



# CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

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## SAN FRANCISCO DE ASIS

Committed to living and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ within the Catholic tradition, we are blessed to have as our patron saint someone who continues to call us to reach out to others in charity and compassion.

### **Church of St Francis of Assisi**

1114 Third Street SE  
Rochester, MN 55904  
507.288.7313  
<http://stfrancis-church.org>

### **Parish Center Hours:**

Mon-Thurs: 8:00AM - 3:30PM  
Friday: 9:00AM - 3:30PM

### **Weekday Mass:**

Monday - Friday 7AM

### **School Mass:**

Tuesday 9:15AM

### **Weekend Mass:**

Saturday 4:30PM  
Sunday 8AM, 10AM

### **In Spanish:**

Sunday 12PM

### **Misa En Español:**

Domingo 12PM

### **Pastor**

Rev. Jim Berning

### **Parochial Vicar**

Rev. Luis Vargas

### **Deacon**

Mr. Terry Smith



When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord,  
they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.  
The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom;  
and the favor of God was upon him.

- Luke 2:39-40



**FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY.** Today is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We invite everyone to spend time at the Nativity Scene or crèche in our parish church or the new one outside to pray for your families and all families throughout our parish and world. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us.

**POPE FRANCIS.** On December 9, 2020, Pope Francis, during his General Audience, taught us all to pray a short prayer: "Lord help me!" He invited all to call out to God in prayer of petition and always ask for God's help and strength in our entire lives and for our families. "Lord help me! Lord help us!"

**CHRISTMAS.** We give many thanks to all who made our Christmas Liturgies beautiful and meaningful for all of us. They have worked so hard to make these possible for us - both in-person and virtually.

**THANK YOU! MUCHAS GRACIAS!** Our deepest gratitude to those who answered the call to help those less fortunate during this Advent Season. Through your generosity, we were able to help many of our parish's Hispanic families in need. We thank you and are humbled by your immediate and generous response. Also, thank you so much for your generous response in support of the Parish Festival deficit and thank you for your continued support of our parish!

**SOLEMNITY OF MARY.** On New Year's Day, we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, a Holy Day of Obligation. The Vigil Mass will be on December 31 at 5:15pm (English) and 7pm (Spanish). Mass on January 1 will be at 9am (English). Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

**EPIPHANY.** Next Sunday, we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord and the manifestation of Christ to all the nations. The Christmas Season continues all the way to the Baptism of the Lord - this year on Sunday, January 10.

FR JIM BERNING

*"God, Bless Our Family"*

*Today and every day, let this quiet, tender moment of  
Our Lord's own family touch our hearts and change our lives.*

*God, bless our family. Make it like the family of your Son.*

*May our moments of sorrow give way to seasons of joy.*

*May the memory of harsh words fade before the warmth of a loving touch.*

*May there never be pain that a kind embrace cannot lessen.*

*May the tears of sorrow always be replaced by the music of laughter.*

*May resentment be banished from our home and  
forgiveness reign in our hearts. Today and every day.*

*Let the only living thing that is stronger than the love that binds our family  
together be your love, O God, which makes all creation one.*

*Let it be, God, until that day when your gentle guidance brings  
each of us to our eternal home and your loving arms. Amen.*

*Prayer: Rev. Paul J. Keller, CMF*

Welcome to the Church of St. Francis of Assisi. Our church has helped to bring Jesus Christ to the city of Rochester since 1937. We seek to foster the spiritual growth of our parishioners through the celebration of the Sacraments, catechesis, community life, and personal prayer. Like our patron saint, we strive to rebuild the Church and to console the heart of Jesus by serving our neighbors in need.

Parish Contacts

**Parish Center Office**

(507) 288-7313

**Pastor** (x 202)

Rev. Jim Berning

**Parochial Vicar** (x 203)

Rev. Luis Vargas

**Deacon** (x 208)

Terry Smith

**Parish Administrator** (x 204)

Sarah Kinsman

**Office Manager** (x 201)

Michelle Ibarra

**Financial Secretary** (x 205)

Debbie Worden

**Director of Music/Liturgy** (x 301)

Zack Stachowski

**Faith Formation** (x 207)

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**Trustees**

Bruce Anderson

Rosemary Bengal

**Knights of Columbus**

Dale Frank

**Calvary Cemetery**

Steve Flynn, Director

(507) 273-0140

**Catholic Charities**

(507) 287-2047



**FIESTA DE LA SAGRADA FAMILIA**

El domingo siguiente a la Navidad, los católicos de todo el mundo celebran la fiesta de la Sagrada Familia.

La Sagrada Familia es el nombre dado a la familia formada por Jesús de Nazaret y sus padres,

María y José. El hogar de Nazareth siempre es citado como ejemplo por la Iglesia Católica para todas las familias católicas. Ojalá que los esposos cristianos descubran en la escuela de Nazaret "lo que es la familia, su comunión de amor, su belleza austera y sencilla, su carácter sagrado e inviolable" (Papa Pablo VI).

La Santa Casa de Nazaret se nos ofrece como el modelo perfecto del hogar cristiano.

Tal es la Sagrada Familia bajo el humilde techo de Nazaret, verdadero modelo de esa vida doméstica con sus mutuas relaciones de caridad y su inefable belleza, que es el ámbito de acción de millones de fieles en todo el universo; donde el marido gobierna como José, mientras que la esposa obedece como María; donde los padres están atentos a la educación de sus hijos, y donde los hijos ocupan el lugar de Jesús por su obediencia, su progreso, la alegría y la luz que difunden a su alrededor. (...) Por las gracias que se derraman desde el cielo sobre él cada día y en cada momento, por la multitud de virtudes que pone en acción, y finalmente por la felicidad de la que está dotado, el hogar cristiano es "como la puerta del Paraíso".

En todo el universo, por la misericordia de Dios, la familia cristiana ha sido establecida y defendida por la Iglesia como su más bella creación y su mayor beneficio para la sociedad. La luz, la paz, la pureza y la felicidad del hogar cristiano se deriva de la vida que llevan Jesús, María y José en la santa casa de Nazaret. En las alegrías y dificultades de la Sagrada Familia están los caminos a veces sinuosos de nuestras familias de hoy. La familia en la que el Hijo de Dios se hizo carne nos invita a volver a lo esencial. La familia sigue siendo para todos los bautizados el lugar por excelencia donde nace la Iglesia.

P. Luis Alfonso Vargas



**MASS INTENTIONS**

For the Week of December 28, 2020

MON Dec 28	7:00 AM	Steve & Clara Woodward †
TUE Dec 29	7:00 AM	For the Parish
WED Dec 30	7:00 AM	James Neisen †
<b>THU Dec 31</b>	5:15 PM	Kinsman Family †
	** 7:00 PM	
<b>FRI Jan 1</b>	9:00 AM	Brian P. Neisen †
SAT Jan 2	4:30 PM	For the Parish
SUN Jan 3	8:00 AM	Michael Long †
	10:00 AM	For the Parish
	** 12:00 PM	

\* School Mass \*\* Spanish Mass

**MASS INTENTIONS**

If you have a desire to remember someone who has passed away or simply in need of some extra prayers, Mass Intentions are available every day for our weekday Masses and on the weekends. You are welcome to stop by the Parish Office and schedule a Mass intention during normal office hours.

**Readings for the week of December 27, 2020**

Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1] or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [7a, 8a]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40  
 Monday: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18  
 Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 [11a]/Lk 2:22-35  
 Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 [11a]/Lk 2:36-40  
 Thursday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13 [11a]/Jn 1:1-18  
 Friday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 [2a]/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21  
 Saturday: 1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 [3cd]/Jn 1:19-28  
 Next Sunday: Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 [cf. 11]/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

**Las lecturas de la semana del 27 de diciembre de 2020**

Domingo: Eclo 3, 2-6. 12-14 o Gn 15, 1-6; 21, 1-3/Sal 127, 1-2. 3. 4-5 [cfr. 1] o Sal 104, 1-2. 3-4. 5-6. 8-9 [7. 8]/Col 3, 12-21 o 3, 12-17 o Heb 11, 8. 11-12. 17-19/Lc 2, 22-40 o 2, 22. 39-40  
 Lunes: 1 Jn 1, 5—2, 2/Sal 123, 2-3. 4-5. 7-8 [7]/Mt 2, 13-18  
 Martes: 1 Jn 2, 3-11/Sal 95, 1-2. 2-3. 5-6 [11]/Lc 2, 22-35  
 Miércoles: 1 Jn 2, 12-17/Sal 95, 7-8. 8-9. 10 [11]/Lc 2, 36-40  
 Jueves: 1 Jn 2, 18-21/Sal 95, 1-2. 11-12. 13 [11]/Jn 1, 1-18  
 Viernes: Nm 6, 22-27/Sal 66, 2-3. 5. 6. 8 [2]/Gal 4, 4-7/Lc 2, 16-21  
 Sábado: 1 Jn 2, 22-28/Sal 97, 1. 2-3. 3-4 [3]/Jn 1, 19-28  
 Domingo siguiente: Is 60, 1-6/Sal 71, 1-2. 7-8. 10-11. 12-13 [cfr. 11]/Ef 3, 2-3. 5-6/Mt 2, 1-12

## Faith Formation

"For Unto Us a child is born," not in the Ritz Carlton or even a Quality Inn, but in a manger... a feeding trough for animals.

Jesus' simple birthplace becomes very symbolic for his life. He did not come into this world to be a "King," like everyone had hoped, but a servant. He came to demonstrate "unconditional love" in a world that needed it.

Perhaps that is our challenge this year. How do we show love to each other? How do we let our celebration of Christmas, this year, impact us going forward? The Church celebrates Christmas for a few weeks after December 25th because we believe it is that important and significant to our faith. How can we also demonstrate that same level of care for this event by serving others? Service comes in many different forms: from caring for our spouse, to helping a neighbor with a cup of sugar, and everywhere in between. Perhaps, this Christmas we are just a little more attuned to the needs of others and are a little more willing to care for everyone we see everywhere we go.

Jesus was born in a manger because there was no room in the Inn. Our challenge is to make extra room in our hearts to let Jesus reside within us. Jesus wants to touch our hearts and help our family homes be places of love and grace so our children will always remember Christmas 2020.

Merry Christmas!

- **Mark** ([youthminister@stfrancis-church.org](mailto:youthminister@stfrancis-church.org))

## FAITH FORMATION



## School News



✠ School resumes Monday, January 4th. May 2021 bring many blessings to our parishioners!

## Music and Liturgy



### MusicNotes

#### MERRY CHRISTMAS!

While I never would have expected the circumstances of the past year, I have been trying to reflect on the many blessings I was fortunate enough to experience. A major blessing has been the gift of this parish. Certainly, it was an odd time to begin a parish music director job - liturgies with sparse attendance, live streaming, no choir - and yet, the welcoming spirit of this parish community could not be contained. Ministering at this parish has been a great source of joy and comfort. Know of my prayers for a peaceful, healthy, and joyous Christmas season!

#### LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

The print deadline for this article came before we released the new ministry schedule. That is why you won't see the usual outline below. Know that the most current schedule is always available by logging into Ministry Scheduler Pro OR by checking the copy posted in the Liturgy Room (formerly known as the Cry Room).

- **Zack** ([litfranc@stfrancis-church.org](mailto:litfranc@stfrancis-church.org))

*We pray for the repose of the soul of:*

*Raymond A. Kosis*

*(November 15, 1950 - December 14, 2020)*

*Dennis Fohrman*

*(October 15, 1941 - December 15, 2020)*



*May they rest in God's love and peace.*

**WHAT CAN OUR FAMILIES LEARN FROM THE HOLY FAMILY?**

The family faces many challenges these days. Marriage, the foundation of family life, is threatened by divorce, relativism, and secularization. Same-sex and "de facto" unions undermine the meaning of marriage, calling into question its very purpose. Divorce is expected in almost half of today's marriages. Many children are raised without discipline, and their potential is dashed by abuse or neglect.

On Sunday, December 27, the Church celebrates the feast of the Holy Family, the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. When Pope Paul VI made a pilgrimage to Nazareth, where the Holy Family lived, he offered three bits of advice for families so we could form our families after the model of the Holy Family.

First, the Holy Family offered silence. The Pope said that we need this wonderful state of mind to combat the pressures and noise of the world. A silent interior life is free of struggles and distraction; it is a life of constancy, whereas the noise of the world is disruptive and distracting. It is in interior silence that we contemplate and have communion with God. If we wish to be holy families, we must pray.

Next, the Holy Family is a community of love and sharing. It serves as a model of what the family should be, the perfect setting for rearing children - and for this there is no substitute. Pope Paul VI said that building a community of love and sharing is crucial to teaching children the virtues. This community is also necessary to form within children the raw material for selfless, loving relationships with God and their future spouses and children.

Finally, The Holy Family taught discipline, which means instruction or knowledge. God gave parents the duty to discipline their children. In the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, we learn about work and the discipline it entails. Allow your children to help you in your daily tasks at home. By doing so, they learn the virtues of diligence, self-discipline, responsibility, and the value of work. Obedience to their parents' will, is a training exercise in obedience to the will of the Father; even Jesus was obedient to Joseph and Mary and grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:51-52).

Peace,

Deacon Terry

**SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD:**

**JANUARY 1.** We have Pope Paul VI to thank for the 1974 enshrining of the devotion to Mary into our calendar on January 1. Just as Christmas honors Jesus as the "Prince of Peace", the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, hon-

ors Mary as the "Queen of Peace." New Year's Day is also designated as the "World Day of Peace," further acknowledging the role of Mary in our hearts and in our world. On this holy feast day, we take a moment as we start our new year to honor our Blessed Mother, who in her "yes" to God brought our Savior into the world to redeem us.

Let us pray...

**God of heaven and earth,  
you came to us and took our earthly flesh  
through the gift of Mary's yes.  
She is our Mother in faith,  
as she is your earthly mother.**

**We are thankful beyond our ability to thank you  
for the gift of her Son as our brother and savior.  
Through her self-giving,  
we have been reconciled to you.**

**Bless us as we begin this New Year  
and endow us with the desire and ability  
to create a world of peace.**

**We ask all this,  
through the intercession of Mary to you,  
one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.**



A big **THANK YOU** to all who have participated in the Advent Angel Tree gift giving program. This year, donations to our Advent Angel Tree provided gifts for over 25 families and helped these families have a Blessed Christmas! Many thanks to all of you who have been so generous in donating to this program. It is through these programs that the love of Christ continues to shine bright!

## **ENTERING INTO AND CELEBRATING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON.**

Christmas is not the end of Advent. It is a real season of the Church year. We usually miss it because the consumer society that some of us live in has nothing to offer us, except for days to return gifts. Too often, within days after Christmas day, the decorations are down and it is over.

This year, let's try to really celebrate Christmas and the days that follow. Let's enter a new Season, which has its own spirit and desires and graces.

Special Feasts begin the season and we continue the story, so that we enter more deeply into the story of Jesus' coming to be one with our life, but also that we might enter more deeply into how Jesus comes this year to bless each of us.

### **ASKING FOR THE GRACE WE DESIRE.**

Sometimes we come up to Christmas eve and Christmas day, as well as the days after, with little or no time for formal prayer at all. Every moment, it seems, is filled with some preparation, some tradition, having people over to our house or going to others' homes. Even those of us who are home bound or those of us who might be alone these days sometimes have difficulty "getting to" the heart of the Gift offered us these days.

This year, let's ask for the grace or graces we desire. We may have many desires swirling around inside, or we may feel so fragmented that we don't know what we desire. Check out our Desires Page, for words that might help us with words to name our own desires.

### **KEEPING FOCUSED IN THE "BACKGROUND."**

The key to finding intimacy with God in the midst of each of our activities is to go through our day with an awareness of what it all means. With focus and a conscious attention to our desires, we can maintain an alive "background," even while rushing somewhere, opening packages, eating dinner or avoiding a conflict.

For example, while going to a family dinner or while preparing a meal - even though there might be music on or other conversation happening around me - I can take brief moments to "collect" who I am and why I'm here and what I desire for this moment in this day. In a

few simple deep breaths, I can say, "O Lord, as you came into our world to share our lives, please come into this day and give us peace. Please bless me, my family and friends at this meal with a little more love. I hand over to you my anxieties and fears, as I ask you for your own peace." The Christmas Prayers linked in the Resources column offer ways to turn to God through the normal activities of our days. Our hope is that by reading these prayer suggestions, we might more easily use our own words in similar situations throughout our day.

### **LETTING RITUALS AND GESTURES BE OPEN TO GRACE.**

We hope that we will be able to celebrate the Eucharist or some common prayer with our faith community. Let's let that celebration be richly open to grace, with our attention and prayer. With focused attention, we can let many very ordinary parts of our days become prayerful and rich with grace. Imagine how different this Christmas would be if we let every hand-

shake, touch on the arm, every hug, every kiss, be an opportunity - even for a few brief seconds - to turn to God in thanksgiving and with a prayer. "Thank you so much for Ann; she is such a gift. Please give her your freedom and peace." "Chris is such a wonderful partner. Please fill our marriage with faith, generosity and self-sacrificing love." "Lord, you know the struggles I have with Michael; let me be as compassionate and loving with him as you are."



In these or similar brief prayers, our very ordinary gestures of greeting might be transformed and full of faith. Any other activity can become a ritual, if I let it have meaning: turning on the Christmas tree lights, ("Lord, let your Light brighten this house this day."), opening the front door to guests, ("Lord, we open our house and our hearts to the gifts you bring us."), sitting down after a big meal, ("Lord, I feel full, in so many ways; thank you.").

### **AND GIVING THANKS AT THE END.**

At the end of our day, perhaps as we change our clothes, or just as we get into bed, we can give thanks for the wonder of God's gift to us in the coming of Jesus into our world, and for the graces that came to us through his coming to us today.

<https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/secondweek.html>

## The Greater Catholic Community

**ASSISI HEIGHTS JOB OPENING.** Do you know anyone who would like to join our great staff in Rochester's most unique facility? The Residential Life Assistant supports the Director of Residential Life for the well-being of Sisters residing at Assisi Heights to provide support and implement opportunities and events for the communal, social, ministerial, spiritual, liturgical, and congregational life of the Assisi Heights Sisters. Qualified candidates have a Bachelor's Degree in Pastoral Ministry, or the equivalent, and two years of gerontology or long-term care experience. <https://rochesterfranciscan.org/employment-2/>

**HEALTH OFFICE NURSE.** There are two opportunities available for employment in the Rochester Catholic School Health Offices. These positions are both part-time and cover multiple Catholic School Buildings. For more information, please look on the Rochester Public Schools website <https://www.rochesterschools.org/> under Careers

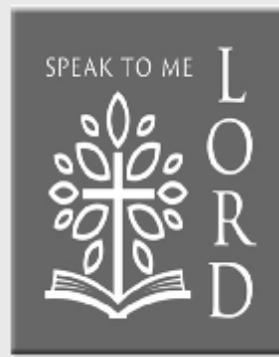
**JOB OPENING @ PAX.** Pax Christi Parish, a vibrant, diverse Catholic parish of 1600 families in Northwest Rochester, MN, seeks a full-time Director of Liturgy and Pastoral Ministry to plan and coordinate liturgical and pastoral ministries as well as recruit, train, and schedule liturgical and pastoral ministers. The ideal candidate will possess a degree in theology, liturgy or pastoral ministry or equivalent experience and have excellent organizational and communication skills. Please send cover letter, resume, and 3 professional references to: Jessica Scully, Parish Administrator, Pax Christi Parish, 4135 18th Ave NW, Rochester, MN 55901, or email to [Jessica.Scully@PaxChristiChurch.org](mailto:Jessica.Scully@PaxChristiChurch.org) by January 4. Full position description is posted to our website: [www.paxchristichurch.org/employment](http://www.paxchristichurch.org/employment)



**2020 STEWARDSHIP.** We humbly ask those who have been blessed with an abundance this year to consider making a special gift to help the Church of St. Francis of Assisi end the calendar year with a balanced budget. We sincerely appreciate your generosity!

**REMINDER:** Please bring your contributions for parish support up-to-date before December 31st. We are so grateful to all of you who honor your commitment.

**HAVE YOU MOVED?** As we prepare to mail out 2020 Year-End Contribution Statements, please help us by keeping our records current. Please notify the Parish Center office at #288-7313 if you have recently moved. Thank you so much!



### ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE:

**December 27, 2020**  
**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**

Tragedy and disappointment are inevitable. What sees you through this? There will be challenges, changes, unexpected circumstances, interrupted plans, hurts, and injustices experienced by every human being at some point in their lives. We will be asked to adjust our plans, change course, and even encounter suffering and death. Where do we learn all of the lessons we need to live life well? Some of them we learn along the way but much of what we bring to life, positive and negative, comes from our early beginnings, our families. This is our early world and provides the blueprint for how we see the bigger, more inclusive world, which unfolds before us.

Our families of origin can be sources of grace, heartache or a combination of both. Families are intended to be pivotal in providing us with proper social structure and understanding, a support system, lessons about relationships and communication, and the unconditional acceptance and love we so desperately crave. They can also determine whether we have an accessible and healthy relationship with God. Many of life's challenges can literally bring us to our knees and require that we possess a strength of character that resides well beyond the superficialities of our world. At some point we will all need three coping gifts that can be given to us only by God: faith, hope, and love. Our families help us learn that we are not the ones responsible for their creation, but God!

Our experience of early family life colors all of our relationships and what we expect to achieve from life in general. Resolving conflicts, dealing with difficulty and suffering, celebrating accomplishments, prioritizing our needs, listening to God's call, understanding relationships, understanding disappointment, learning about the virtues and living a centered focused life are all lessons our families either succeed in teaching or do not. To succeed, as God has designed and ordered our world, is to discover his presence and then trust that Presence. The Holy Family can teach even the most dysfunctional family how to best use God's gifts of faith, hope, and love to find him and do his will. Their simple humble example is always before us, showing us the way. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

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