

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 24, 2016

Merry Christmas

Sunday, December 25, 2016

7:00 AM Merry Christmas

9:30 AM Merry Christmas

11:30 AM Merry Christmas

Monday, December 26, 2016

7:00 AM Stephen Pollock Anniversary

Tuesday, December 27, 2016

7:00 AM Parishioners of St. Assisi

Wednesday, December 28, 2016

7:00 AM Annie Mullen Memorial

Thursday, December 29, 2016

7:00 AM Dorothy F. McRae Anniversary

Friday, December 30, 2016

7:00 AM

Saturday, December 31, 2016

4:00 PM Estelle "Kitty" Lezynski Memorial

Sunday, January 1, 2016

7:00 AM Guido Buglio Memorial

9:30 AM Richard Leland, III Anniversary

11:30AM William P. Sweeney, II Memorial

Thank you for your offerings for last weekend:
Percentage of offertory by Envelope/EFT—73%

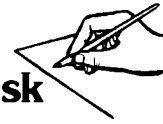
If you are interested in the Online Giving option to simplify your weekly contributions, please contact the parish office.

Collection Report

Offertory Envelopes	\$ 5,322.00
Offertory/Loose	\$ 2,502.00
EFT Weekly Average	\$ 1,253.75
Total Offertory	\$ 9,077.75

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

From the Pastor's Desk



IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT OFFERTORY ENVELOPES FOR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR.

It has come to our attention that there were 2 envelopes for both the Christmas and New Year's collections. **This is an error.** Since both of these Holy days fall on a Sunday this year, there should have been only one envelope. The entire Christmas collection is for the benefit of the Clergy Funds, so please use that envelope. You can use either envelope for New Year's Day and please discard the other one. (How often do you hear this from your pastor!)



Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

(A Christmas Prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson)



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.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



*From the desk of the
Pastoral Associate
Mrs. Linda Muldoon*



Room in the Inn... This past week during some communion visits, we prayed with the Gospel from St. Luke that is often read at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. We found it interesting that the people were all traveling toward a destination, for the purpose of enrollment, in the region

known then as Syria. Fast forward to our time, and refugees now flee from Aleppo and other areas in the region now known as Syria. And as they flee, they too often find that there is no room in the inn. Perhaps the rest of the world needs to hear the voice of the angel telling us, “do not be afraid” to make some room for them in the inns of our hearts and our communities. For we all know Whom it is we welcome when we welcome the stranger among us.

There are so many people to thank this year! With grateful hearts, we thank:

ALL OF YOU... It is your generosity that allows St. Francis of Assisi Parish to continue our tradition of helping the less fortunate among us. From you we have received additional food for our pantry and funds for our St. Vincent DePaul conference, Thanksgiving Day toys (all given to the Marge Crispin Center for Braintree Holidays), and funds to allow us to supplement when needed, hundreds of Advent Giving Tree gifts beyond everyone’s imagination with packaging that made the jobs of our volunteers so much easier, more funds for shopping for the tags that remained on the tree, 5 families “adopted” by parishioners or groups, anonymous “drop-offs,” and many offers of help from individuals and families.

OUR ST. VINCENT DEPAUL MEMBERS AND FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS... Our volunteers stocked our shelves with the additional donations we received, shopped for items on sale, assembled over 40 Christmas meals, and organized 1 set of the gifts from the Advent Giving Tree. They checked for the attached tag and items purchased, coordinated gifts numerically by family, and arranged for their distribution.

OUR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM... Our students and families had the opportunity to participate in several wonderful and creative activities—to name just a couple—they collected for and assembled Thanksgiving baskets for distribution through our pantry and the Marge Crispin Center. The family faith formation parents and students created gingerbread houses to donate to happy recipients. Some of our confirmation students visited Sunrise Assisted

Living and chatted and put together gingerbread houses with some of the residents.

OUR PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY... Several members gathered to assemble 20+ gift bags containing shawls for folks in assisted living and care facilities right here in Braintree.

OUR PARISH MUSIC MINISTERS... Sometimes beautiful music just happens—or at least it appears that way! But almost always it happens because of the care put into its selection, the practice to get it right, its placement within the Mass, and the dedication of those who play instruments and **OUR DECORATORS, SACRISTANS, EMHC, LECTORS, ALTAR SERVERS, USHERS...** The presence and efforts of many volunteers contribute to the beauty of our liturgies.

OUR UNSUNG HEROES... There are several individuals who do so much “behind-the-scenes” on a daily or weekly or seasonal basis to help keep our parish up and running. You know who you are. Enough said!

OUR PRIESTS... Whether one heard Fr. Clifford singing a Christmas carol at Mass this past weekend, Fr. Delay encouraging everyone to go ahead and say, “Merry Christmas!” or Fr. Milling speaking at Family Mass about joy, we are truly blessed that they are our priests. Each gave so much time to help us prepare for Christmas—thoughtful homilies, availability for confession, presence with SFA school and religious education, etc., etc. And the assistance of Fr. Carey and Fr. Suarez when their schedules allow is yet another gift.



*From
The clergy and staff of
St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi*



***The parish office will be closed on Monday,
December 26. Have a safe and blessed Christmas
weekend.***



Parish Info and events of note



From
Mr. Brian Cote
Principal

The Meaning of Christmas

*“For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”*
Isaiah 9:6

- **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.

On behalf of the administration, faculty and staff at Saint Francis of Assisi School, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a Blessed and Holy Christmas. Let us keep our hearts and minds on the Birth of Jesus, the Greatest Gift of all. May each day of your Christmas be filled with peace and may God’s love continue to light your way through the New Year. Let this Christmas be a time filled with family, enthusiastically enjoying activities and traditions that will be a part of your memory forever.

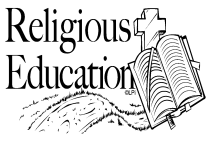
Calling all Alumni – As families gather to celebrate Christmas, St. Francis of Assisi School would like to offer its alumni four great ways to stay connected so that you can receive news about our school, alumni events/news. But, we need your help by updating your contact information by:

- 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

There are no classes this week due to Christmas and school vacation.

Merry Christmas to all of our Parents, Catechists and Students!

Merry Christmas from the Confirmation Program. May the Church experience the joy that "togetherness" brings.

Our young people are forming relationships with each other and around Christ. We pray for them to continue to grow with each other.. Their unity gives them strength to go into the world to spread 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.

Classes schedule for Religious Education:

Sunday, December 25 10:30-11:30 **Gr. 1-5**
 No classes this week.

Sunday, December 25 5:00 – 7:00 **Gr. 10**
 No Classes this week.

NEXT CLASS: January 8.

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

Monday, December 26 3:50-4:50 **Gr. 1-5**
 No classes this week.

Tuesday, December 27 3:50-4:50 **Gr. 1-5**
 No classes this week.

Tuesday, December 27 6:30- 7:45 **Gr. 6-8**
 No classes this week.

Thursday, December 29 6:00-7:30 **Gr. 9**
 No classes this week.
 Next class January 5, 2017.

"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



Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord.

All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

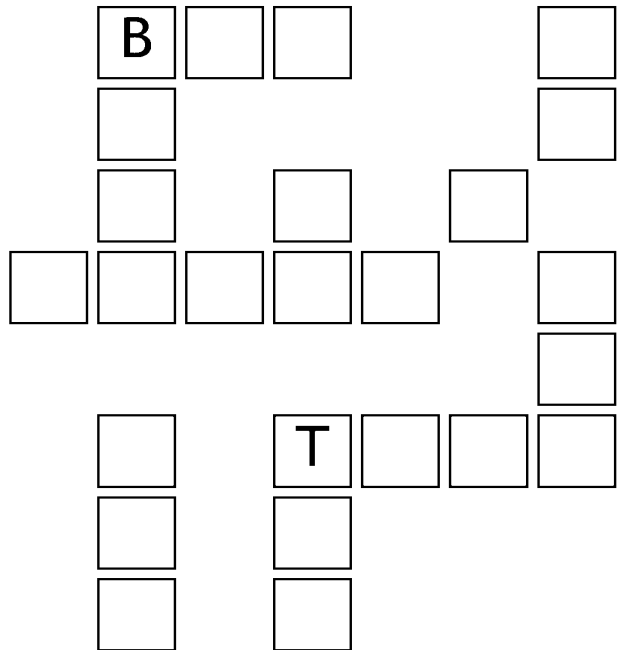
Stay Close and God Bless,
 Diane Hopkins and Ronna Petrilli



Puzzle

Fit this Gospel message into the empty squares:

They saw the baby lying on a bed of hay.



©LPi

Sharing the Gospel

The angels shared the good news about Jesus so people could worship him, too. Maybe it was the way they glowed when they sang about Jesus. Maybe it was the words or the tune of their songs. After the angels left, those shepherds were curious enough to stop what they were doing and look for Jesus themselves. When they found him, they were thrilled. Everything the angels told them was true.

Prayer

God, I am thankful that the angels and the shepherds spread the good news about Jesus.

Something to Draw

Draw a picture of yourself telling a friend about how wonderful Jesus is.

Mission for the Week

Ask your parents to light candles and join you in singing songs about Jesus.



From the Archdiocese of Boston

December 25 ~ The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
The Lectionary gives four different sets of readings for this great feast: the Vigil Mass, Mass during the night, at dawn, and during the day. The readings are very familiar: the genealogy in Matthew, the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, stories of shepherds and angels in Luke, and the magnificent Prologue to John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word..." Whatever readings you hear, try to hear them with new ears and give thanks for the greatest gift. "Awesome" is so overused but it doesn't even begin to describe Christmas. God loved us so much, He sent His Son to be with us, to be one of us, to redeem us. Just think about that and give thanks. We should all be like the angels, singing, 'Glory to God in the highest' And, if singing, isn't your thing, at least be ready to share your story of God's goodness and how Jesus has worked in your life with at least one other person this week.



Your Christmas Offering

The 614 diocesan priests in our Archdiocese are there for us, sharing Christ's good news, performing good works, and building strong communities of good faith. Remember priests who have made a meaningful difference in your life, and consider honoring him/them with a generous gift to today's/tonight's collection. Also, remember to find the Trust on Facebook by searching "@ClergyTrust." Thank you for your prayers and generous support of our priests.

GRAND ANNUAL UPDATE

As of Monday our Grand Annual Collection was \$51,800 from 257 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



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.



The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." - Lk 2:10-12

Readings for the Week of December 25, 2016

- 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
- Monday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31/Mt 10:17-22
- Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
- Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:5--2:2/Ps 124/Mt 2:13-18
- Thursday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96/Lk 2:22-35
- Friday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Ps 128/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
- Saturday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96/Jn 1:1-18
- Next Sunday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21