music, and physical education classes that improve their motor, spatial, and language skills and encourage teamwork and community involvement.

The Franciscan School is committed to the success of all our students. We know that academic challenges can discourage students from wanting to learn, but we don't let that get in the way. Our Learning Specialists are available for students who have diagnosed learning needs. Your child will receive remediation and curriculum assistance in one-on-one and small group settings, in addition to testing and other accommodations as needed. Ultimately, we partner with you to create a plan of action that prepares your student for success.

The Franciscan School's curriculum is the foundation on which we've built the last twenty years of educational excellence. To find out more about The Franciscan School, please do not hesitate to contact Principal Mike Watson at michael.watson@stfrancisleigh.org or reach out to our admissions team at admissions@franciscanschool.org.



Celebrating who we are and what we can be!

Take a minute and see what your child could be doing by joining us here at St. Francis of Assisi Preschool.

The preschool provides your child with developmentally appropriate activities, opportunities to experience Catholic traditions, fosters the development of beginning a relationship with God and partners with parents as the "first teachers in faith."

We offer a preschool program with a tradition of excellence validated by the Diocese of Raleigh for children ages 2 through 5 years, including extended day and transitional Kindergarten. Our classrooms have low child to teacher ratios and our school faculty and staff meet or exceed the professional requirements for their career as outlined by the State of North Carolina.

We infuse our Franciscan Faith in all we do. At Exploration Station children can become one with environment and learn through play in a natural space. Participating in Little Francis CARES is another way that our children are exposed to the value of servicing others at a young age. Our Science STEM enrichment program and the many diverse families that make up our community cultivate a preschool like no one else. At St. Francis of Assisi preschool, we embrace, promote and celebrate who we are and what we can be in the future.

These are pictures of one of our parents sharing her Nigerian culture with her daughter's class!

Call Jennifer Stephens at 919-847-8205x377 to schedule your tour and sign up today!

As The Catholic Community of St Francis of Assisi, we are continuing to respond to the coronavirus as the many aspects of our lives personally and professionally are affected. Let us share how we are moving forward as a community of faith.

Communications

Through virtual communications, our faith community is keeping us connected as Catholics filled with hope and grace.

At the end of each week, you will receive this email: The Franciscan Flash newsletter from the parish. We hope you will stay connected through prayer, formation, education, serving and caring with our community. Our weekly bulletin will be attached and continue to be available on our bulletin webpage.

Please make sure you are receiving this weekly communication by updating our parish census with your current email address and by accepting these emails from our parish constant contact. Please follow this link to verify you will receive our emails. <http://bit.ly/SFASignup>

You can also reach out to us through our parish website and follow our parish facebook page. We will continue to regularly post all the many ways for us to stay connected.

Watch the Pastor's blog for daily thoughts and reflections from Fr. Steve Patti during these days.

Liturgy

With the latest request from Bishop Zama to suspend all daily and weekend masses, we will continue to livestream our Sunday 9:30 am mass through Facebook Live.

To watch, follow our Facebook Page. We invite you to join us through facebook each Sunday. Also, read from Fr Jim Sabak on how to navigate these days of Eucharistic absence during the coronavirus.

Prayer & Formation

This week, we have started many new opportunities for prayer.

Every morning, we are posting a video with a "Daily Friar Reflection" to our website and our facebook page.

Each noon, we are live streaming to facebook "Lunch Break with Mr. Jim" which is meant for our youngest community members to pray, to sing and dance and to be together while not in school.

Each evening, we are livestreaming to facebook "Virtual Evening Prayer." The Liturgy of the Hours is an ancient Christian practice and how we live the words of St. Paul to "pray without ceasing" (1Thes 5:17). By praying this portion called Evening Prayer virtually, "in community," we can sustain ourselves and one another in common prayer.

Every day, you can use the same monthly prayer book as our Friars, called "Give Us This Day" which provides the daily mass readings, reflections, and also morning and evening prayer. For free access to a digital version of their content click on the "digital" button on the upper right side of their website. You can also pray the Prayer from the USCCB during the coronavirus.

We will continue to inform you of opportunities of virtual prayer and formation though these days of Lent on our website, our facebook page, and this weekly email.

Caring & Serving

This time of COVID-19 has left us wondering how to care for each other, how to be a people of care, mercy, justice, and peace. In order to build a list of people willing to offer care in our community, we have created a webpage for connecting opportunities to serve with those who

need to receive care.

Please visit our webpage to be included in "offers to serve" or to "receive care."

Parish Operations & Support

Even though the parish offices are closed to visitors, you can contact our parish staff through email and you can reference the 'Contact Us' pages of the parish bulletin or see "Get Involved" tab of our parish website for all ministries contacts.

Your financial support will be essential to our ability to carry forward our mission as faith community.

We are concerned about the financial effect this will have on the parish and our ability to ensure that we have the resources to provide for those most in need, pay our bills and continue to pay our employees. As we are currently in the process of completing our Census and Commit cards to the parish, if you have not completed your census card or you are not currently using online giving, this is a good chance to consider doing so. Also, if you normally give to the Sunday collection basket, please consider accounting for any missed Masses in your next offertory contribution.

You can mail your contribution to us at:
St Francis Of Assisi
11401 Leesville Road
Raleigh, NC 27613

You can Online Give through: Faith Direct by using electronic funds transfer from either a bank account or credit/debit card just as you may do now with your mortgage payment, cable bill, or other expenses.

Online Banking by making arrangements through your online banking to make donations to the parish. This giving

method is arranged by parishioners with their bank. The parish receives a check from your bank, usually on a weekly or monthly basis.

Text-to-Give by texting to:
the following phone number:
919-629-1199

For these and other ways to continue to support your parish, please go to our "treasure webpage".

Our Ministries & Schools

As all meetings, gatherings, and schools have been canceled or closed on our parish campus, we are opening virtual and online ways to continue our parish mission.

Watch for emails and posts from our ministry leaders on how we are continuing our good works through video conferencing, distance learning, and online sources.

The Franciscan School is currently closed through March 27 at this time. The school will continue to update the COVID-19 page on the school website with any general information from governmental sources as well as the communications from the Diocese of Raleigh offices. Meanwhile, our teachers are working diligently to provide the distance learning measures with our students.

Our St Francis Preschool is currently closed through March 29. Our preschool teachers continue to develop and offer optional online resources to share with parents that include developmentally appropriate 'learning through play' activities. We are also including home activities for our preschools through our preschool facebook page.

Our K-12 Faith Formation programs are going digital and will be offering many faith formation resources to come our youth in their faith journey. Be sure to watch them on their facebook page as well.



Meditations on St. Joseph

*Were you filled with awe
Or something else,
When you saw
An angel sent to wash away your doubts?
Yet how surprised you must have been To find no
place to stay in Bethlehem, Your ancestral town
still filled
With distant relatives.
Did dread and fear fill your heart As once again
an angel sent
Instructing you to rouse your family and depart?
You must have cried
And screamed your grief
At the news that all those babies died.
Did you trust your
Last to visit angel
Commanding your return to land both holy and
hostile? When at last your life was done,
No angel came for you.
You had had enough of angels
And what it is they have to say.
But your beloved foster Son
Came to lead you on the way.*

Parish Life Ministries

Camp Francis:

Registration is NOW OPEN! We have lots of really cool opportunities in athletics, technologies, arts, and various enrichment areas! We have several new opportunities this summer for all age groups. 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 more information: <http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/camp-francis/>.

Parent /Child Classes:

Registration is now open for Spring classes! Are you looking for a fun filled activity to do with your young child? Want to learn sign language to better communicate with your infant or toddler? Want to learn some new signs with your toddler and incorporate them with song? Want to connect with your toddler or preschooler with music? Check out Community Life's Parent/ Child Classes. All Parent/Child Classes are located in the Cupertino Room of the Assisi Community Center. For more information, visit our website at <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/parent-child-classes-2/>.

Stations:

Join us Friday nights during Lent beginning with Stations of the Cross online at 6:00pm.

Youth volleyball League:

Registration is Coming Soon! The Game Level program is for children of all skill levels that are rising 3rd graders through rising 9th graders. Teams will have an hour practice on either Monday or Wednesday. All Games will be held on Thursday nights.

Youth Volleyball Clinics:

Registration is OPEN! Two clinics for rising 3rd – 9th grade boys & girls. Clinics will be held on May 3rd and May 31st. Cost is \$25 per child/per clinic. Register at <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/youthvolleyball-clinic/>

Youth volleyball League:

Registration is Coming Soon! The Game Level program is for children of all skill levels that are rising 3rd graders through rising 9th graders. Teams will have an hour practice on either Monday or Wednesday. All Games will be held on Thursday nights.

Youth Basketball Skills Camp:

Registration is Now Open!

Skills Camp 1: 1st-4th graders 5:45 -6:45pm

The following Thursdays:

March 26, April 2, 16

Skills Camp 2: 5th-8th graders 5:45 -6:45pm

The following Thursdays:

April 23, 30, May 7, 14, 21

Registration fee is \$90 per child/session or \$20 per child for each individual camp.

To register, please visit:

<https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/cl-youth-basketball-clinic/>.

Invisibility

Kathleen Owen, Director of Parish Life



There have been times lately when I felt invisible. You know how it feels, right? You walk up to the cashier to check out and they are so busy talking to another co-worker or checking something on their phone, they barely acknowledge your presence. You don't even get the chance to say, "Hello", "Thank You", or maybe another phrase

that wouldn't be appropriate for a church bulletin!

Remember when you used to catch up with your best buds for a couple of hours and find out what everyone is doing, tell them what's happening in your life and the make plans to do it again? Now it seems we have the occasional blast of texts, or emails and then long periods of silence.

Add to that the overload of what passes for news – documenting everything that 'famous' people do, while ignoring stories that might help elevate or illuminate something positive. Social media apps that let you see what others are doing, but doesn't offer the same satisfaction as having a good chat with someone who gives you a chance to share what's going on with you.

This constant overload of what's going on around you and the narrowing of ways for you to be heard can leave you feeling overlooked, overwhelmed, insignificant and invisible. If you feel this often enough, you could start to express anger at inappropriate times, begin to feel anxious and could suffer some mild depression. So what's the answer?

Being heard is a good first step to getting back on track. Stephen Ministers are available here at St. Francis. This isn't therapy, it's a trained lay person who is skilled in listening, hearing, and even asking questions to help you process your feelings. They only know what you tell them and they are only focused on you. They will meet with you for an hour each week to help you until get back on track and find your way. We're here for you as long as you need us. And we've been offering Stephen Ministry here at St. Francis for 26 years!

So if you are feeling that you need to be heard, that there are some feelings you need to work through, give me a call at 919-847-8205x241 or email at kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org. Even in these times of COVID-19 and seasonal flu, we can Facetime with you, or catch up by phone until we're able to meet face to face again. You matter to us!



Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday of Lent (A)
March 22, 2020

To Live By Faith

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Our Lenten practices are transforming our hearts to receive the love of Jesus in his passion, death, and resurrection. Today's Gospel revolves around this theme of learning to live by faith. The apostles take for granted that the man's blindness is due to someone's sin. The Pharisees call the man a sinner, born in sin. In their self-righteousness they judge both the blind man and Jesus.

Jesus sees and judges differently. He asserts that the man's blindness was not due to a sin of his own or that of his parents and restores his sight.

He challenges the wise, educated, and insightful Pharisees by saying, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains" (John 9:41).

While they can see physically, they cannot see the simple truth that Jesus is the Son of God and has the authority to heal, even on the Sabbath. They are so blinded by their "fidelity to God"—which is really fidelity to their distorted interpretation of the traditions and regulations God gave them—that they cannot see his spirit of mercy. They fail to see with eyes of faith.

Being merciful like Jesus doesn't mean merely condemning blind legalism, it means showing God's love to those in need. First we need to see as God sees. Then we need to love others and to enlighten them with the truth. Jesus heals one man's blindness in the hope of opening the minds and hearts of the Pharisees—and us today. +

Sunday Readings

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6–7, 10–13a

God does not see as a mortal,
who sees the appearance.
The LORD looks into the heart.

Ephesians 5:8–14

Take no part in the fruitless works
of darkness; rather expose them.

John 9:1–41 or

John 9:1, 6–9, 13–17, 34–38

Jesus said, "I came into this world
for judgment, so that those who
do not see might see, and those
who do see might become blind."

*While the Pharisees
can see physically,
they cannot see
the simple truth
that Jesus is
the Son of God.*

A Word from Pope Francis

We can imagine what Joseph must have been thinking. How is it that the Son of God has no home? ...And those of us who do have a home, a roof over our heads, would also do well to ask: Why do these, our brothers and sisters, have no place to live?

—Meeting with the homeless,
September 24, 2015



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Are there people or groups I blindly judge? What is at the root of these judgments?
- To what truths am I blind? How can I work to open my heart to these truths this Lent?



Diocese of Raleigh News

The Heart of Mary Magdalene

Attend a morning retreat on April 25 as Olivia Woodford presents "The Heart of Mary Magdalene." The dramatic presentation explores what Mary Magdalene may have experienced in the weeks following the Resurrection as she grappled with the extraordinary events she had witnessed in the days and weeks before and how the relationships with key disciples helped strengthen her faith and confidence to be part of the movement to continue Jesus' ministry. Register by April 20; \$20 registration fee paid at the door includes lunch. Location: Holy Infant Catholic Church, Fellowship Hall, 5000 Southpark Drive, Durham; Fellowship Hall. Time: 9:30am to 12:30pm. Register online at <https://holyyinfantchurch.org/the-heart-of-mary-magdalene>.

Ways the Gospels Make Us Uncomfortable

By Kathy Coffey

It may be a shift to read the Gospels and feel discomfort. While the words and actions of Jesus enlighten, they're no escape hatch. Conflict, tension, and frustration still plague believers.

But we read the Gospels for one purpose: to know Jesus better—not for warm fuzzies, easy answers, or reinforcement of prejudices. Nor will we always encounter “Jesus, meek and mild.”

He who threatened the cozy assumptions of his contemporaries may have the same effect on us. If we rely on the wrong supports, like wealth (Luke 6:20, 24), prestige (Matthew 23:1–12), or religious rituals (Mark 2:27–28), he'll challenge us, too.

Jesus questioned many of the customs of his time—such as the subservient role of women and the authority of the Pharisees. “It is hard to believe [Jesus] was simply an early flower child who traipsed through the sunlit fields talking about lilies and love!” Nathan Mitchell writes in *Real Presence: The Work of Eucharist*. “Who would seek to arrest and execute such a sap?”

The Perils of Storytelling

We may be uncomfortable with the Gospels' storytelling if we want just the



facts. We might prefer a precise blueprint or spreadsheet to rambling, inconsistent stories. But if we compare the Bible to our own complex, difficult life stories, we grow more comfortable with its mixed genres. We find links where the larger story of God intersects with our personal lives.

So we reflect not only on Jesus' and the Hebrews' experience in the desert, but also on our own desert times. Wandering in the wilderness brings valuable insights we don't learn in secure kitchens.

As much as we enjoy the intriguing connections, storytelling has its shortcomings. It's unscientific, subject to interpretation, and sometimes wildly inaccurate. Two people who attended the same party might tell radically different accounts.

So, too, each Gospel writer has a different emphasis. Even within the Gospel of John, there are inconsistencies: “Jesus was deeply *troubled*” (13:21), but in the next chapter Jesus says, “Do not let your hearts be *troubled*” (14:1).

Those who enjoy stories listen beneath the words. Their primary interest is the meaning stories give our experiences. We don't read the Gospels primarily for scientific accuracy or historical fact but to follow Jesus better.

We read through the lens of a human

author who will sometimes shade, condense, or exaggerate. Sometimes we may also need to read biblical interpretation, but most important is our response. There's an old saying: the Gospel gives the chapter headings; we write the texts in our lives.

Too Good to Be True?

The Gospels have been misused to incite guilt. Some people may need that stern correction to luxuriating while others starve. But many hard-working people are simply trying to survive, raise families, and do their jobs while being as generous as possible with their time and treasure. They certainly don't need another guilt trip!

What we may find harder than guilt is the Gospels' insistence on how splendid we are. Jesus walked among the diseased, smelly, and sweaty, and assured them that even in poverty, mourning, or persecution, they were blessed. Mired in our own problems, do we struggle with *good* news?

Admittedly, the central message is hard to absorb. We, limited and flawed, are made in his divine image. Throughout the Gospels, the message recurs: You are not a slave. You are a friend and adopted child with an eternal inheritance—not condemned to futility or the finality of death. +



Lord, you are the Word of God that shows me what is good, right, and true. Make me a faithful witness to your Word.

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

March 23–28

Monday, Lenten Weekday:
Is 65:17–21 / Jn 4:43–54

Tuesday, Lenten Weekday:
Ez 47:1–9, 12 / Jn 5:1–16

Wednesday, The Annunciation
of the Lord: Is 7:10–14; 8:10 /
Heb 10:4–10 / Lk 1:26–38

Thursday, Lenten Weekday:
Ex 32:7–14 / Jn 5:31–47

Friday, Lenten Weekday:
Wis 2:1a, 12–22 / Jn 7:1–2, 10, 25–30

Saturday, Lenten Weekday:
Jer 11:18–20 / Jn 7:40–53

Group Opportunities

All Masses, meetings, gatherings, and events are cancelled until further notice. This includes daily and weekend Masses as well as confessions.

AA Meeting: (Online see page 2) The Daily Reprieve Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets Mon. thru Fri. at 7:00am in the Laverna Center (log cabin across from the Chapel.) Enter thru the garage.

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

Always God's Children: LGBT people, family, and friends are invited to this support group to discuss issues of personal concern in a confidential, welcoming place.

Meets April 5 at 3:15pm in Anthony Hall Room 406.

Visit www.stfrancisraleigh.org/LGBT.

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 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.

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: Tuesdays, 7:00 - 9:00pm in the Cupertino Rm. of the Assisi Community Center. Confidential, co-ed healing from separation and divorce. Contact Bill Morgan at dejanuts@yahoo.com.

Grief Support Group Next meeting is April 8, 10:00-11:30am in Anthony Hall Room 402. Contact Marsha Riely at marshariely@mac.com or Marlys Varga at marlysvarga@hotmail.com.

GriefShare

Contact Marlys Varga at marlysvarga@hotmail.com.

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 Ministry: Breakfast April 6, 7:00am, 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: Lee Cunningham - emcunningham3@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: Clare Hall Room 201, April 2, 12:00noon-2:00pm. 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.

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

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

Volunteer Opportunities

DivorceCare and DivorceCare4Kids:

We need adults and teens to help facilitate our next session of DivorceCare and DivorceCare4Kids session. Training is provided. If you or your 9-12th graders have experienced divorce and are looking for service hours, Contact Kathleen Owen at kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org or 919-847-8205x241.

Stephen Ministers:

We're always looking for Stephen Ministers who are inactive, but who would like to become active ministers again. We're offering some skills refresher gatherings and would love to have you there.

Contact kathleen.owen@stfrancisraleigh.org or 919-847-8205x241.

Transportation Ministry:

Drivers Needed for the Transportation Ministry. There are people on our waiting list who would like to come to Mass, but don't have transportation. If you have room in your car, could you bring someone even once each month? Contact Stephanie Smith at 919-302-0080.

Visitation Ministry:

Visitation Ministry needs volunteers. Could you visit someone who is in the hospital or nursing home? Your smile can make the difference between an ordinary day and a great day! Contact Sharon Holland at hollandbozo@yahoo.com

Eucharist Ministry to The Meadows

Would you consider volunteering on Saturday at The Meadows? There is a need for volunteers with the Eucharist Services. This is a great opportunity for families. Contact Andrea McVerry at amcverry@yahoo.com.

Caring Casseroles:

Please remember that some of our families are facing challenging circumstances and could use your help. Consider making a freezable casserole (not frozen) to help someone who is caring for a loved one who is ill, someone who is between jobs, or someone who just needs to feel the care and love of our parish as they rise to meet the challenges of life.

Visit <https://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/caring-casserole/>.

Job Connections Ministry:

If you are a human resources professional, life coach, or employer, please consider volunteering to help those who are looking for their next job or career. Job Connections Ministry works with people on how to network, resume updates, interviewing skills, etc.

Contact Mary Horner at 610-755-5392 or sfa.jcm@gmail.com.

Parking Ministry:

Help needed for the Parking Ministry. Our mission is to provide safety in the St. Francis parking lot for pedestrians. Perks are an orange vest, a road cone, and the thanks of many parishioners. Just a few extra minutes before you attend mass will make all the difference. For more information, contact Steve Burdett at 919-669-8099.

EM Ministry to the Homebound

The EM to the homebound ministry is in need of volunteers. This is a great opportunity to carry out the mission of our church. This ministry only requires 1 - 2 hours of your time every 3 - 4 weeks and is very flexible. You schedule your visits with our homebound parishioners, based on your availability and theirs. Contact Pat Spencer with any questions or to volunteer at 704-608-1678 or spencer1334@bellsouth.net.

The Ladies Book Club has been meeting at St. Francis for over 20 years. Their meetings are generally held on the third Wednesday of the month and begin at 11:30 am. When a new session begins in April, they will have several vacancies and would like to invite others to join. If any lady would like to join, please contact Sue Harris at (919) 418-8759 for further information.

Contact Us!

Parish Office: 919-847-8205 fax: 919-870-1790

Staff email: firstname.lastname@stfrancisraleigh.org

Welcome

New Parishioner Registration
Becoming Catholic
Get Involved!

Franciscan Friars

Pastor Fr. Steve Patti, O.F.M.
Assistant to the Pastor Fr. Steve Kluge, O.F.M.
Associate Pastor Fr. Jim Sabak, O.F.M.
Deacon Stephen Andrews

Sacraments

Baptism
First Reconciliation
First Eucharist
Confirmation
Matrimony
Holy Orders
Anointing of the Sick
Reconciliation Appointments
RCIA
Sacraments Administration
Funeral Planning
Columbarium Niches

Toni Hammes 847-8205x265
Jenn Fiduccia 847-8205x238
Deb Royals-Mizerk 847-8205x222

Fr. Steve Patti, O.F.M. 847-8205x224
847-8205x249
Fr. Steve Kluge, O.F.M. 847-8205x226
Fr. Jim Sabak, O.F.M. 847-8205x261
Stephen Andrews 732-213-0104

Tim Hetzel 847-8205x244
Sarah Bowser 847-8205x496
Sarah Bowser 847-8205x496
Thomas Bulick 847-8205x239
Tim Hetzel 847-8205x244
Fr. Steve Patti, O.F.M. 847-8205x224
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
847-8205x249
847-8205x238
Jenn Fiduccia 847-8205x264
Martina Dumberger 847-8205x241
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x236
Trish Adamkowski

The Franciscan School

Principal
Receptionist (Main Number)
Assistant Principal, K-5
Assistant Principal 6-8

St. Francis Preschool

Director
Assistant to the Director
Admissions and Marketing

Faith Formation

Director
Children's Faith Formation
Middle School Faith Formation
Coordinator of Youth Ministry
Play and Pray (Sunday Nursery)

Parish Operations

Dir of Strategic Planning
Communications and Webmaster
Human Resources
Safe Environment Specialist
Director of Stewardship
Parishioner Records
Director of Finance
Director of Facilities

Mike Watson 919-534-4840
Diana Chapman 919-534-4837
Michele Northington 847-8205x254
Colette Dziadul 847-8205x651

Heidi Hobler 847-8205x240
Shelley Freeman 847-8205x262
Jennifer Stephens 847-8205x377

Jenn Fiduccia 847-8205x238
Sarah Bowser 847-8205x496
Thomas Bulick 847-8205x239
Marisa Ferrara 847-8205x223
Tara Moore 847-8205x489

Tricia Henry 847-8205x375
Diogenes Ruiz 847-8205x271
Trish Adamkowski 847-8205x236
Trina Sugrue 847-8205x245
Deb Royals-Mizerk 847-8205x222
Toni Hammes 847-8205x265
Rob Neppel 847-8205x243
Marc Kiely 847-8205x227

Get Care!

Care

Home Eucharist Visits
Feed the Need (meals)
Medical Facility Visits
Transportation to Mass
Stephen Ministry
St. Vincent de Paul
Good Grief
GriefShare

Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241

Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Leave Voicemail 919-534-4842
Marsha Riely marshariely@mac.com
Marlys Varga marlysvarga@hotmail.com

Prayers

Prayer Line
Prayers
Receive a Prayer Shawl

Support Groups

Divorce Care
Job Connections
Seeing God in your Cancer
AA Daily Reprieve Group
Al-Anon
Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

Jackie Adamo 847-8205x268
Jackie Adamo 847-8205x268
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241

William Morgan dejanuts@yahoo.com
Mary Horner 610-755-5392
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Madeline Horrigan 919-923-1234
Linda Tucker 937-478-9537

Get Involved!

Worship Ministries

Director of Liturgy and Music
Coordinator of Liturgical Ministers
Altar Servers & Thurifers
Children's Liturgy of the Word
Church Keeping
Cross Bearers
Deaf Ministry
Environment & Art
Eucharistic Ministers
Funeral Ministers
Hospitality Hands
Lectors
Master of Ceremonies
Medical Presence at Mass
Music Ministry
Parking Ministry
Ushers
Weekend Receptionists
Weekend Welcome Hosts
Wedding Directors

Deb Royals-Mizerk 847-8205x222

Jim Wahl 847-8205x230
Tim Hetzel 847-8205x244
Joanie Madormo rmadormo@sbcglobal.net
Jackie Kelly 203-512-8807
Beverly Saunders 919-846-5795
Joseph Randazzo josephjrandazzo1@gmail.com
Jean Cooke-Byrne 919-412-8365
Theresa Baumgartner 919-848-3383
Tim Hetzel 847-8205x244
Lisa Gianturco 919-845-9718
Deb Royals-Mizerk 847-8205x222
Mike Wrzesien 919-624-1592
Michael & Julie Ducatte 919-622-8883
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Joyce Petzka jepetzka@gmail.com
Steve Burdett 919-845-2714
Troy Chaput troy.chaput@gmail.com
Kathleen Owen 847-8205x241
Deb Royals-Mizerk 847-8205x222
Carol Ricotta 919-554-8896

Outreach Ministries

Director of Justice and Peace
St. Francis Feeds
Brown Bag Ministry
Oak City Cares
Catholic Parish Outreach
Panera Food Pick Up
Ronald McDonald House
Jobs for Life Dinners
Our Lady of Rosary Food Pantry
Interfaith Food Shuttle

Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270
Becky Cawley 847-8205x267
Mailbox stfrancisbbm@gmail.com
Becky Cawley 847-8205x267
Sue Hand 919-846-7954
Becky Cawley 847-8205x267
Mailbox stfrancisrmhministry@gmail.com
Ellen Ferrone ellen.ferrone@gmail.com
Becky Cawley 847-8205x267
Becky Cawley 847-8205x267

St Francis Serves

Community Garden
Curbside Care
Duke Children's Hospital
Family Promise / WHIN Hosts
Gabriel Project
Migrant Ministry
Prison Pen Pal
R.A.R.E. Tom Zimmerman thomaspzimmerman@bellsouth.net
Red Cross Blood Drive
Refugee Resettlement
St Francis Builds / Habitat
St Vincent de Paul Ministers
Support Circles Kat and Ferrel Guilroy ferrel.guilroy@gmail.com
Whitaker House

St Francis on Mission

International Mission Trips
Sister Parish - Guatemala
St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia

St Francis Learns

Catholic Social Teaching
Care for Creation
Community Conversations
Engaging Spirituality
Just Faith
Justice Theater Project
Peace Pole Prayer
Study Circles

Pat & Paul Kelly 919-413-8833
Lori Piraino ipiraino7@gmail.com
Joe and Geanie Slifer 919-870-6993
Ron Smith 919-455-7786
Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270
Bruce Cartier bcartier7@gmail.com
Jill Balogh jbalogh@nc.rr.com
Bryan Kozak 910-728-9200
Aggie Dalton aggiedalton@gmail.com
Diane & Bob Steinbeiser 919-846-8026
Cathy Smith 419-348-8843
Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270

Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270
Carie Gunnells carie.gunnells@gmail.com
John Budway 305-205-5104

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/>
Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270
Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270
Becky Cawley 847-8205x267
Trevor Thompson 847-8205x270
<http://www.thejusticetheaterproject.org/>
Ben Whitehouse whitehouseben5@gmail.com
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

LGBT Ministry

Men's Ministry

Young Adults

Women's Ministry

50+ Adults Group

Deb Royals-Mizerk

847-8205x222

Kathleen Owen

847-8205x241

Kathleen Owen

847-8205x241

Alice Stanford

919-781-5860

Kathleen Owen

847-8205x241

Anita Misko

630-699-0519

Pat Spencer

704-608-1678

Jacob House

919-449-7634

Andrea McVerry

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Edward Gilmartinedward.gilmartin@gmail.com

Janice Horner

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Pauk Wilson

wilsonpf99@gmail.com

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Dianne Rotunno

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Barbi Taperek

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Kathleen Owen

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Mary Horner

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hollandbozo@yahoo.com

Stephanie Smith

919-302-0080

Toni Hammes

847-8205x265

Leon Cooke

919-740-7515

Chuck Small

984-204-0012

Jane Paris

919-847-7431

Norm Tuomi

norman3722@att.net

Ralph Guenther

rguenther2@nc.rr.com

fb.me/YoungAdultsofStFrancis

Kathleen Owen

847-8205x241

Angela Azzopardi

919-848-1347

St. Francis of Assisi Community Center

Coordinator of Community Center

Athletic Programs

Assisi Café

Parish Events (FrancisFest)

Summer Camps (Camp Francis)

Community Organizations

Girl Scouts of USA

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) Mike Hutchinson membership@pack352.com

Knights of Columbus Bob Weisenberger 919-723-7424

Secular Franciscan Order

Faith Formation Ministries

Director of Faith Formation

Assisi Scripture Study

Baptism Ministry

Marriage Ministry

Confirmation Sponsors

Children's Formation Group Leader

Family & Marriage Enrichment Team

Middle School Formation Group

Faith Formation Retreats and Camps Jennifer McCourt

Faith Formation Registration & EventsPatti Panizza

Youth Ministry Group Leader

RCIA Team & Sponsors

Play and Pray (Sunday Nursery)

Young Adults Bible Study Group

Stewardship Ministries

Director of Stewardship

Stewardship Committee

Way of Francis

Ashley Watson

847-8205x444

Mary Arleth

847-8205x358

Ashley Watson

847-8205x444

Ashley Watson

847-8205x444

Ashley Watson

847-8205x444

Melissa O'Connor

847-8205x296

Mark Priest scoutmaster352@gmail.com

Scott Cash scoutmaster219tfs@gmail.com

Mike Hutchinson membership@pack352.com

Bob Weisenberger 919-723-7424

Lee Cunningham http://ofscentralnc.org

Jenn Fiduccia

847-8205x238

Jenn Fiduccia

847-8205x238

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

Thomas Bulick

847-8205x239

Sarah Bowser

847-8205x496

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

Thomas Bulick

847-8205x239

Jennifer McCourt

847-8205x269

Patti Panizza

847-8205x237

Marisa Ferrara

847-8205x223

Jenn Fiduccia

847-8205x238

Tara Moore

847-8205x489

Tim Hetzel

847-8205x244

Deb Royals-Mizerk

847-8205x222

Deb Royals-Mizerk

847-8205x222

Ben Whitehouse whitehouseben5@gmail.com