

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH

856 WASHINGTON STREET, BRAINTREE, MA 02184

Parish Office Phone: 781-843-1332 • Fax: 781-848-0976 • Website: www.sfab.org

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM



Pastoral Staff: Rev. Paul Clifford, Pastor
Rev. Donald Delay, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Robert Milling, Senior Priest in Residence
Mrs. Linda Muldoon, Pastoral Associate
Rev. Mr. Joseph MacDonald, Director of Music
Mr. Brian Cote, School Principal, 781-848-0842
Mrs. Diane Hopkins, Religious Education, 781-848-3238
Mrs. Ronna Petrilli, Religious Education, 781-848-3238

Parish Office: Mr. Rick Timmerman, Business Manager
Miss Patty Kinnally, Office Manager

Mass Schedule: Saturday Evening – 4:00 PM
Sunday – 7:00, 9:30 and 11:30 AM
Weekday – Monday thru Friday 7:00 AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday – 2:30 to 3:45 PM

Sacrament of Marriage: A minimum of ten months notice is required. Please call the Parish Office to schedule an appointment prior to booking a hall.

Sacrament of Baptism: First and Third Sunday of the month at 1:30 PM.
Please call the Parish Office to register.

Sacrament of the Sick and Communion Calls: Please notify the Parish Office if anyone is hospitalized or unable to attend Mass because of illness.

Community Meetings: School Hall Alcoholics Anonymous – Friday 8:00 PM

Food Pantry: Thursdays – please call the Parish Office one day in advance.



Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 17, 2016

4:00 PM Franklin Copley & Steven Lemieux Anniversary

Sunday, December 18, 2016

7:00 AM Salvatore Lombardo Anniversary

9:30 AM Patricia Salvaggio Memorial

11:30 AM Anna & Rinaldo Ventresca Memorial

Monday, December 19, 2016

7:00 AM Parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi

Tuesday, December 20, 2016

7:00 AM

Wednesday, December 21, 2016

7:00 AM

Thursday, December 22, 2016

7:00 AM

Friday, December 23, 2016

7:00 AM Acela Livelo Spec. Intention

Saturday, December 24, 2016

4:00 PM **Merry Christmas**

Sunday, December 18, 2016

7:00 AM **Merry Christmas**

9:30 AM **Merry Christmas**

11:30AM **Merry Christmas**

Thank you for your offerings for last weekend:
Percentage of offertory by Envelope/EFT—74%

If you are interested in the Online Giving option to simplify your weekly contributions, please contact the parish office.

Collection Report

Offertory Envelopes	\$ 5,610.00
Offertory/Loose	\$ 5,489.00
EFT Weekly Average	\$ 1,253.75
Total Offertory	\$ 9,352.75

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH WHEN PLANNING YOUR ESTATE. Thank you!



The St. Francis/St. Clare of Assisi Collaborative Mass schedule for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day is as follows:

St. Francis of Assisi

Saturday, December 24

4:00PM Upper and Lower Church, 6:00PM and 11:00PM

Sunday, December 25

7:00AM, 9:30AM and 11:30AM

St. Clare

Saturday, December 24

4:00PM and 6:00PM

Sunday, December 25

8:15AM, 10:15AM and 6:00PM

Please see the flyer at church entrances for a complete list of Advent Confession opportunities.



A St. Vincent DePaul Reflection for the 4th Sunday of Advent, December 18:

In today's Gospel, we hear that Jesus will be named Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." The mystery of the birth of Jesus is supremely a mystery of love. May each Christmas find us more and more like him: more humble, more holy, more happy, and more full of God. **So far, in the month of December, through your gifts, our Society of St. Vincent de Paul was able to help the poor and suffering to face their hardships and fears, by assisting our clients with food, limited financial assistance, and Christmas gifts for their children.**

GRAND ANNUAL UPDATE

As of Wednesday our Grand Annual Collection was \$49,600 from 252 contributors (13% of Appeals sent). Thank you to all who have contributed. If you did not receive an Appeal letter or have misplaced your copy, please call the parish office at 781-843-1332 and we'll be happy to send you a new one.



Pray for Vocations

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From the desk of the
Pastoral Associate
Mrs. Linda Muldoon



The article below, written by Eileen Wirth, is taken from today's Daily Reflection from Creighton University's Online Ministries at www.onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/121816.html and used with permission.

"When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home." Matthew

At this time of year, we are so focused on Mary and the Baby Jesus that we often overlook what a remarkably courageous figure Joseph was in responding to his mysterious call in a dream to take the pregnant Mary into his home as his wife.

I suspect that if I had a dream where an angel commanded me to do something similar that I would wake up thanking heaven that the message was only a dream. Yet the Christmas story would have had a very different outcome if St. Joseph had done the 1st century equivalent of taking 2 aspirin and moving on because Mary's explanation of her situation was crazy. Joseph obviously had a lot more faith than most of us.

So what can we learn from his response to this call? While I'm no mystic, I think of the times when I have felt God calling me to do something important. For example, I sensed God's hand at work in my life when I adopted my 2 children. I also felt God calling me to teach at Creighton as a vocation not just a job. I didn't quite get it but after falling in love with Ignatian spirituality at Creighton, this intuition made perfect sense. St. Ignatius tells us that God is at work in our lives just as He was in Joseph's.

Take a few minutes to reflect on your life to identify a time when God has called you to do something that has made all the difference. You just have to listen and act in faith when this happens, even if the meaning is unclear.

What great gifts we have already received—and it's still a week before we plow into the presents under our trees! Have a blessed Christmas and say a prayer thanking St. Joseph for showing us how to respond to calls from God.



THE "O ANTIPHONS" OF ADVENT

Are you looking to add something new to your prayers during the week before Christmas? Many circumstances prompt an "Oh..." from us at this time of year—the night sky, a soft snowfall, the smell of freshly baked cookies, a beautiful carol, a card from a faraway friend, the kindness of a stranger. How about an "O" for the Lord? The longest of the antiphons below contains 25 words. Even if we pray slowly, 1 second per word, it's still less than a 30-second pause in our day. Deacon John McDonough, may he rest in peace, used to ask, "Do you have a buck for Jesus?" He then passed it along to help someone in need. Do we have 30 seconds this week for Jesus?

The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the *Magnificat* canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

December 17

O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!

December 18

O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!

December 19

O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!

December 20

O Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!

December 21

O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

December 22

O King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!

December 23

O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!

Parish Info and events of note



From
Mr. Brian Cote
Principal

- **St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry...** We are open Thursdays from 10AM-12NN and 2-4PM. If you need groceries, please call on Wednesday so that we can be prepared for your visit. Referrals and limited financial assistance are available for parishioners in need. Please call the parish office for more information.
- **Prayer Shawls...** next meets Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00PM in the St. Francis church hall. If you knit or crochet or would like to learn—in an atmosphere of soft music, prayer and quiet conversation, please give us a try! 
- **Our Bereavement Group** will resume in February (2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 1-2:30PM), and we will use the book, *The New Day Journal*. This book is “a journey from grief to healing for people coping with the loss of a loved one.” Meanwhile, if you have just experienced or are struggling with the loss of a loved one, we have resources, referral information, and lots of tissues. Help and a cup of tea are a phone call away at 781.843.1332. 
- **Visits to the Sick and Homebound...** If you or someone you know cannot attend Mass due to surgery, illness or infirmity, you can request a Communion visit. Our staff and trained home visitors are available and willing to come to you. Please call the parish office for more information.
- **Parish Prayer Line...** To be placed (or to pray) on the parish prayer line, please call the parish office.
- **Military Service...** If someone you know is newly deployed and you would like their info to appear on the board, please call or email the parish office. Thank you.
- **RCIA is the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.** It begins with a time to ask your questions and discern whether God is calling you to something more. Are you interested in becoming Catholic? Maybe you were baptized but missed the opportunity to receive your first holy communion or be confirmed. Do you hunger, do you thirst for something more? Do you want to learn about the food that endures for eternal life, to taste and see the goodness of the Lord? Maybe you have questions about our faith or your own circumstances. You can reach out to a member of our staff at any time by contacting the parish office or join us for an inquiry session, soon to be scheduled. If the words above do not resonate with you, please pass them along to someone you know who may be interested. God works through us, especially when we pay attention.

The Holiday Calendars Are Here! Thinking of stocking stuffers and Christmas gifts? Have scratch tickets crossed your mind? A \$10 scratch ticket gives you ONE chance to win, BUT wouldn't a wiser investment be a \$10 ticket on 31 chances to win \$5,000 in prizes? St. Francis of Assisi has you covered! **On December 17, and 18 following all of the masses, SFA school children, families, and staff will be selling Christmas calendars for \$10 each.** Prizes will be drawn for each day beginning January 1 through 31 with prizes totaling over \$5,000! Stock up for all of your Christmas needs and don't forget the mailman, the milkman, the bus drivers, CCD teacher, co-workers, and more! In advance, we would like to thank you for your continued support of our school.



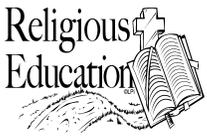
Calling all Alumni – As families will soon gather to celebrate Christmas, St. Francis of Assisi School would like to offer its alumni four great ways to stay connected so that you can receive news about our school, alumni events, and alumni news. But, we need your help by updating your contact information by:

- Completing our on-line Alumni Update Form located on our school's website (www.sfab.org/sfabschool);
- Joining us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/sfabraintree
- Sending your current contact information (name, address, city, state, zip, telephone, year of graduation) and email address as well as news about what you have been up to alumni@sfab.org; or
- Contacting us at (781)-848-0842.

Help us spread the news to other SFA alumni and parents of alumni and we look forward to reconnecting with you. Thank you for staying in touch.

Enroll Today

St. Francis of Assisi School offers a rolling admissions policy. For more information regarding our admissions procedure, simply visit our school's website (www.sfab.org) or contact us at (781) 848-0842. Are you interested learning more about what SFA has to offer for your child, its curriculum and extracurricular activities? Arrange your personalized visit/tour with our principal by contacting Brian Cote at (781) 848-0842 x12 or emailing bcote@sfab.org. We look forward to possibly serving your family in the spiritual, academic, and social development of your child.



Mrs. Diane Hopkins
Mrs. Ronna Petrilli
Phone 781.848.3238

Classes meet as scheduled for Religious Education
Sunday, December 18 10:30-11:30 Gr. 1-5
Classes in the school.

Parents please walk your child over to the school immediately following Mass.

Sunday, December 18 5:00 – 7:00 Gr. 10

We will be attending the 6:00 Mass as part of class with the Confirmation I students.

NEXT CLASS: January 8.

We will be attending the 6:00 Mass as part of class.

Monday, December 19 3:50-4:50 Gr. 1-5
Classes meet in the school.

Tuesday, December 20 3:50-4:50 Gr. 1-5
Classes meet in the school.

Tuesday, December 20 6:30- 7:45 Gr. 6-8
Classes meet in the school..

Thursday, December 22 6:00-7:30 Gr. 9
No classes this week.

Next class January 5, 2017.

CONFIRMATION II (Grade 10) - IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Important Note/Retreat: All Confirmation Candidates (grade 10) have been assigned a date of either Saturday, January 14th or January 21st to attend a retreat being held at St. Francis of Assisi. Please review the information received regarding the upcoming retreat. **Parents, kindly return your assignment to our office at St. Francis of Assisi as soon as possible.**

Many of you still need to pass in your **Sponsor Information Sheet.** A parent cannot be a sponsor according to the Code of Canon Law (Canon 893). (The form can be found in your welcome package or download one from the sfab website (www.sfab.org) found under the Activities Tab.

During this season of Advent, many of our young people have been out in the community spreading comfort and joy by giving their hearts, hands, and energy. We continue to pray that through them others see the presence of God and the world becomes brighter.



"We find ourselves by giving ourselves away. Your life is a gift, and the gift only has value if you give it away. Don't keep the gift to yourself." John R. Wood, Taken from Ordinary Lives, Extraordinary Mission

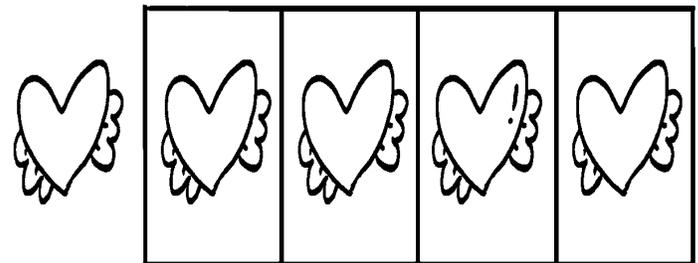
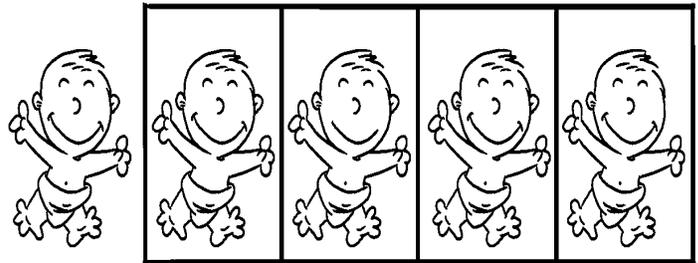
Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

Stay Close and God Bless,
Diane Hopkins and Ronna Petrilli



 **Puzzle**

In each series color the image within the box that is identical to the one outside the box. Make sure to notice all the details.



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Sharing the Gospel

God brought Jesus into the world as a tiny baby. Jesus was God's Son. He was so powerful that he could have gotten anything he wanted. But Jesus did not come to earth to be a rich, selfish ruler. He did not need a palace or fancy clothes. Jesus came to show you that God is with you all the time. He was born to be the king over your life. He gave up his own life to rescue you from your sins, so that you could be close to God forever.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to rescue me.

Something to Draw

Draw a picture of baby Jesus.

Mission for the Week

Tonight after dinner, ask your family to light some candles, turn off the lights, and sing some of your favorite Christmas songs about Jesus.



From the Archdiocese of Boston

December 18 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent

Today's readings are so full of hope! "and they shall name him Emmanuel", which means "God is with us." This week will see the darkest / shortest day of the year, but then, second by second, each day is longer. Even in the darkness, God is with us - Emmanuel. The world is moving at warp speed – shop, buy, return, shop, buy again, wrap. The noise is constant – and not all from celestial angels. But, God is with us. Like Paul, we are called to be disciples, and set apart to share the gospel – the Good News - of God.



Your Christmas Offering

This Christmas, the collection will once again benefit the Clergy Health and Retirement Trust which cares for the needs of our priests. **Our priests are always there for us;** they share Christ's good news, perform good works, and build communities of good faith. All are welcome to learn more and make a gift online at clergytrust.org. And don't forget to find the Trust on Facebook by searching "@ClergyTrust." Thank you in advance for your prayers and support.



If you worship with us regularly, are here for the 1st time or are a returnee, we are so happy that you are here. If you would like to learn more about our parish family, please do not hesitate to call the parish office at 781-843-1332.



Upcoming Events

NEW YEAR'S EVE SENIOR GALA

December 31, 2016—12:00-4:00PM at the Sons of Italy-Braintree. Dinner-Dancing, Noisemakers, Champagne toast \$35.00 per person. For more information or tickets please call Marta at 781-848-4768.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

"The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom." As we await the coming of the Lord, let us rejoice and encourage our marriages to bloom by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The next WWME Weekends are Jan 20-22, 2017 in Duxbury, MA and Mar 17-19, 2017 in South Kingstown, RI. For more information, call Stephen & Michelle O'Leary at 800-710-9963 or visit us at www.WWMEMA.org.



Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." - Mt 1:20-21

Readings for the Week of December 18, 2016

- Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24
- Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71/Lk 1:5-25
- Tuesday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24/Lk 1:26-38
- Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33/Lk 1:39-45
- Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2/Lk 1:46-56
- Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25/Lk 1:57-66
- Saturday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89/Lk 1:67-79
- Next Sunday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
- Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
- Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
- Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14