We extend a warm welcome to all our parishioners, all new members and guests celebrating with us today.

December 6, 2020
Second Sunday of Advent

Parish Office: 973-835-0480 / 0489
Fax: 973-835-3277
Email: stfrancis@optonline.net / frgregg@optonline.net
Website: stfrancishaskell.org
C.C.D.: 973-835-1946

We are a Catholic Community, rooted in the Trinity, sustained by the Eucharist and the Word of God, called to witness, to serve and to educate.

Parish Membership
You are invited to join our parish family. We are committed to meeting the needs of all members. Please register by contacting our Parish Office. (Please notify the Parish Office of change in address or phone number and if you are moving out of the parish.)

Religious Devotions
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena is on Monday after 8:00 am Mass
Novena Prayers in Honor of the Blessed Mother and St. Anthony: Are said every Tuesday after 8:00 am Mass
Prayer Group: Meets at 11:00 am - every Thursday
Adoration: Every Friday after Mass
Divine Mercy: Daily recitation of Chaplet after Mass

Ministries
Join the various ministries and associations:
- Ministry of Lector, Eucharist, Usher, Altar Server, Respect Life and Lazarus Ministry, St. Francis Ladies Guild, Emmaus Prayer Group, Youth Group, Carnival, Knights of Columbus and other volunteers associated with the Church of St. Francis of Assisi.

Mass Schedule
Weekends
Saturday: 5:30 pm
Sunday: 7:30 am, 10:00 am & 12:00 noon

Weekdays & Holy Days
See schedule in bulletin.

Religious Education Office / 973-835-1946
Mrs. Maryann Marren, Coordinator
Mrs. Betty Norton, Secretary

Youth Ministry / 973-835-0480
Our youth ministry is open to all Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Grade students. Come join us.

Baptism: Parishioners are welcome to have their children baptized at St. Francis of Assisi. Please call the rectory for an appointment to discuss the arrangements.

Sacrament of Penance: Saturday: 4:30-5:00 pm or at other times upon request.

Marriage: Arrangements to be made at least 1 year in advance by calling the Parish Office.

R.C.I.A.: Anyone interested in an update of their faith or wanting to become Catholic, call the Parish Office.

Ministry of the Sick and Elderly: For the confined, elderly and/or shut-in, be they at home or in the hospital, please call the Rectory. Holy Communion is offered to any person permanently or temporarily homebound. For the seriously sick and dying contact the Rectory immediately.
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 6, 2020

Mass Intentions
THRU WEEK

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2020
5:30 P.M.  Ralph Cortellessa
Stephen Koslowski
Andy Pyryt
Sharon Acquaire

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020
7:30 A.M.  Parishioners
Teresa Tachine
10:00 A.M.  Joseph Negrini, Sr.
Gerald D’Onofrio
12 NOON  Elaine Arendas
Florence Korkuch

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020
8:00 A.M.  Kathy Boyle
7:30 P.M.  Theodore Galinus

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020
9:00 A.M.  Eleanor Leppin
Eleanor Bolsman
Jared Fisher
Paula Johnson

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2020
8:00 A.M.  Bishop Jan Niemiec

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020
8:00 A.M.  Joseph & Gea Giavannone

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2020
5:30 P.M  Ralph Cortellessa
Alvin Shough, Jr.
Sharon Acquaire
Gerald D’Onofrio

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2020
7:30 A.M.  Parishioners
Ted Sagan
10:00 A.M.  Adele Jensen
12 NOON  Peter Caporale
Gerald D’Onofrio

Pray daily for our servicemen and women serving their country.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:
Mary Carton  Jacob Hicks  Judy Moran
Ava Rae Nebbia  Matthew Polifonte  Gary Ragusa
Evelyn Means  Bob Delventhal  Ryder Sasso
George Link  Michael Soojian  Valentina Manuele
Susan Nichols-Boggio  Jacqueline Altamore
Mike Tidaback  Robert Moreno  Lydia Rivera
Jerome Foray  Loretta LaSala  Infant Ronan Suatoni
Patrick Keegan  Manuel Esguerra  Michael Gotti
Marianne Dorn  Robert Nebbia  Christopher Berry
Frank Polglaze  Noah Lorenco  Florence Grim
Josephine Venezia  Alex Coronel  Geraldine Kearns
Alice Roslund  Alejandro Salcedo  Bernie Shushan
Jessica Skorubski  Patricia Charlesworth

Alexander Saraceni  Christie Farias
DECEASED:  Guiseppa Kozlowsky  Peter T. Kraft

WEEKLY COLLECTION
Sunday, November 22, 2020 - $2,452.00
Sunday November 29, 2020 - $3,958.00
Thank you for your continued support.

WEEKLY REFLECTION
Do you know the favor of the Lord? Every 50 years the people of Israel were commanded to celebrate a Year of Jubilee - a year of favor by the Lord (Leviticus 25:10-12). God did not want his people to forget all the blessings and favors he had shown them over the years. Isaiah prophesied in a year of Jubilee that God would send his anointed one to bring his people back from their time of exile. The anointed one would bring good news (the same word as "gospel") - news of freedom for those who were oppressed by sin, darkness, despair, and brokenness (Isaiah 61:1-2).

When John the Baptist announced the imminent coming of God’s Anointed One, the Messiah, the religious leaders questioned his authority to speak so boldly in God’s name. They asked him bluntly, "Who are you?" and "What do you say about yourself?" They wanted to know if he was really sent by God.

John had no doubt and no mistaken identity about his call and mission. In all humility and sincerity he said he was only a voice bidding people to get ready for the arrival of the greatest Ruler of all, God’s anointed King and Messiah. John the Baptist bridges the Old and New Testaments. He is the last of the Old Testament prophets who points the way to the Messiah. He is the first of the New Testament witnesses and martyrs. He is the herald who prepares the way for Jesus and who announces his mission to the people: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world! (John 1:29). John saw from a distance what the Messiah would come to accomplish - our redemption from slavery to sin and our adoption as sons and daughters of God, our heavenly Father. Do you recognize who you are in Christ? The Lord Jesus has come to restore us to friendship with God and he has made us citizens of heaven - his everlasting kingdom of peace and justice.
LITURGY OF THE WORD
The Second Sunday in Advent.

The theme of the Readings for today is clearly spelled out in both the First Reading and the Gospel. It is "Prepare a way for the Lord." This does not refer to roads or highways or, God forbid, freeways, although the First Reading does use the word "highway." What these readings are saying is: "Remove any obstacle that prevents Our Lord Jesus from coming to you in all His spiritual glory." This is a preparedness of the heart.

The First Reading is from the Prophet Isaiah (40:1-11). The prophet is speaking to the people of Israel soon after the end of the Babylonian Exile, (late 6th century BC). The Israelites are returning with new hopes and dreams and a new determination to be faithful and obedient to God. So the prophet is preaching to them to open their hearts and clear away anything that would prevent the God of Israel from entering and being with them in spirit. This was only partially successful. What would be your response today?

The Responsorial Psalm (85:9-14). Here the psalmist continues the message of Isaiah above, telling his people and us that if we give our hearts to God, He will give us blessings beyond our wildest dreams, beginning with peace and all the other spiritual blessings to follow.

The Second Reading is from the Second Letter of St. Peter (3:8-14). In this seldom read letter, Peter admonishes us to be prepared for the coming of the Lord at our own death, as well as at the end of the world. If we look to this life only, what will we have when Christ comes for us? This world will eventually pass away, so why hang on to things of this world?

The Gospel Reading is from the beginning of the Gospel of Mark (1:1-8). In his opening statement, Mark repeats the line from the Prophet Isaiah about preparing a way for the Lord. This was John the Baptist's entire message and it refers to an interior or spiritual preparedness. John knew that someone "greater than he" would come soon and that everyone should be prepared. That message is as true today as it was in the time of John or Mark or even Isaiah. In the days of the Jewish kings, it was common practice that when a king would travel, he would send out servants to make sure the roads were cleared and safe for his arrival and passage. The readings above use these images and the message but intend them to mean clearing a spiritual passage in our heart for Christ to freely enter and be with us at Christmas time.

2020 DIOCESAN MINISTRIES APPEAL
“Love Thy Neighbor”
As the year comes fast to an end, and many are planning on how to make a final year-end charitable contribution that has the most impact, please consider the many lives that are helped because of the support given to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal. These are your neighbors, your friends, our senior priests and seminarians and urban school students. All of us can play a part in the Diocesan Ministries Appeal – as either a contributor to the cause or a recipient of its mission – and all are blessed as a result. Please make the Diocesan Ministries Appeal a priority in your year-end philanthropy. Gifts can be made by check, credit cards, through gifts of securities or on-line at www.2020appeal.org

NEWS FROM THE LADIES’ GUILD
The Ladies’ Guild Soup Sale was a huge success, thanks to the efforts of many soup makers and soup sellers whose generous gift of time and energy benefited our parish and especially our customers (always necessary). It was our pleasure to provide a little boost to general morale, through the timeless symbol of food, especially soups, from traditional to adventurous.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR SCHEDULE
Sacrament of Reconciliation
Reconciliation Service – 7 PM (with 3 priests)
Individual Reconciliation
Saturday, December 19th – 3 – 5 PM

Sacrament of Holy Eucharist
Christmas Vigil: Thursday, December 24th
4:00 PM - Children’s Mass – Main Church
4:10 PM - Children’s Mass – Church Hall
6:00 PM - Christmas Eve Mass
10:00 PM - Christmas Eve Mass

Christmas Day: Friday, December 25, 2020
7:30 AM 10:00 AM 12 Noon

New Year’s Eve: Thursday, December 31, 2020
7:30 PM

New Year’s Day: Friday, January 1, 2021
10:00 AM
Stand Up For The Unborn

I remember reading an article about the U.S. birth rate that had dropped for the second year in a row and the birth rate that year set the lowest level in a century. The experts thought it may be because of the recession or it may be because of a decline in immigration to the United States.

Have they never heard of abortion??

Abortion kills approximately 4,000 babies in the womb each day. Can’t they do the math and see how this decreases the population? We must not sit back and let innocent babies be killed. We are Americans! Whatever happened to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all?

Since when do we have the right to play God? To choose which baby lives or dies? We do not have

“Hope In Our Darkness"
Christmas Classics

Recorded here at St. Francis of Assisi parish in 2020!

Thanks to Fr. Greg, one of our Diocesan priests, Fr. David McDonnell, has recorded a new Christmas CD here at St. Francis! Fr. Greg contributed his own special gifts of hospitality and artistic vision to help make it happen. This Fr. David’s third CD, and each has raised a substantial amount of money for those of our Diocese in need at Christmas (his parish does not benefit from the proceeds- it all goes to charity). He is the lead vocalist and is accompanied by a variety soloists and vocal ensembles musicians. The songs are some of your favorite Christmas classics, and the arrangements are beautifully done. The price is $15 per CD. The CD’s will be available for purchase after all Masses on December 13th and 14th. They make a wonderful Christmas gift – not only for those who receive them, but also for those in need who will benefit from your purchase at this special time of year.

SUPER 50/50 RAFFLE

Congratulations to the winners of the Super 50/50 raffle drawn on Thanksgiving morning after 9AM Mass:

- 25% - Maria Bambuch - $1,104.00
- 15% - Maria Parian - $662.40
- 10% - Lish Redner - $441.60

Thank you to everyone who took part in this fundraiser.

CHRISTMASTIME
AND EVER AFTER

The Christmas season will come and go
But never will God’s love –
He’s with us every day we know,
Embracing from above!
His heart so gives to everyone
A hopeful place in life.
He’s here to seize what brings us sorrow;
Though in the hour of Christmas Day
When families join through love,
We often lose the sight of God
Who watches from above.
Yet His embrace and virtuous heart
Will always mark each day –
Though Christmastime will come and go
His love for us will stay!

Dianne Cogar

LECTORS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2020
7:30 A.M. Erika Reid
10:00 A.M. Chris Marren
12 NOON Mary Avella
Reading for Second Sunday of Advent

IS 40:1-5, 9-11
Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!

Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Go up on to a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news!

Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm; here is his reward with him, his recompense before him.

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

Responsorial Psalm

Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

2 PT 3:8-14
Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard “delay,” but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved in flames and the elements melted by fire.

But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.

Gospel MK 1:1-8
The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

John was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey.

And this is what he proclaimed: “One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”
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