

Mass Intentions

January 1 - January 7, 2024

Monday, 1/1	9:00 a.m.	Alexander O'Connor
Tuesday, 1/2	9:00 a.m.	Lisa Devlin
Wednesday, 1/3	9:00 a.m.	Xavier Joseph
	7:30 p.m.	Rod & Gaby O'Connor
Thursday, 1/4	9:00 a.m.	Patrick Wayne Flippin
Friday, 1/5	9:00 a.m.	Barbara Lynn Beall
	7:30 p.m.	Haile Family (L)
Saturday, 1/6	5:00 p.m.	<i>Pro populo</i>
Sunday, 1/7	8:00 a.m.	Haile Family (L)
	9:30 a.m.	Margaret Smith
	11:15 a.m.	Maria Relunia
	1:00 p.m.	Carlos Rosales Trabao
	5:00 p.m.	Catherine Sgambati

+ In Memoriam Aeternam +

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of Laurie Frashure, niece of Dianne Palmer, Mary Wagner, wife of John Wagner, Mary Pat Breitfelder, sister of Monsignor John Enzler.

Please pray for the sick...Bea Weiss, Laura Tseronis, Reverend James Alco, Eduardo De Ausen, Joan Misko, Christine Degen, Nicole Behrus-Weiss, Maryann Murphy, Mark Patterson, Michael Waple, Sophia Jusko, Debra Price, Barbara Schmidt, Angelica Santos, Allison Brauer, Frank Knorr, Allan Degen, Bob Jones, Sandra Kimball, Ed Dudenhoefter, Jackie Roebuck King, Jeni Stepanek. *(Names will remain on this list for four consecutive weeks, but can be repeated by calling the Office.)*

Readings for the Week of December 31, 2023

Sunday:	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/ Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9/ 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:	Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 (2a)/Gal 4:4-7/ Lk 2:16-21
Tuesday:	1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Jn 1:19-28
Wednesday:	1 Jn 2:29—3:6/Ps 98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6/Jn 1:29-34
Thursday:	1 Jn 3:7-10/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Jn 1:35-42
Friday:	1 Jn 3:11-21/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 4, 5/Jn 1:43-51
Saturday:	1 Jn 5:5-13/Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20/ Mk 1:7-11 or Lk 3:23-38 or 3:23, 31-34, 36, 38
Next Sunday:	Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 (see 11)/ Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR

I hope that everyone had a very Merry Christmas. I thought that it was wonderful to see so many people attend the Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. After all the Christmas Masses were concluded, I was pleased to have Christmas dinner with my Stehle cousins who live in DC. Today we are celebrating the Feast of the Holy Family—which is celebrated on the Sunday between Christmas and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. I was surprised to find out that the devotion to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph developed rather recently—in the seventeenth century. Built on the Gospel accounts, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are looked upon as an excellent domestic unit representing the ideal family life. To promote family life and build up devotion to the Holy Family, a feast of the Holy Family was established for the Universal Church in 1921.

The Office of Readings in the Liturgy of the Hours for today quotes from an address that Pope Saint Paul VI gave when he visited Nazareth on January 5, 1964. The Holy Father said on that occasion that Nazareth was a kind of school where we could discover what the life of Christ was like and even to understand his Gospel. At Nazareth we can observe and ponder the simple appeal of the way the Son of God came to be known, profound yet full of hidden meaning. St. Paul VI thought that here in Nazareth we could come to realize who Christ really is. We can also sense and take account of the conditions and circumstances that surrounded his life on earth: the places, the tenor of the times, the culture, the language, religious customs, in brief everything which Jesus used to make himself known to the world. St. Paul VI noted that here everything has meaning and here we can learn the importance of spiritual discipline for all who wish to follow Christ and to live by the teachings of his Gospel.

Saint Paul VI mentions three lessons that we can learn from the profound school that is Nazareth:

First, we learn from its silence. If only we could once again appreciate its great value. We need this wonderful state of mind, beset as we are by the cacophony of strident protests and conflicting claims so characteristic of these turbulent times. The silence of Nazareth should teach us how to meditate in peace and quiet, to reflect on the deeply spiritual, and to be open to the voice of God's inner wisdom and the counsel of his true teachers. Nazareth can teach us the value of study and preparation, of meditation, of a well-ordered personal spiritual life, and of silent prayer that is known only to God.

Second, we learn about family life. May Nazareth serve as a model of what the family should be. May it show us the family's holy and enduring character and exemplifying its basic function in society: a community of love and sharing, beautiful for the problems it poses and the rewards it brings; in sum, the perfect setting for rearing children—and for this there is no substitute.

Continued in the column to the right.....

December 31, 2023

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

How does my faith affect the way that I treat the members of my family? How can my faith help me to grow to be a better parent/sibling/daughter/son?

PLEASE DONATE WINTER OUTERWEAR IN GOOD CONDITION BY MONDAY, JANUARY 15

Do you have any gently used coats, hats, gloves, mittens, or scarves filling your closets? If so, please donate them to a coat drive benefitting Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington beginning Saturday, December 30, through Monday, January 15. Items in good condition can be left in the designated receptacle in the Gathering Space. For more information, please contact Director of Social Concerns and Adult Faith Formation Tony Bosnick, abosnick@sfadw.org.

ON JANUARY 20, THE HAITI BENEFIT CONCERT FEATURES

THE LESSBURG STRING QUARTET

If you're looking to break out of your winter doldrums, then please join us at the Haiti Benefit Concert at 7 pm Saturday, January 20, 2024, in the church. The Leesburg String Quartet will be giving a special performance at the event, which is sponsored by the St. Francis of Assisi Music Ministry. It will be followed by a reception in the Gathering Space. While the concert is free of charge, all donations are welcome and will benefit the Haiti Medical Mission. For more information, please contact St. Francis of Assisi Music Director Janet Pate at sfadwmusic@gmail.com or Haiti Ministry Coordinator Dan Cardile at dancardile@yahoo.com.

PARISH OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, JANUARY 1

Happy New Year!

THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR (continued)

Finally, in Nazareth, the home of a craftsman's son, we learn about work and the discipline it entails. I would especially like to recognize its value—demanding yet redeeming—and to give it proper respect. I would remind everyone that work has its own dignity. On the other hand, it is not an end in itself. Its value and free character, however, derive not only from its place in the economic system, as they say, but rather from purpose it serves.

St. Paul VI closed his address in Nazareth by expressing his deep regard for people everywhere who work for a living. He pointed out that Christ their brother would be their great model and prophet in every cause that promotes their well being.

Let me wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Until next week,
Fr. John

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS

This year Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala will celebrate the Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass to Celebrate the Vocation of Marriage on Saturday, February 10, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. This celebration is to highlight the witness to the Catholic vocation of marriage and the beauty of God's plan for married life. Couples must register with the parish office by **Friday, January 26** to attend the Mass and/or to receive a certificate from Cardinal Wilton Gregory in honor of their anniversary year.

OUR MASS FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN TAKES PLACE ON JANUARY 7

Come celebrate the gifts and contributions of persons with special needs at the Mass for All God's Children! Please join us at the 5 pm Sunday Mass on Sunday, January 7, when Fr. John Dillon celebrates this special liturgy where most liturgical roles are filled by people with special needs and learning differences. There will be a light reception following the Mass in the Gathering Space.

If you wish to participate in this event as a liturgical reader, greeter, usher, or altar server, please contact Sylvia Jones at (301) 762-6564 or e-mail at decaffqueen@gmail.com. Older teens are also invited to take part as usher mentors. All are invited and welcome!

GIANT FOOD'S COMMUNITY BAG PROGRAM CAN YIELD DONATIONS FOR THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

During the month of January, St. Francis of Assisi parishioners shopping at the Giant Food at 18250 Flower Hill Way will have an opportunity to support the parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society while buying items their families need. Through Giant Food's Community Bag Program, every purchase from January 1-31 of a purple reusable Because You Care bag for \$2.50 will yield a \$1 donation to our St. Vincent de Paul Society. Let's see how many dollars can be raised for this charitable organization that helps and befriends the poor and vulnerable in our community! For more information, please contact Director of Social Concerns and Adult Faith Formation Tony Bosnick at abosnick@sfadw.org.

FAITHFUL GENEROSITY AT CHRISTMASTIME

Please remember St. Francis of Assisi Parish in your gift-giving plans this Christmas and at year end. Traditionally, many of us have used the Christmas envelope for this purpose. You can also make your Christmas gift conveniently through our website at <https://www.sfadw.org/faith-direct>. Parishioners over 70 1/2 can also take advantage of making a year-end gift from their IRA through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), avoiding those income taxes and supporting our parish ministry. Please contact Parish Secretary Donna Zezzo at (301) 840-1407 or e-mail her at dzezzo@sfadw.org for more information.



2023-24 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 8

RE CLASS SCHEDULE AND THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

There are NO Religious Education classes on the following days:

- Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, December 31, January 1 & 2.

Religious Education classes will resume on January 7, 8 & 9.

PARENT MEETING FOR HOMESCHOOL OPTION RE

The Online Parent Meeting: Unit 3 Overview for families sharing in this year's homeschool religious education program will be from 1-2 pm on Sunday, January 7. Families registered for the Homeschool option will receive an email with link to join.

FIRST RECONCILIATION PREP DAY – SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

Children preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time will attend a day of preparation on Saturday, January 13 from 9:00 am - 12:30 pm in the Parish Center (Snow date: January 20). Please pray for these children who will receive this Sacrament on Saturday, January 27.

WAYS TO SERVE

The entire parish community shares responsibility for faith formation and the support of many volunteers makes our programs successful. There are a variety of ways to serve, including weekly, monthly, and "as needed" commitments:

- Catechist
- Classroom Aide
- Substitute Catechist
- Support for Service Projects
- Support for Art Projects (at home preparation)
- Help with Sacramental Celebrations & Special Events

Please consider supporting our Religious Education program as a volunteer! To learn more, please call the Religious Education Office at 301-258-9193.

Continued in the column to the right.....

POOR BOX DONATIONS

The donations for next weekend will go to *Gaithersburg Help*. Thank you for your generosity.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (*continued*)

SNOW/EMERGENCY CANCELLATION POLICY

If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed for weather, and if schools are dismissed early, Religious Education classes 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 posted:

- On the parish website: www.sfadw.org
- On the St. Francis Parish Facebook page: "St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church"
- On the Religious Education Office phone voicemail: 301-258-9193.

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

Spotlight on St. Jude Regional Catholic School *We are...St. Jude*

www.StJudeRockville.org

<http://www.facebook.com/stjuderockvillemd>

REGISTER NOW FOR 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

Registration is open for all current and new families! We are a PreK3-8th grade Catholic school. Come and witness a faith-filled school with high academic standards and happy students! MAP scores above the National Average! Tours are available by appointment. Please contact Ellen Donnelly at Ellen.Donnelly@StJudeRockville.org.

Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance Program

The application window for tuition assistance opened on Monday, October 2, 2023. Application deadline for high schools: Friday, December 15, 2023. Application deadline for K-8: Friday, February 16, 2024. A Catholic education is a blessing that we want to make available to every family in our Archdiocese. We work hard to keep Catholic education as affordable as possible. We are committed to help you find the financial resources that you need. Follow the link!

<https://adwcatholicschools.org/tuition-assistance/archdiocesan-tuition-assistance-program/>

Thank you to Mrs. White for keeping Christ at the center of this season and preparing our Pre-K through 5th grade students for our **Annual School Christmas Show**, with beautiful singing, music, and the 5th grade's musical performance, "**Miracle on Bethlehem Street**"! *Merry Christmas, everyone!*

SAVE THE DATE

April 20, 2024 OLYMPIC GALA

Going for Gold

More information to come!

*St. Jude Regional Catholic School wishes everyone a
HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

ST. MARTIN'S FOOD PANTRY SHORTAGES

Pasta
Pasta Sauce
Macaroni & Cheese
Meals in a can
Canned Soup
Oatmeal/Cereal
Canned Beans
Canned Vegetables
Canned Fruit
Dried Rice & Beans
Tuna/Canned Meat/Canned Fish

Baby Formula: Similac Blue & Similac Orange, and/or domestic or foreign equivalents/substitutes and baby wipes.

Paper Bags (Wegmans or Trader Joe size or similar).
Plastic Newspaper or Grocery Bags
12-egg cartons (Plastic)

Please place donations in the St. Martin's Food Pantry Bin in the Gathering Space or the Rectory front porch.

May God bless you for whatever help you can provide.

SINGLE CATHOLICS ARE INVITED TO AN EPIPHANY PARTY ON JANUARY 13 IN THE ST. RAPHAEL PARISH GYM

Single Catholics, are you ready for an Epiphany Party? The St. Catherine and St. Lawrence Society and St. Raphael Parish are co-sponsoring the 24th (almost) Annual Epiphany Party at 7 pm Saturday, January 13, 2024, in the St. Raphael's gymnasium, 1513 Dunster Road, in Rockville. Black tie optional, the event will feature wine, Ledo's lasagna, dancing, and speed dating. A three-tiered admission is available. By January 6, you can mail a \$22 check made out to the "St. Catherine Society" to 1590 Kimblewick Road, Rockville 20854; by January 8, you can pay \$24 online at <https://www.paypal.com/biz/fund?id=AJLD5F4VY43NE>; at the door, pay \$28 by cash, check or credit card.

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE ABUSED

Domestic violence refers to a pattern of violent and coercive behavior by one adult over another in an intimate relationship. It can consist of repeated severe beatings or subtle forms of abuse, including threats and control. If you experience any form of abuse, please know that there is help. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233. To learn more about domestic violence, please visit www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Adoration is held on Fridays
in the **CHURCH**
9:30 a.m. - 12 Noon.
All are welcome to attend.

ENCOURAGE MINISTRY

EnCourage is a ministry dedicated to the spiritual needs of parents, siblings, children, and other relatives and friends of persons who have same-sex attractions. Standing by the true teaching of the Catholic Church, EnCourage members support one another and their loved ones through discussion, prayer, and fellowship. Please contact Fr. John for more information at 301-840-1407, Ext. 12 or email him at jdillon@sfadw.org.

TEAMS OF OUR LADY

Teams of Our Lady is a movement of Christian Marriage Spirituality that brings together couples united by the Sacrament of Matrimony and who wish, together, to deepen the graces of their Sacrament. It offers married couples a pathway toward love, happiness, and holiness. The movement's aim is to help couples live fully their Sacrament of Marriage. Interested in learning more, contact Fr. John at 301-840-1407 or email him at jdillon@sfadw.org.

NEW LISTEN EVERYWHERE AUDIO SYSTEM DELIVERS AMPLIFIED SOUND IN CHURCH DIRECTLY TO SMARTPHONE

Did you know our church now has an assistive listening system that allows people with hearing loss or challenges to have amplified sound delivered straight to their smartphones? The Listen Everywhere system uses multiple-channel audio to bring a clearer sound directly to the user. Start by downloading the Listen Everywhere app onto your iPhone or Android device. Once you log on to St. Francis of Assisi's WiFi network, you can then select our channel and hear amplified sound either through your Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids or an advanced neck loop system the church can provide. For more information, please contact Communications Coordinator Melissa Egan at (301) 840-1407.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MONTGOMERY COUNCIL 2323

Montgomery Council 2323 is recruiting new members. Join the largest Catholic fraternal organization in the world and the "strong right arm" of the Catholic Church. We are dedicated to charity, unity, fraternity and family while having a lot of fun doing good for others! For a limited time only get **one year free** online membership by clicking on the QR Code! For more information contact Membership Director, John DeMare, johnd2323@comcast.net or 240-354-6648. *Vivat Jesus!*



SCAN ME

2023 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

To receive credit in 2023, your contributions must be dated December 31, 2023. If you are mailing a contribution, it must be received in the parish Office on or before Tuesday, January 2, 2024. As a reminder, the parish statement of contributions will not include your FAITHDIRECT contributions. You will receive a statement directly from FAITHDIRECT.

Anuncios del boletín del 31 de diciembre de 2023:

Generosidad fiel en Navidad

Por favor, recuerde a la Parroquia de San Francisco de Asís en sus planes de entrega de regalos esta Navidad y fin de año. Tradicionalmente, muchos de nosotros hemos utilizado el sobre navideño para este fin. También puede hacer su regalo de Navidad cómodamente a través de nuestra página web en <https://www.sfadw.org/faith-direct>.

Los feligreses mayores de 70 años y medio también pueden aprovechar la oportunidad de hacer una donación de fin de año de su IRA a través de una Distribución Caritativa Calificada (QCD), evitando esos impuestos sobre la renta y apoyando nuestro ministerio parroquial. Comuníquese con la Secretaria Parroquial Donna Zezzo al (301) 840-1407 o envíele un correo electrónico a dzezzo@sfadw.org para obtener más información.

Nuestra Misa por Todos los Hijos de Dios se llevará a cabo el 7 de enero

¡Venga a celebrar los dones y contribuciones de las personas con necesidades especiales en la Misa para Todos los Hijos de Dios! Únase a nosotros en la misa dominical de las 5 pm el domingo 7 de enero, cuando el P. John Dillon celebre esta liturgia especial donde la mayoría de los roles litúrgicos son ocupados por personas con necesidades especiales y dificultades de aprendizaje. Habrá una recepción ligera después de la Misa en el Espacio de Reunión.

Si desea participar en este evento como lector litúrgico, salador, ujier o monaguillo, comuníquese con Sylvia Jones al (301) 762-6564 o por correo electrónico al decaffqueen@gmail.com. Los adolescentes mayores también están invitados a participar como mentores de ujieres. ¡Todos están invitados y son bienvenidos!

Por favor, done ropa de abrigo de invierno en buenas condiciones antes del lunes 15 de enero

¿Tiene abrigos, gorros, guantes, manoplas o bufandas poco usados que llenan sus armarios? Si es así, por favor dónelos a una colecta de abrigos a beneficio de Caridades Católicas de la Arquidiócesis de Washington a partir del sábado 30 de diciembre hasta el lunes 15 de enero. Los artículos en buenas condiciones se pueden dejar en el receptáculo designado en el espacio de reunión. Para obtener más información, comuníquese con el Director de Asuntos Sociales y Formación en la Fe para Adultos, Tony Bosnick, al abosnick@sfadw.org.

El 20 de enero, el concierto benéfico de Haití contará con el Cuarteto de Cuerdas de Leesburg

Si está buscando salir de su estancamiento invernal, únase a nosotros en el concierto benéfico de Haití a las 7 pm el sábado 20 de enero de 2024 en la iglesia. El Cuarteto de Cuerdas de Leesburg dará una actuación especial en el evento, que es patrocinado por el Ministerio de Música de San Francisco de Asís. A continuación, tendrá lugar una recepción en el Espacio de Reunión. Si bien el concierto es gratuito, todas las donaciones son bienvenidas y beneficiarán a la Misión Médica de Haití. Para obtener más información, comuníquese con la Directora de Música de San Francisco de Asís, Janet Pate, en sfadwmusic@gmail.com, o con el Coordinador del Ministerio de Haití, Dan Cardile, en dancardile@yahoo.com.

El programa de bolsas comunitarias de Giant Food puede producir donaciones para la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl

Durante el mes de enero, los feligreses de San Francisco de Asís que compran en Giant Food en 18250 Flower Hill Way tendrán la oportunidad de apoyar a la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl de la parroquia mientras compran artículos que sus familias necesitan. A través del Programa de Bolsas Comunitarias de Giant Food, cada compra del 1 al 31 de enero de una bolsa morada reutilizable *Because You Care* por \$2.50 generará una donación de \$1 a nuestra Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl. ¡Veamos cuántos dólares se pueden recaudar para esta organización benéfica que ayuda y se hace amiga de los pobres y vulnerables de nuestra comunidad! Para obtener más información, comuníquese con el Director de Asuntos Sociales y Formación en la Fe para Adultos, Tony Bosnick, al abosnick@sfadw.org.

Los católicos solteros están invitados a una fiesta de Epifanía el 13 de enero en el gimnasio de la parroquia de San Rafael

Católicos solteros, ¿están listos para una fiesta de Epifanía? La Sociedad de Santa Catalina y San Lorenzo y la Parroquia de San Rafael están copatrocinando la 24ª (casi) Fiesta Anual de la Epifanía a las 7 pm el sábado 13 de enero de 2024, en el gimnasio de San Rafael, 1513 Dunster Road, en Rockville. Opcional, el evento contará con vino, lasaña de Ledo, baile y citas rápidas.

Hay una entrada de tres niveles disponible. Antes del 6 de enero, puede enviar por correo un cheque de \$22 a nombre de la "St. Catherine Society" a 1590 Kimblewick Road, Rockville 20854; antes del 8 de enero, puede pagar \$24 en línea en <https://www.paypal.com/biz/fund?id=AJLD5F4VY43NE>; en la puerta, pague \$28 en efectivo, cheque o tarjeta de crédito.

¡Feliz año nuevo!