



# Mass Intentions

**December 5 - December 11**

<b>Monday</b> , 12/5	9:00 a.m. Alex Scaria
<b>Tuesday</b> , 12/6	9:00 a.m. Deacon John Etzel
<b>Wednesday</b> , 12/7	9:00 a.m. Zoraida Bustamante 7:30 p.m. Robert F. Ruiz
<b>Thursday</b> , 12/8 <i>Holy Day</i>	9:00 a.m. In Thanksgiving to Mary 12:00 p.m. John Loh 7:30 p.m. <i>Pro populo</i>
<b>Friday</b> , 12/9	9:00 a.m. Paul Noone
<b>Saturday</b> , 12/10	9:00 a.m. Patrick Koyi 5:00 p.m. Evelyn Hubscher
<b>Sunday</b> , 12/11	8:00 a.m. <i>Pro populo</i> 9:30 a.m. Scrofani Family 11:15 a.m. Paul Lea 1:00 p.m. Grace Abbate 5:00 p.m. Paul Lea

**+ In Memoriam Aeternam +**

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the souls of Roberta Bullen, mother of Harry Bullen, Eduardo Balingit.

**Please pray for the sick**...Barbara Feeter, Tom Carrington, Bob Coyne, Maureen Ferraro, Ryan Schick, Bob Coyne, Jacqueline Gordon, Jeni Stepanek, Robert Dax. *(Names will remain on this list for four consecutive weeks, but can be repeated by calling the Office.)*

**Readings for the Week of December 4, 2016**

<b>Sunday:</b>	Is 11:1-10/Ps 72/Rom 15:4-9/Mt 3:1-12
<b>Monday:</b>	Is 35:1-10/Ps 85/Lk 5:17-26
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Is 40:1-11/Ps 96/Mt 18:12-14
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Is 40:25-31/Ps 103/Mt 11:28-30
<b>Thursday:</b>	Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/ Lk 1:26-38
<b>Friday:</b>	Is 48:17-19/Ps 1/Mt 11:16-19
<b>Saturday:</b>	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80/Mt 17:9a, 10-13
<b>Next Sunday:</b>	Is 35:1-6, 10/Ps 146/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11

## Scripture Corner

### REPENT!

Both Jesus and John the Baptist began their public ministry with the same words. The words were, "REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND!" (Matthew 3:2; 4:17) The Baptist had the critical assignment, as Isaiah said, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." (Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:3) Zechariah, the father of John, predicted, "You, child, will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways." (Luke 1:76)

"Repent" is the critical word. It is a translation of the Hebrew *metanoia*, "which means 'change of mind,' but could better be translated as 'change of Heart.'" All of this fits well into the season of Advent, not a penitential season, as is Lent. Advent is rather a joyful season, awaiting the birth of the Messiah. "Change of heart" can call for love of God and love of neighbor. Considering the circumstances of the Savior's birth one might well reach out with acts of love, acts of fairness to the poor and needy. That would be a wonderful response to the words of John the Baptist, "Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance (change of heart)." (Matthew 3:8)

Today's first reading (Isaiah 11:1-10) teaches much about our Lord. It is part of the Book of Emmanuel (Isaiah 6 – 12). Emmanuel means "God is with us." Isaiah teaches that the Messiah will arrive with many blessings. God will give to the Messiah, the Christ a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be fear of the Lord." (Isaiah 11:2-3) "Fear of the Lord" could better be translated as 'reverence for God.'

~ Fr. Ralph

## FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

*Holy Day of Obligation*

*Mass Times*

*Vigil Mass - Wednesday  
December 7, 7:30 p.m.*

*Thursday, December 8*

*9:00 a.m. 12:00 Noon 7:30 p.m.*

*PARISH OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED*

## Second Sunday in Advent

### QUESTION OF THE WEEK

*What is one concrete, "peaceable" thing that I can do this week to bring a glimpse of Isaiah's "Peaceable Kingdom" to my little corner of the world?*

### WELCOME to the Family of Christ!

The following individuals and their families recently joined our St. Francis faith community during the month of November:

Vincent Emanuele  
Gregory & Jennifer Pomicter  
Mba Snell

The following children were baptized during the month of November:

Jacob David Campbell  
Robert Declan Hosack-O'Connor  
Abby Briggette Lopez  
John Daniel Martinko  
Rowan Catherine Mitchell  
Daniel Chidube Ozoji

### RCIA

The Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming will be celebrated at the 5:00 p.m. Mass next Sunday. This Rite is the first of the public rites celebrated in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). The inquirers will declare their intention to continue their journey of faith toward reception and full initiation into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. At this Rite, those who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil in April will become catechumens and those who are already baptized and will be received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil will become candidates. The St. Francis community, represented by the sponsors, will offer its support and witness to these inquirers as they continue their faith journey.

### THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR (continued)

1. Permanently halt Haitian regular removal policy and reinstate humanitarian parole of Haitians at the U.S./ Mexico border.
2. Reinstate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti.
3. Expand the capacity of Cuban and Haitian family reunification parole programs.
4. Increase efforts to ensure Haitian family unity.

Bishop Elizondo, Sr. Markham, Dr. Woo, and Bishop Vann conclude their joint letter by urging that our nation lead by example during this time of crisis and tragedy and that the U.S. offer aid protection, and compassion to Haitians abroad and within the United States.

Complete copies of this letter are available on the Social Concerns table in the Gathering Space.

Until next week,

*Fr. John*

### THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR

On Saturday, November 26, 2016, Brother Saul Soriano, OFM Cap. gave a presentation here entitled, "Unity in Diversity: Justice for Immigrants." Brother Saul discussed three things in his presentation. First, he gave the story of his own family's emigration from El Salvador to the United States. Brother Saul's father died in a car accident when he was five or six. His grandmother encouraged her daughter, Saul's mother, to try to go to the United States as that would provide the only real opportunity for her to support her children. When Brother Saul's mother followed that advice, his grandmother took care of her grandchildren. Later his mother was able to bring the whole family, including Brother Saul's grandmother, to the United States where they are now settled. Brother Saul eventually became a citizen of the United States and voted in his first presidential election this year. Brother Saul's family is a success story. But this is not the case of many families from countries like El Salvador, from which many families want to escape the ongoing gang violence or civil war. In the second part of his talk Brother Saul presented some points on Catholic Social Teaching on immigration. In doing this, he made use of some recent documents published by the United States Conference of Catholic bishops. In the final part of his talk, Brother Saul talked about advocating on behalf of immigrants who come to the United States seeking a better life—much like other immigrants before them (including our own ancestors). He recommended people who are interested in such advocacy look at websites like Justice for Immigrants or even the website of the United States Conference on Catholic Bishops because there is very useful information on them regarding justice for immigrants.

I decided to take up Brother Saul's suggestion and looked up Justice for Immigrants. When I did this, I found an action alert to ensure the well-being of Haitians affected by Hurricane Matthew. As we know all too well, Hurricane Matthew devastated Haiti on October 4, 2016, killing hundreds and leaving 1.4 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. Justice for Immigrants points out that, sadly, in response to Hurricane Matthew, the Department of Homeland Security has failed to enact humane immigration policies that would allow arriving Haitians to remain temporarily in the United States and support themselves while Haiti is being rebuilt.

On November 1, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration (USCCB/COM), joined partners at Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC), and Catholic Relief Services in a letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State sharing their concerns regarding the care and treatment of Haitians.

Bishop Elizondo, along with Sr. Donna Markham, OP (President and CEO of CCUSA), Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo (President and CEO of CRS), and Bishop Kevin Vann (Chairman of CLINIC) expressed their concern about DHS's recent immigration policies which separate and detain Haitian family members. They think that these policies are particularly inhumane in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew when the U.S. government should be showing Haitians compassion and support. They make four migration-related recommendations in their joint letter:

*Continued in the column to the left.....*

**LAMB OF GOD PRAYER MEETING** .Join the Lamb of God Prayer Group for worship and the study of Scripture on Tuesday, December 6, 7:30 p.m., St. Clare's Chapel in the Rectory. For details, please call Louise, (301) 977-5217.

**POOR BOX DONATION** – The donations for next weekend will go to the Shady Grove Pregnancy Center. *Thank you for your generosity.*

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRAYER CHAIN** If you have a prayer request, please contact Marianne Bullen, (301) 963-3420 or [mariannebu@comcast.net](mailto:mariannebu@comcast.net) with your requests.

### ROSARY FOR PRIESTS

Every Wednesday evening at 6:45 p.m. we pray the rosary for our priests before the 7:30 p.m. Mass.

**ROSARY CENACLE OF OUR LADY, QUEEN OF PEACE** Cenacle of Our Lady, Queen of Peace to pray for priests and vocations, 3:00-5:00 p.m. in the St. Clare's Chapel (Rectory) every Sunday. Please join us.

### HOLY HOUR FOR THE DYING

On Thursday evenings in the St. Clare Chapel in the Rectory a prayer group meets at 7:00 p.m. to pray for the dying. This is a Holy Hour Devotion for the Dying. As a central work of our Catholic faith, we are called to pray for the dying, especially for those who may die suddenly, unprepared to face God. For additional information, please call the Parish Office, (301) 840-1407.

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - COUNCIL 2323

The Knights of Columbus are actively pursuing new members. Our council incorporates members from St. Francis, St. Mary's and St. Martin's. Though best known for our many charitable projects, we also have a lot of fun with dinners, fund raisers, family nights and many other fraternal social occasions. If interested in learning more, please contact Gary Palmer, (301) 412-1237 or e-mail [gtdbpalmer@verizon.net](mailto:gtdbpalmer@verizon.net).



**DECEMBER 2016 LUNCH** – The St. Francis Lunch Bunch will meet on Wednesday, December 7, at Applebee's, 21048 Frederick Road, Germantown (301) 972-1301. **Directions: Go North on 355 toward the Target/Wal-Mart Shopping Center, turn left at the light onto Henderson Corner Road, left again into the parking lot - Applebee's is right there.** If you are planning to attend, please contact Mary Lou Habib, (301) 417-0243 and she will reserve a seat. for you and answer any questions

### BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Blood Pressure Screening will take place next weekend in the St. Clare Room after the Saturday 5:00 p.m. Mass, Sunday 8:00, 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. Masses. Please stop by to have your pressure checked.

## BUILD UP OUR CHURCH

The St. Francis of Assisi Communications and Technology ministries are seeking expertise in the areas of graphic design and web site design to assist with ongoing projects that help promote the parish among its members and in the community at large.

Specifically, the ministries are in need of a:

- Graphic designer to help lay out promotional and marketing materials, including brochures, signs, and other peripherals, as needed. An individual with experience using Photoshop and other design software packages is particularly desired. Interested individuals would need to attend regular meetings (every month or every other month) of the Communications Ministry to discuss ongoing and upcoming projects that help promote St. Francis to its members and the public at large.

Please consider using your professional and creative talents to help our parish grow through serving in these ministries. If you have interest in the graphic design role, please contact Communications Ministry Coordinator Melissa Egan at [Melissa.egan74@verizon.net](mailto:Melissa.egan74@verizon.net). If you have interest in the web design role, please contact Technology Ministry Coordinator Wil Garcia at [wagarcia@comcast.net](mailto:wagarcia@comcast.net).

### RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Your donation works for aging religious. "I read that roughly 95% of donations to the Retirement Fund for Religious aid senior religious," a donor writes. "That's wonderful when we truly want our donations to work." Your gift works for elderly religious by helping to furnish medications, nursing care, and more. Please support next week's collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious, and give to those who have given a lifetime.

### THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who donated food for the Thanksgiving Food Drive coordinated by St. Patrick's parish. St. Francis parishioners donated 504 cans of food that were added to donations from other parishes and schools. Many people in the Rockville and Silver Spring areas were helped through your generosity. Donations that arrived too late for this food drive were added to our weekly donation to St. Martin Food Pantry.

### A SPECIAL "THANK YOU"

Thank you to all who purchased items from the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation at their recent sale of products from the Holy Land at the parish. Your purchases of items valued at over \$1,100 help support struggling families and artisans in very difficult conditions in the Mother Church in the Holy Land.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS/EVENTS

### CHRISTMAS STOCKING HELP LINE

Religious Education families are invited to participate in the *Christmas Stocking Help Line*, an Advent project to benefit children and families in need. Items needed will be listed on “stockings” hung in the Parish Center during RE class times. Families may choose to take one or more stockings, purchase the items listed, and return them to RE classes no later than December 13. Letters with more information about this project will be given to students in RE classes.

### SACRAMENT OF PENANCE FOR RE STUDENTS

The students in grades 3 - 8 will have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of their Religious Education classes in Advent. Catechists will review the Sacrament of Penance in advance, and we encourage parents to talk with their children about the Sacrament as well. Please note the date for your child's session and grade as shown below:

#### Sunday 9:20 Session:

Grade 5 - Sunday, Dec. 4  
Grade 3 - Sunday, Dec. 11  
Grade 4 - Sunday, Dec. 18

#### Monday 4:30 Session:

Grades 3, 4 and 5 - Mon., Dec. 5

#### Monday 6:45 Session:

Grades 6, 7 & 8 - Monday, Dec. 19  
(participating in the Parish Penance Service starting at 7:00 pm)

#### Tuesday 6:45 Session:

Grades 6, 7 & 8 - Tuesday, Dec. 13

### CATECHESIS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Our parish offers monthly catechetical sessions specifically designed for children and youth with special needs and their families. Our next session is on Sunday, December 11 from 3:30-4:30 pm in the St. Clare Room. If you would like to learn more about these sessions, or if you are interested in serving as a catechist or aide for children with special needs, please call Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

### CATECHISTS AND AIDES NEEDED

Additional volunteers are still needed! Please consider whether you can serve as a catechist or classroom aide for our children and young people. We especially need catechists for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade on Monday and Tuesday evenings, from 6:45-8:00 pm. If you would like to learn more about this important ministry, please contact Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY

If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed, and if schools are dismissed early, Religious Education classes, including FRED, are also cancelled. This applies to Sunday classes as well if Montgomery County Public Schools announces cancellation of weekend school activities. Cancellation announcements will be recorded on the Religious Education Office phone (301-258-9193) and posted on the St. Francis Parish Facebook page (“St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church”).

Whenever in doubt, please use your own judgment about local weather and driving conditions, and error on the side of safety when making decisions about bringing your child to class.

## YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS/EVENTS

### ST. FRANCIS YOUTH MINISTRY

*Upcoming Events*

**FRED  
HIGH SCHOOL**

#### Schedule of YA 33 Days Meeting (YR) 6-9 pm most Fridays

Dec 5 (Monday) - St. Louis de Montfort  
Dec 9 - St. Maximilian Kolbe  
Dec 16 - St. Mother Teresa  
Dec 23 - St. John Paul II  
Dec 30 - Synthesis & Review and Consecration

#### DECEMBER

4 FRED - The Battlefield  
11 Manna Food Service  
11/12 Bake & Bling Sale  
12 FRED - Love Wins  
15 St. Martin's Soup Kitchen  
16 Christmas Caroling  
17 Feed the Homeless Service Project  
18 FRED & FRED Jr. Christmas Party

#### FRED JR.

#### DECEMBER

11 Manna Food Service  
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#### GET SOCIAL

*\*Instagram “SFASusie”*

*\*FRED group on FACEBOOK: friend “Susan FRED Lea”*

*\*“St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church” page on Facebook*

### YOUNG ADULTS

**Small Groups** - Join a young adult small group! Weekly gatherings give members a chance to hang out, discuss Scripture, and pray together. If you feel called to be more involved as a small group facilitator, please reach out to Crystel Britto at [crys-tel@270catholic.org](mailto:crys-tel@270catholic.org). Visit <https://www.facebook.com/270Catholic/events> or email: [270catholic@gmail.com](mailto:270catholic@gmail.com) for more info on any of the events listed above..

### PARISH PENANCE SERVICE

**Monday, December 19**

**7:00 p.m.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Confessions on Christmas Eve will be heard from 12:00 Noon - 1:00 p.m.**

**There will be no confessions heard at 3:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve.**

### DINNERS NEEDED

We are looking for dinners during the months of December/January (December 13 - January 12) for Fr. John on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The Parish Cook will be gone during this time. You would be asked to cook one dinner and drop it off at the Rectory anytime before 5:00 p.m. Nothing fancy, just good old home cooking. If you are able to help, please call the Parish Office, (301) 840-1407 to sign up. *Thank you!*

### THE HOLIDAY BAZAAR

The Bazaar has been a tradition at St Francis now for over twenty five years. This year *Millie's Bake Shop* was a hit with all of the kids. Mary Francis and her many friends made sure the wheel kept spinning. Shabby Chic, as always, had wonderful gifts and treasures for everyone. Thanks to the Beall family, who always do a great job with Shabby Chic. Karen Mason always has so many interesting religious items for everyone to choose from. The Silent Auction, headed up by Debi Dicello, had many wonderful baskets and items to bid on.

There were many beautiful handmade crafts and ornaments made by several of the parishioners. The crafters who gave of their time and talents were Jane Tom, Geri Prelewicz, Sara Becker, Doris Chung, Suzanna, Margaret Talcott and Mary O'Sullivan. The Jewelry Boutique was a big hit. Linda Call always does a great job. The raffle, spearheaded by Linda Foster, was a great success. The Flea Market was also a great success. Pat Badolato and her helpers did a great job converting the rectory into a buyer's haven. Nadine Edwards headed up the Café Assisi with its many appetizing treats. Coffee and donuts were a great treat - thanks to Sylvia Jones, it kept everybody warm and awake during the day. There was even a visit by Santa Claus (aka Fr. John). There were several other people who stepped up and volunteered to help out. They were there to help set up, volunteer during the Bazaar and help clean up afterwards. Although this year's Bazaar was a little slow, it was still a success, and a good time was had by all. I would like to thank everybody who helped. It takes many people to run the Bazaar, without volunteers there would be no Holiday Bazaar. Thank you also to all of the parishioners who came out and supported the Bazaar.

*God Bless & Thank You!*

*Anne Culver*

### 2016 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

To receive credit in 2016, your contributions must be dated December 31, 2016. If you are mailing a contribution, it must be received in the parish Office on or before Wednesday, January 4, 2017. As a reminder, the parish statement of contributions will not include your FAITHDIRECT contributions. You will receive a statement from them.

### FAITH DIRECT

With the busy Holiday Season, enrolling in *Faith Direct* is a great way to take one item off your weekly to-do list. Pick up an enrollment form from the parish office today or enroll online at [www.FaithDirect.net](http://www.FaithDirect.net), our church code is **MD110**. Already using *Faith Direct*? Don't forget to add your Christmas or End of Year contributions to your account. Thank you in advance for your support and for using *Faith Direct*!

### "ENTERING CANAAN":

#### A DAY OF PRAYER & HEALING

Have you experienced shame, sadness, regret, or guilt after abortion? You are not alone. Any woman who has gone through the abortion experience is invited to attend an "Entering Canaan" Day of Prayer and Healing on Saturday, December 10. You will find the Sacraments, a caring retreat team, a witness talk, and a non-judgmental atmosphere to help you to heal from shame and other negative emotions that come after abortion. The exact location is confidential due to the personal nature of this experience. For more information, contact Julia Shelava at Project Rachel Ministry, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington: (301) 853-4565, [ProjectRachel@adw.org](mailto:ProjectRachel@adw.org). Registration is required..

#### RELIGIOUS CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christmas Cards will be on sale in the Gathering Space this weekend. Purchasing these beautiful cards supports the Right to Life of Montgomery County, a wonderful local pro-life organization. Cards are \$6 for a pack of ten. Thank you for your support

#### ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday, December 21, Brooke Grove Rehabilitation & Nursing Center, 18131 Slade School Road. For further information contact Bill Neely, (301) 924-5176 or [bneely@bgf.org](mailto:bneely@bgf.org).

#### 2017 CATHOLICS IN ANNAPOLIS

Mark your calendar for the 33rd annual "Catholics in Annapolis" on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 from 3:00-8:00 p.m. Meet your legislators and build a positive relationship with them by sharing the great work and the Good News of the Church in Maryland lived out through the works of our ministries, charities,

#### ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT CARD SALE

Alternative Christmas Gift Card Sale after all Masses this weekend. Please stop and purchase your Alternative Gift Cards.

Need more time to decide on a gift? *Copies of the Alternative Christmas Gift Catalog can be found on the Social Concerns table.* Complete the order form and mail or drop the Alternative Christmas Catalog envelope in the baskets used for the weekly offering collection. All mail orders must reach the Parish Office no later than **December 16**. This is to allow enough time for greeting cards to be mailed prior to Christmas.

#### WALK WITH MARY:

##### OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CELEBRATION

On Saturday, December 10, the Archdiocese of Washington will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, with pilgrimages from the Shrine of the Sacred Heart and Holy Name Church in DC to the Basilica of the National Shrine, where Mass will be celebrated by Cardinal Wuerl. The processions from the two parishes start at 12 Noon. At the Basilica, the Sacrament of Reconciliation begins at 1pm, followed by the Rosary at 1:30 p.m. and Mass at 2:30 p.m. For more information, contact [culturaldiversity@adw.org](mailto:culturaldiversity@adw.org).