

Saint Francis Xavier Parish

3 Saint Peter Street, Winooski, VT 05404 · (802) 655-2290

Monsignor
Richard G. Lavalley
Pastor

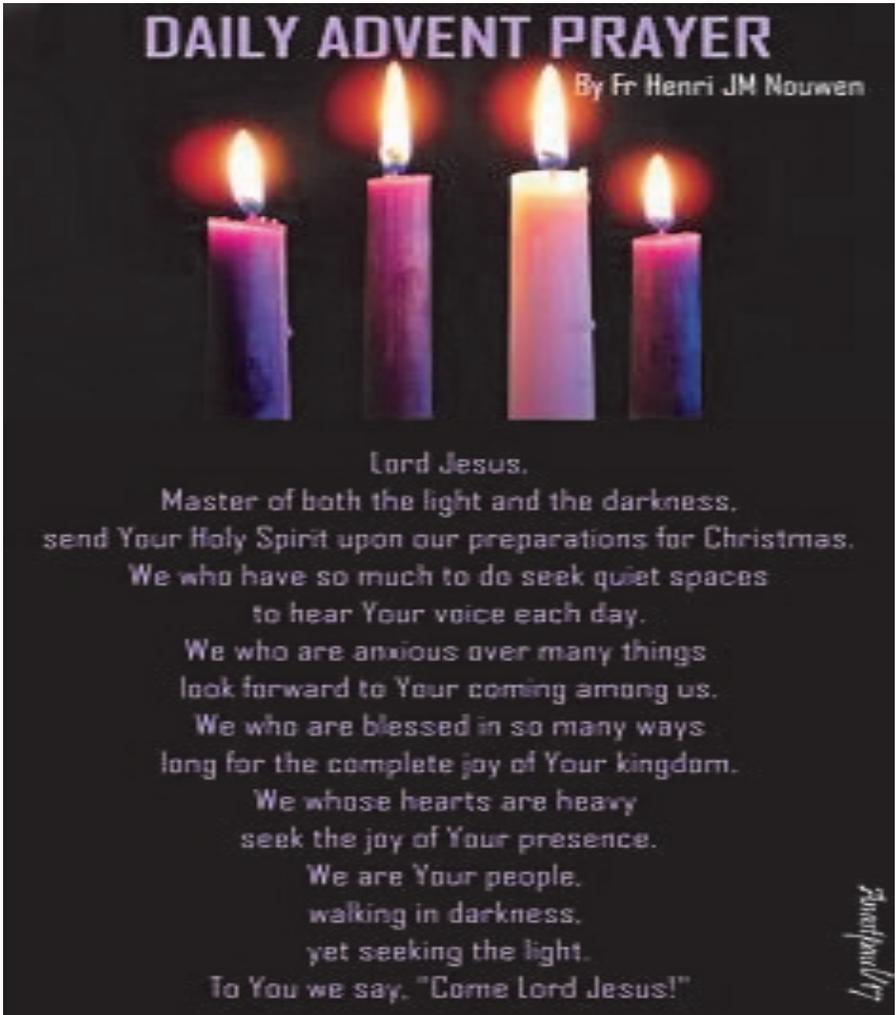
Reverend
Joseph Sanderson
Parochial Vicar

Saint Francis Xavier School
Eric Becker, Principal
Pre-School through 8th grade
655-2600

**Director of Faith
Formation**
Jordan Easley
503-8241

**Our Lady of
Providence**
Residential Care
Facility
655-2395

St. Francis Xavier Cares
Sharon Brown, RN
Parish Nurse
922-2958



DAILY ADVENT PRAYER
By Fr. Henri JM Nouwen

Lord Jesus,
Master of both the light and the darkness,
send Your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.
We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces
to hear Your voice each day.
We who are anxious over many things
look forward to Your coming among us.
We who are blessed in so many ways
long for the complete joy of Your kingdom.
We whose hearts are heavy
seek the joy of Your presence.
We are Your people,
walking in darkness,
yet seeking the light.
To You we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

Weekend Masses

Saturday : 4:00 PM

Sunday : 7:30, 9:00, & 11:00 AM

Weekday Masses

Monday - Friday : 8:00 AM

Confessions

Saturday 2:30 to 3:30 PM
Anytime by appointment

St. Vincent de Paul Center

Phone: 655-3006
Open 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Baptisms

Parent classes required. Please call the rectory for more information.

Marriage

Plan six months in advance.
Contact the rectory. Attend Pre-Cana classes

Registration

New parishioners and newly married couples should register by calling the rectory as soon as possible.

TELEPHONES

School	After School
655-2600	655-4660

School Website: www.SFXVT.org

NEWS FROM The Inland See

December 21–27, 2019

FOR THE DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON

St. Joseph — in the face of mystery

At one point in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program each year I ask participants: “Is it possible to know God?” There is usually discussion and then concern that it is an impossible question to answer.

In truth, it is meant as a trick question. On one hand, God is a God of self-revelation. If you read the Scriptures, God gives messages to Abraham and his descendants. God speaks through the burning bush or in the pillar of cloud. God’s presence is proclaimed powerfully through the words of the prophets. God is not unknown.

On the other hand, some members of the group come to a different response: To truly know God would require each of us to be equal to God. Therefore, God cannot be fully known. As in any loving relationship, the depth of God’s being can never fully be fathomed.

At this point our conversation addresses questions about how to know God more fully and how to respond to the unknown part. I introduce God as mystery. A fully faithful life is lived in the mystery of God even as the faithful come to know God more and more.

As the Church contemplates the role of Joseph in the Nativity event, encountering mystery is a great place to start.

Matthew’s Gospel provides the image of Joseph facing crucial questions but ultimately entrusting himself to the plan of God, which he totally and completely cannot understand. By faith, however, he allows himself to be drawn into the tremendous mystery of Incarnation.

Encountering God as mystery admits that God is beyond human ability to know fully. Yet God as mystery invited Joseph to accept what was happening, namely the ultimate revelation of God, God as human!

The use of dreams in Matthew’s Gospel is a great way to convey God’s plan that intercepts human understanding. Joseph surrenders himself to the mystery. He does not understand but he trusts.

That leads to another aspect of this account, one of discernment. This is the process by which humans attempt to understand God’s will in their lives.

Over the years I have known many people who spend a great



amount of time “discerning” a big decision that must be made.

Often they go into overdrive trying to find out God’s plan for them regarding vocation choice, use of personal wealth or even how to vote. These can be major decisions, but the real process of discernment must start way before one is confronted with big decisions.

Discernment, simply stated, is an awareness of God already active in our lives each day. As such, people become conscious of their strengths and weaknesses.

It is not simply what someone wants to do but also what that person is called to do. If a person is faithful to prayer of listening and is surrounded by honest support, God’s plan becomes clear much more easily.

Joseph simply could not have decided to accept pregnant Mary because of a dream alone. There was a context for this, and that context was that Joseph was already, according to Scripture, a just and compassionate man.

He had already been allowing God to direct his life. In the New Testament he proclaims no great canticles as Mary did in Luke’s Gospel. Instead, there is quiet certitude and commitment.

In Joseph’s own prayer life, there likely already had been some sense of trust in the mystery of God. He was well versed in the Torah and would have known God to be both immanent and transcendent.

His experience would have included daily prayer and a great expectation of the promise of salvation. For this to unfold in his own married life would have been beyond comprehension, but not beyond his sense of God’s commitment to the Israelites.

All this leads us to the final meditation on Joseph and the Incarnation. Once he had accepted the power of this mystery, he had to face a life of great commitment. There would be challenges and misunderstandings (Lk 2:41-52), no doubt.

But in the face of all this, precisely because of his willingness to live in the mystery of God, his life became one of peacefulness and gentle humility. Those are gifts given to all who trust in the power of God working in their lives.

— **Father Herb Weber, Catholic News Service**

Father Weber is founding pastor of St. John XXIII Church in Perrysburg, Ohio. His weekly podcast can be found at 23.church.

UPCOMING EVENTS



12|22 SUNDAY Advent Lessons and Carols

*Sacred Heart Saint Francis de Sales,
Bennington • 2 pm*

Friends of all faith traditions are warmly invited to gather for this solemn offering of Old Testament Scripture and music.



12|25 WEDNESDAY Free Christmas Meal

St. Anthony, Bethel • 12:30 - 2:30 pm
Free Christmas meal for all. A beautiful

tradition by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas — led by chef extraordinaire, Cathy Day—where we offer a free meal to one and all on Christmas Day.



12|29 SUNDAY Messe en français

St. Joseph Cathedral, Burlington • 6 - 7 pm
Mass in French animated by the

French-speaking African communities at St. Joseph Cathedral. Mass and homily in French celebrated by Fr. Lance W. Harlow, Rector. This is a great occasion for high school students to get some extra credit and for French speakers of all levels.



12|31 TUESDAY Rosary New Year Celebration

Catholic Center at UVM, Burlington • 4 - 7 pm
Come and join for the New Year's Evening

celebration with Mary, the Queen of Peace, hosted by the Lady's Blue Army Vermont. The Lady at Fatima requested that we pray the Rosary often for Peace, Hope, and Love. Mass will be celebrated at 4 pm. Light Procession and the Rosary begin at 5 pm. (The Fatima pilgrim statue will be at the Catholic Center from Dec. 28 to Jan. 4, 2020.)



01|01 WEDNESDAY Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Holy Day of Obligation in the United States.



01|12 SUNDAY Burlington K of C Pancake Breakfast

St. Mark, Burlington • 8:30 - 11:30 am

Sponsored by the DeGoesbriand Council 279 Burlington,

supporting our seminarians and postulation in the diocese.
Ages 6 to 89, Suggested \$7 maximum per family \$25.



01|18 SATURDAY Diocesan Mass, VT Rally for Life

St. Augustine, Montpelier • 9:30 am - 12 pm
Join us for Mass at St. Augustine. Following

Mass Vermont Right to Life will sponsor a prayerful walk to the Statehouse with a program to follow inside.



01|22 WEDNESDAY VCP Networking Breakfast

*Pomerleau Alumni Center, St. Michael's
College, Colchester • 8 - 9:30 am*

This free event will begin with networking and refreshments, followed by words from a professional development speaker, and followed by more networking and discussion. Our January guest speaker is Mike Smith — Interim president and CEO of the Vermont Information Technology Leaders, Inc / Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services.



01|23-26 THURSDAY-SUNDAY Life is Precious Washington D.C. Trip 2020

Trip will include Rally for Life with thousands of other teens, March for Life with hundreds of thousands, National Mall Museums, National Basilica and more! Cost: \$175 — submit \$50 non-refundable deposit by November 1. Submit full deposit by January 1, 2020 (*non-refundable after January 1*).



01|31, 02|01, 02 FRI, SAT, SUN Discernment in Daily Life

*Our Lady of Life Spiritual Center,
St-Paul-d'Abbotsford, QC*

Retreat for students and young professionals, 18-35 years old, with teaching given in French/English (*simultaneous translation as needed*) by a team of Our Lady of Life members.



02|02 SUNDAY World Marriage Day Anniversary Mass

St. Joseph Cathedral, Burlington • 10 - 11 am

Join us as we celebrate World Marriage Day by honoring in a special way those celebrating a milestone wedding anniversary. Mass with Bishop Christopher Coyne.



02|26 WEDNESDAY Ash Wednesday

Come to Mass and receive your ashes!



02|22 SATURDAY Marriage Preparation Retreat

*Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Parish Hall,
Bennington • 10 am - 5:30 pm*

Take a break from wedding preparation and spend time in prayer, sharing and fellowship with your fiancé and other engaged couples. Lunch and materials will be provided.



03|28 SATURDAY Diocesan Catholic Men's Conference

St. Anthony, White River Jct. • 9 am - 3:15 pm

Diocesan Catholic Men's Conference featuring Guy Gruters

DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON CAREERS

Diocese: Finance Officer

Diocese: Respect Life Coordinator

Diocese: Senior Accountant

Diocese: Technical Support Specialist

The Loretto Home, Rutland:
Residential Care Positions

Our Lady of Seven Dolours, Fair Haven:
Organist or Keyboardist/Choir Director

St. Joseph Residential Care Home, Burlington:
LPN

Vermont Catholic Charities: Counselor

For More Info:

vermontcatholic.org/careers



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON

To see more events or to submit your event to the diocesan calendar:
vermontcatholic.org/events

FOLLOW US



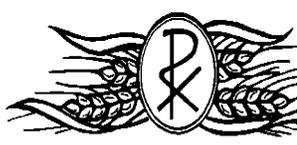
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ROMAN CATHOLIC

VERMONTCATHOLIC.ORG/VTC

Ask your pastor where to find free copies of the latest issue of Vermont Catholic Magazine in your parish.



Mass Intentions for the Week

- Monday, December 23, 2019**
 8:00 AM Joseph and Mary Rose Kern *by Daughter*
 11:00 AM Mary Bissonnette *by Estate* (OLP Chapel)
 5:30 PM Mass at Church
- Tuesday, December 24 * Christmas Eve***
 4:00 PM Intentions of Parishioners
 7:00 AM Deceased Members of the Paul Gagnon Family *by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Turmel*
 Midnight Rick Marcotte *by Family*
- Wednesday, December 25 * Christmas Day***
 10:00 AM Intentions of Parishioners
- Thursday, December 26**
 8:00 AM Joe Doppman *by Family*
 11:00 AM Mass at OLP Chapel
 5:30 PM No Mass
 6 to 7 PM No Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- Friday, December 27**
 8:00 AM Mignonne Parent *by Parent Family*
 11:00 AM Mass at OLP Chapel
 5:30 PM No Mass
- Saturday, December 28**
 4:00 PM Theresa Mongeon *by Estate*
- Sunday, December 29**
 7:30 AM Living and Deceased Members of the Thibault Family
 9:00 AM Intentions of Parishioners
 11:00 AM Jerry, Elaine and Tim Bergeron *by Family*

Parish Support

Because of the bulletin publishing schedule financials were not available, they will appear in a later publication.

National March for Life:

The Diocese is sponsoring a bus for teenage Vermonters to participate in the annual National March For Life in Washington. This is amazing experience for youth. Buses will leave January 23 (eve) and return January 26. This will be an extended itinerary for teens and their chaperones to include visits to several museums/shrines in the D.C. area and overnight stays.



The Winooski Knights of Columbus meet every 2nd Monday of each month at the Senior Center at 7 PM. Any man 18 years of age or older wishing to join the Knights should contact Grand Knight Greg Clairmont at 343-8446 or listandsellvt@gmail.com or Deputy Grand Knight Greg Bolger at 660-9044 or gbolger@ccnne.com For additional information about the Knights of Columbus visit our web site www.wkofc.org and “like” our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Winooskikofc2284

Knights of Columbus Sunday Breakfast

The Knights of Columbus St. Stephen’s Council #2284’s world famous breakfast returns on Sunday, January 19, 2020, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM, at the Winooski Senior Center. Charge is \$7.00 per person, maximum \$20.00 per family, children under 5 years of age complimentary.

“For I was hungry and you gave me food” Matthew 25: 35-40

Our St. Francis Xavier parish community is partnering with the new Winooski Food Shelf to help feed our neighbors in need. For the month of **December** the food shelf is in need of canned chicken, carrots, beets, peas, chowders, ramen noodles, tomato paste, garbanzo beans, spam, hash, chili, baked beans. Cereal such as Raisin Bran, Life, Honey Nut Cheerios and Fruit Loops as well as additional non-perishable food items for distribution. There is also a need for Laundry Soap and Dish Soap, as well as ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise. Shampoo and toothpaste. Collection boxes are placed in the church vestibule and delivered to the Food Shelf each week.

FREE Christmas Day Meals

Please join us on Wednesday, **December 25, 2019** Elks Lodge, 925 North Avenue in Burlington
NOON — 3:00 pm

FREE & open to the public, all ages welcome.

If you are 50 or older and need transportation, please call Megan Humphrey at 864-7528. Otherwise, please just come and join us. Bring a friend!

OR

To reserve a FREE dinner **delivered on Christmas Day** to anyone **50 years or older in Chittenden County** please call Age Well at 865-0360 from December 2-19.

Please Note:

St. Francis Xavier Parish has a new email address.

sfxchurch@vermontcatholic.org

“Keep the Light Burning Bright” at St. Francis Xavier School

The 2019 - 2020 Annual Appeal for Saint Francis Xavier School is underway. Our Co-Chairs this year are two of our recently retired teachers and their spouses: Cathy and Dave Richards and Mary Ellen and Wally Varhue. Cathy and Mary Ellen know firsthand from their years of teaching at SFX School how important it is to “keep the light burning bright” at St. Francis -- the light of learning and the light of faith.

Mary Ellen and Cathy shared the following thoughts recently: “We both agree that many students today are a bit adrift and struggling. There are very good teachers at public schools who care very much about their students, but those teachers are hamstrung in an important way. At Saint Francis Xavier School, we have a ‘super power’ we can use to help our students. We can turn to them and say, ‘You are loved totally and completely by God,’ and that makes all the difference. Monsignor Lavalley has said many times that if kids don’t learn anything else, he wants every student to know that God loves them. We are able to share that message each day at St. Francis.”

The Annual Appeal plays a crucial role in the school’s financial health. Money from the Appeal bridges the gap between what tuition covers and the actual cost of educating our students. Once again this year, a group of benefactors has put forth a challenge. They will match all money raised by January 31, 2020, up to \$50,000! Please take advantage of this opportunity to double your donation to Saint Francis Xavier School and thereby double the gift you give to our children. Remittance envelopes are at church entrances and you can also give online by going to www.sfxvt.org and clicking on the Giving tab at the top of the page.

The CARES Catholic Network: St. Francis Xavier Health & Wellness Ministry

Compassion, Advocacy, Respite, Education, Service

We are three Mercy Associates who are working with the Parish Nurse to collect and redistribute medical equipment in an effort to help those in need have a better quality of life. We are seeking wheelchairs, walkers, canes, commodes, adult diapers, bed pads and other related equipment (good condition only, please). If you have any equipment that you would like to donate or if you are in need of equipment, please call 863-8508 or 578-9920 and ask for Monique.

ADVENT CONFESSIONS

Sunday, December 22 from 2 PM to 3 PM
 Monday, December 23 from 7 PM to 8 PM
 Tuesday, December 24 from 11 AM to Noon

A Gift For You

Our parish has just subscribed to an amazing resource called formed.org. This is a faithfully Catholic website that offers HUNDREDS of movies, documentaries, Bible studies, sacrament studies, books, and audio teachings. If you like the lighthouse Catholic media CDs, then imagine having all of those resources at your fingertips in audio and video. You can sign up for this on your smartphone, tablet, smart TV, or your home computer. Just go to formed.org (or download the app) click the "sign up as part of a parish" button, type in Saint Francis Xavier, and enter your name and email. That's all you have to do to have all of these FREE resources at your finger tips. If you need help signing up, then please call the parish office 655-2290 or contact Jordan Easley, 802-503-8241.

Christmas Flowers:

St. Francis Xavier Parish and Sally’s Flower Shop are again giving parishioners the opportunity to give Christmas Flowers in Memory of Loved Ones. Plants will be especially priced for this purpose. Your selection will be delivered to the Church **Free of Charge**. If interested in participating please call Sally’s Flower Shop at 655-3894 or stop by the show room at 333 Main Street.

1st Annual

St. Francis Xavier Hockey Night Out

Vermont Athletics is hosting St. Francis

School/Parish Group Night on January 10, 2020 7PM at Gutterson Fieldhouse as Men’s Hockey takes on Dartmouth. This event provides fans the opportunity to come out to a Catamount Hockey game for a discounted ticket of just \$10. Purchase tickets online at <https://offer.fevo.com/mhk-dartmouth-gceqvvu-97844e0>. After completing your purchase you will receive a unique link to share the event with your friends and family. UVM ticket office at athletic.tickets@uvm.edu. or call (802)656-4410.

Father Joseph hopes you will join him!

Knights of Columbus Free throw contest

Winooski Knights of Columbus Council #2284 and St. Francis CYO are once again sponsoring a free throw contest on Saturday, January 11, 2020 at 1PM for boys and 2PM for girls at the Winooski High School gym. The contest is open to all local girls and boys ages 9 through 14. Proof of age (as of January 1, 2020) is required for participation.

For more information please contact George Ashline at 654-2434 or Jeff Brosseau at 233-5530.