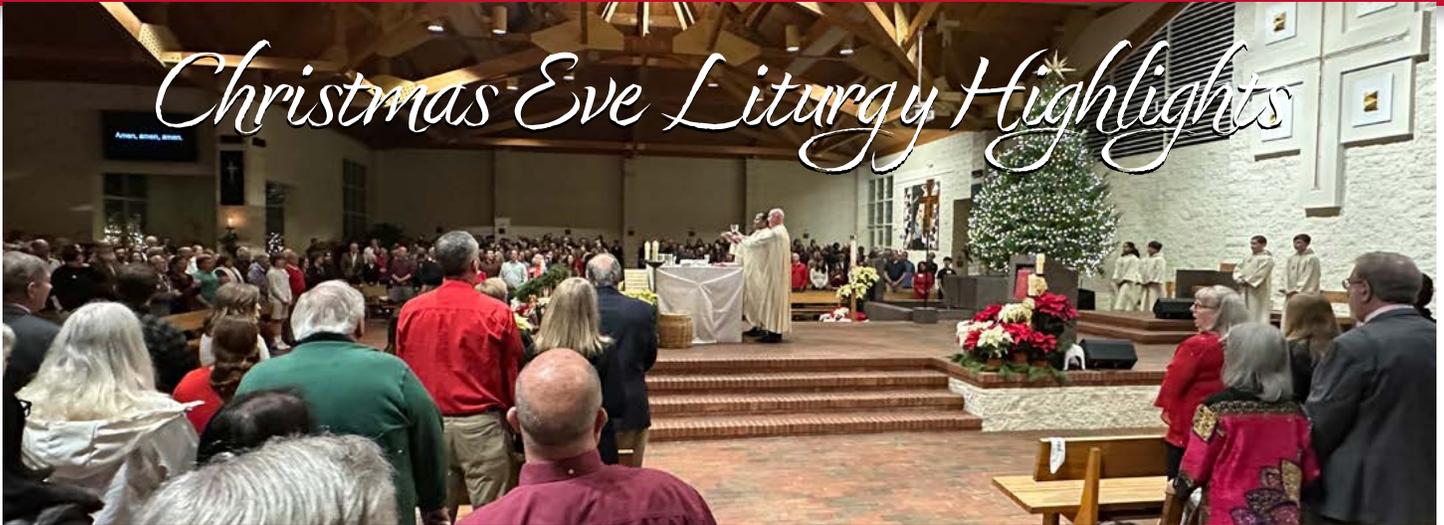


# The Epiphany of the Lord

## Christmas Eve Liturgy Highlights



If you were unable to attend the Solemnity of Mary liturgy celebration, on December 1, [click here to listen to Fr. Chris' homily.](#)

Click to view video

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

A click away If you are receiving a paper copy, visit the parish website at [www.stfrancisraleigh.org](http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org).

[Website](#) / [Realm](#) / [St. Francis Serves](#) / [Prayer Request](#) / [Listing of Prayers of the Faithful](#)  
[KBL series](#) / [Bulletins](#) / [Employment Opportunities](#) / [St. Francis TV](#) / [Giving](#) / [Feed the Need](#)  
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The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi - 11401 Leesville Rd - NC 27613 - Tel: 919-847-8205



**January 3/4 - K of C Used Cell Phone Drive to Benefit Victims of Domestic/Sexual Violence** Knights of Columbus volunteers will collect old/unused cell phones & tablets for donation to InterAct. Items will be collected in the Welcome Center before/after masses on the weekends of Dec. 27/28th and Jan. 3/4th (please ensure factory reset or passcode removed). Donated items will benefit victims of domestic & sexual violence. [Interact of Wake County](#) provides support services to victims of domestic & sexual violence. Contact Joe Azzopardi, [ncjazz@gmail.com](mailto:ncjazz@gmail.com).

**January 7 - Order of Christian Initiation for Adults**  
Interested in exploring the Catholic faith? Do you desire to experience full initiation into the life of the Church? A new cohort group for OCIA will begin January 7, 2026. [Complete the interest form to find out more!](#)  
Contact Charlee Halphen, [charleelhalphen@gmail.com](mailto:charleelhalphen@gmail.com).

**January 7 - Special performance of My Name is Rachel Corrie**  
See page 4.

**January 9-11 - Project Rachel Post Abortion Healing Retreat**  
If you desire healing from a past abortion, you are invited to experience the love of Jesus Christ at a Project Rachel weekend retreat. The retreat is strictly **confidential**, for both women and men and includes discussions, spiritual exercises, the sacrament of reconciliation, a Memorial Service, and a Mass of the Resurrection. Participation offers a beautiful opportunity to experience God's love, forgiveness, and compassion.

For more information or to register, contact Project Rachel at: [project.rachel@raldioc.org](mailto:project.rachel@raldioc.org) or call (919) 852-1021. Visit [rachelinc.org](http://rachelinc.org). Cost is \$350 for lodging, meals, and all retreat materials. Discount of \$50 if you register before December, 9. Spanish and English speakers are welcome. If there is a financial burden, assistance is always available.

**January 10 - Women's Ministry Yoga and Breakfast: Winter 2026** 9:00-11:00am. Ladies, join us for yoga & breakfast on Saturday, January 10th from 9-11am in Fellowship Hall. No experience necessary! We will be guided in a 45 minute beginner yoga class, followed by food & fellowship. [Register in Realm](#). Contact Rosemary Czejkowski, [sfawomensministry@gmail.com](mailto:sfawomensministry@gmail.com).

**January 11 - Always God's Children** 3:00-4:30pm. A confidential setting for those who identify as LGBTQ+, along with family and friends. This gathering provides a safe place to pray together, share our experiences, and support one another in our journey of faith and life. **This meeting will be virtual.** Contact Stacey Shine, [stacey.shine@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:stacey.shine@stfrancisraleigh.org).

**January 12 - Pen Pal Ministry Meeting** 7:00-8:30pm. Interested in writing or securely texting a guy on NC's Death Row? The SFA Pen Pal Ministry has a long legacy of serving the men on NC's Death Row, and we need pen pals. Email [sfapenpal@gmail.com](mailto:sfapenpal@gmail.com) if interested in learning more at a virtual meeting on Jan 12 at 7p. Contact Catherine Maher, [sfapenpal@gmail.com](mailto:sfapenpal@gmail.com).

**January 14 and May 28 - Virtual Book Study - Palace of Nowhere** 1:00-2:30pm. The Palace of Nowhere invites readers into Thomas Merton's exploration of the false self and the freedom found in letting it fall away. Through clear, accessible wisdom, Jim Finley—Merton's former student—shows how releasing illusion opens us to grace, humility, and genuine transformation grounded in God's presence. [Register here](#). Contact Stephen Andrews, [stephenwandrews@outlook.com](mailto:stephenwandrews@outlook.com).

**January 14-February 28 - Winter Parent Child Classes**  
These classes are a fun way to connect with your child. Join us for these fun, low pressure, hands on classes (0-5 years of age). Join us Wednesdays for Making Music Praying Twice and/ or Sign Language at the Community Center. [Click here for more information and to register](#). Contact Jess Kelly, [info@signsoflearning.com](mailto:info@signsoflearning.com).

**January 16 - Virtual Book Study - Oneing: A Living Tradition** 1:00-2:30pm. Looking for a New Year's resolution? Join the biweekly virtual Friday book club starting January 16. Explore desert wisdom, monastic renewal, contemplative justice through ONEING: A Living Tradition, CAC's biannual journal of essays, poetry, and translations rooted in our Christian tradition often overlooked in our daily lives. [Register here](#). Contact Stephen Andrews, [stephenwandrews@outlook.com](mailto:stephenwandrews@outlook.com).

**2026 High School Basketball - Registration Until January 20**  
We are now accepting registrations for the 2026 St. Francis Boy's High School Basketball League. The league runs from February-May. The league is opened to boys in grades 8-12. Regular Registration runs until Jan. 20. [Click here for more information including registration](#). Mary Arleth, [Mary.Arleth@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:Mary.Arleth@stfrancisraleigh.org).

**January 20 and 22 - Issue Engagement Sessions**  
6:30-8:00pm. What keeps you up at night? Learn what our parish is doing about different issues, and tell us what's on your heart, too.  
Tues. Jan. 20 from 6:30-8 - in person or  
Thurs. Jan. 22 from 12-1 - virtual  
[maryellen.mcguire@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:maryellen.mcguire@stfrancisraleigh.org).

**January 20 and 21 Little Rock Scripture Study VIRTUAL Bible Study** Registration on REALM - Little Rock Scripture Study VIRTUAL Bible Study, Gospel of Luke- Part 1- 7 weeks Registration limited to 25. [Purchase book here](#). Facilitator: Diane Rosendahl and Barbara Efirid  
**Tuesday evenings - January 20 - March 10, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm**  
**Wednesday mornings- January 21 - March 11, 10:00 am - 11:30 am**  
After you register on REALM you will receive a confirmation email and before the study begins you will receive the Zoom link. Please purchase the book when you register.

**January 24 - Community Wellness Fair**  
Saturday, 8:30am-12:30pm in Fellowship Hall  
Take part in our first Community Wellness Fair and discover resources to support your mind, body, and spirit. With more than 40 local vendors, this event offers practical tools, expert guidance, and supportive services for all ages.  
Featured Activities & Screenings:  

- 10:00am Yoga Session in Founders
- Pulse Screenings
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Balance Assessments
- Long-Term Care Resources
- Technology Assistance
- Home Improvement Guidance
- Fitness Information & Demos

Join us for a morning of learning, connection, and healthy living. All are welcome!  
Contact Stacey Shine, [stacey.shine@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:stacey.shine@stfrancisraleigh.org).

### The St Francis Inn Philadelphia Ministry trips for 2026

February 16 - 20 - waitlist only

April 13 - 17 - Open

Oct 19 - 23 - Open

Join a delegation to serve the Kensington community of Philadelphia, providing aid in the form of food, clothing, and so much more to anyone in need. Contact Diana Melo, [Melo.diana@gmail.com](mailto:Melo.diana@gmail.com).

### May 10-19 - Franciscan Centenary Pilgrimage

Join Fr. Jim Sabak and Jim Wahl on a Franciscan Centenary Pilgrimage honoring the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis. Journey from Rome to Assisi, celebrate Mass at sacred sites, and walk in the saint's footsteps. Only 14 spots available— family and friends are warmly invited. [More information](#). Contact Jim Wahl, [Jim.wahl@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:Jim.wahl@stfrancisraleigh.org).

### Mid-February - JustFaith Advocacy Program Facilitators Needed

We are looking for JustFaith facilitators for "Just Action! How to Advocate and Mobilize for Justice" to begin mid-February. No prior knowledge or experience is necessary – just a heart for justice and a willingness to organize gatherings. All materials will be provided. [Click here for program info](#). Contact Casey Slock [casey.slock@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:casey.slock@stfrancisraleigh.org).

**Prayer Shawl** continues to have the every other Thursday early afternoon meeting but are trying to make the ministry available for those who are not available during the day.

Prayer Shawl Wednesday meeting dates – 4:15 to 5:30PM

**Jan. 14, Feb. 11, Mar. 11, Apr. 15, May 13, June 10**

Contact Lisa Miller, [lisaorb1@gmail.com](mailto:lisaorb1@gmail.com).

**Marriage Troubles?** If your marriage has become troubled and stressed, unloving or uncaring; if you might have grown cold and distant; or even if you are divorced or separated, or are thinking about it, Retrouvaille can help...as it has already helped tens of thousands of others. **Our next program begins January 16-18, 2026.** For information, visit [www.helpourmarriage.org](http://www.helpourmarriage.org), or call Bill & Lyn Folsom (727) 343-6701. Not counseling or group therapy. All contacts and names held in absolute confidence.

### August 1-10 - Sister Parish in Guatemala

It is time for us to solidify a delegation to visit our sister parish in Las Margaritas II in Guatemala! Please reach out to Mary Ellen McGuire before the holidays at [maryellen.mcguire@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:maryellen.mcguire@stfrancisraleigh.org).

### Work with a Stephen Minister today!

Feeling overwhelmed emotionally, physically, or spiritually? Stephen Ministers are trained to provide confidential, one-on-one care during life's challenges. Whether you're facing a crisis or simply need support, a Stephen Minister can walk with you, listen, and pray with you. It's confidential, free and very helpful. Consider reaching out today! Contact [stephenministry@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:stephenministry@stfrancisraleigh.org), 919-847-8205x234

**Spiritual Direction** is an ancient Christian tradition in which two people enter a sacred space to dream, explore, and discern a path toward a deeper relationship with God. People turn to spiritual direction in times of deep faith, doubt, or life transition to discern God's movement in the experience. [Click here for more information](#). Contact Nancy Jones, [prayerfulheart3@gmail.com](mailto:prayerfulheart3@gmail.com).

# GET CONNECTED

Connecting Parishioners to **Events** and **Volunteer Opportunities**



## Hidden Figures

Sometimes we take for granted how well things work at St. Francis of Assisi. Everything flows relatively smoothly, especially given the number of ministries supported here. How does that happen? Who are the people who, behind the scenes, make it all come together and work so well?

One of the 'hidden figures' bringing it all together is Shannon Hoffman, Administrative Assistant for Pastoral Ministries. "In my role," she says, "I help support our priests by coordinating their schedules, arranging meetings, assisting with requests for sacraments, preparing Mass intentions, and organizing the Prayers of the Faithful." [More](#)



## Ministry Spotlight: CSA

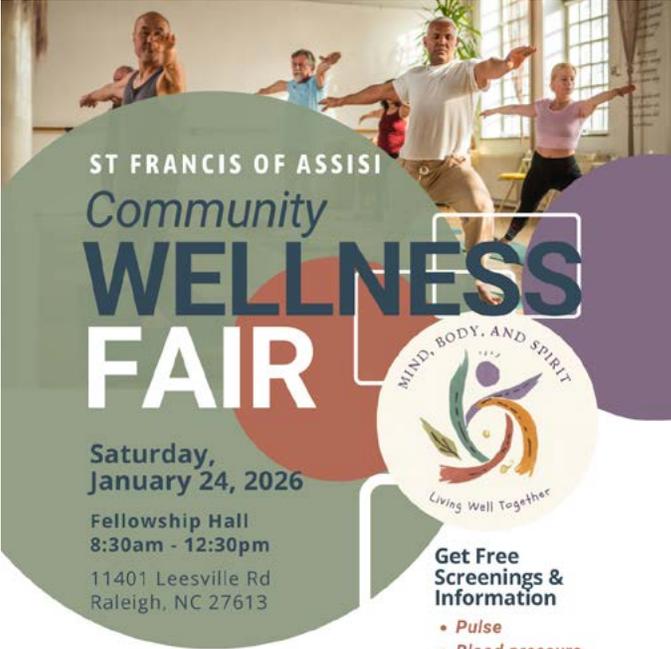
Do you know what Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is? Did you know we have a ministry at St. Francis that supports local farmers? If not, here is a good way to get great, in-season produce, farmed organically in our local communities. Elizabeth Kearse is the ministry contact for the farm-to-church CSA that supports local BIPOC farmers who use sustainable and/or organic farming methods. Elizabeth says... [More](#)



**Are you New to St. Francis?** We warmly welcome you to our community! If you have any questions or are interested in learning more about how to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to [Stacey Shine](#). We look forward to connecting with you and helping you feel right at home.




**REGISTRATION  
COMING  
LATE  
JANUARY 2026!**



**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI  
Community  
WELLNESS  
FAIR**

**Saturday,  
January 24, 2026**

Fellowship Hall  
8:30am - 12:30pm  
11401 Leesville Rd  
Raleigh, NC 27613

**Get Free Screenings & Information**

- Pulse
- Blood pressure
- Balance
- Long Term Care
- Tech Information
- Home Improvements
- Fitness

**10am Yoga Session in Founders**

Click to enlarge

*Special performance:*  
**My Name is Rachel Corrie - January 7, 7:00pm at Burning Coal Theater** (<https://burningcoal.org/special-performance/>). Rachel was a 23-year-old U.S. peace activist. On March 16, 2003, an Israeli bulldozer crushed her to death as she stood before it in an orange vest with a bullhorn to prevent the Israeli army from destroying homes in the Gaza Strip. This story is based on her diary and the emails she sent home during her time in Palestine.

Immediately after the performance there will be a reception during which Tony Aguillar will receive the Sam Adams Award for Integrity (<https://samadamsaward.ch/2025/12/anthony-aguillar-wins-sam-adams-award-for-integrity/>). Tony is being recognized for his bold actions to expose the atrocities committed by Gaza Humanitarian Foundation contractors and IDF soldiers who killed more than 2,000 starving Palestinians seeking food at GHF sites, and injured thousands more (UG Solutions, the company that provides logistics and security for the Gaza 'Humanitarian' Foundation, is based in Davidson, NC). All attendees are welcome to attend the award reception.

If you would like to stay in touch on future events, activities or updates regarding Palestine-Israel via the St. Francis Mideast Peace Realm Group, here is the Realm link to join. <https://e.onrealm.org/groups/9149f32e-9cf9-4601-86ae-b348014e5a74/info> If you are unsure if you are a registered parishioner and need help, please reply and we will look.

If you are not a registered parishioner and would like to participate, please complete the form below. This will allow us to add your information to our database for communication and coordination purposes. <https://form.jotform.com/251747473293162>

**Pope Prayer for Christians in areas of Conflict - Video**  
 Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope. [View Pope's prayer video here](#). Contact person Mary Ellen McGuire, [maryellen.mcguire@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:maryellen.mcguire@stfrancisraleigh.org).



**Church Keeping**

We are currently looking for volunteers to help maintain the worship space, Holy Water fonts, altar, and other liturgical items, as well as wash and iron linens. Volunteer times for Church Keeping can be adapted to fit in your schedule.

For more information please contact:  
[Shannon.hoffman@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:Shannon.hoffman@stfrancisraleigh.org)



**Serving With Heart, Offering Hope**  
 SVdP Walks with Our Neighbors

Click [here](https://stfrancissvdp.org/blog/) to read more or visit <https://stfrancissvdp.org/blog/>

**Serve Learn Donate**

If you need help, please call our helpline at (919) 534-4842



**Care for Creation**

**2026 - Resolve to treat God's planet like you life depends on it.**

[www.stfrancisraleigh.org/care-for-creation/](http://www.stfrancisraleigh.org/care-for-creation/)

# Travel to Italy with Fr. Jim Sabak & Jim Wahl

Franciscan Centenary Pilgrimage  
800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of St. Francis



**MAY 10-19**

**14 SPOTS AVAILABLE | CONTACT JIM WAHL**

**Click to Join**



Join fellow parishioners on the St. Francis social network (like Facebook only better, no ads, no spam) - a safe toxic free online platform. Meet/Connect with fellow parishioners - set up a personal page, upload pictures, post blogs, share interests, There is no cost to join. Must be 18+

## Advertise in the Parish Bulletin

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Diogenes Ruiz, Parishioner

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&  
**WEAR SIERRA**  
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Luxury Med Spa in Raleigh and Cary

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Phil Thalheimer, Parishioner

**[Click here for ad rates and to advertise in the parish bulletin.](#)**

Questions, contact Diogenes Ruiz, [diogenes.ruiz@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:diogenes.ruiz@stfrancisraleigh.org).  
Take advantage of this opportunity to showcase your business in front of our many parishioners and thank you for helping to support our parish through the bulletin ad program.