



If you do not repent, you will all perish as they did.

The Third Sunday of Lent *March 20, 2022*

Saint Francis of Assisi Parish
Missions of Our Lady of the Valley in Fall River Mills
and Saint Stephen's in Bieber

Mission Statement

We, the Catholic Church of Saint Francis, are a community of faith called by Baptism to center our lives in the sacraments and the Holy Eucharist. We gather together to mutually grow in our love for God and neighbor by studying the Word of God; by believing in the Faith and Traditions from the Apostles; by accepting the teachings of the Magisterium and by receiving and giving support, hope, faith and charity.

Parroquia de San Francisco de Asís
Misiones de Nuestra Señora del Valle en Fall River Mills
y San Esteban en Bieber

Nuestra Misión

Nosotros la Iglesia de San Francisco, somos una comunidad de Fe llamados por el Bautismo a centrar nuestra vida en los sacramentos y la Santa Eucarista. Nosotros nos reunimos para crecer mutuamente en nuestro amor a Dios y a nuestro semejante a través de estudiar la Palabra de Dios; a través de creer en la Fe y Tradición de los Apóstoles; a través de aceptar las enseñanzas del Magisterio y a través de recibir y dar Apoyo, Fe, Esperanza y Caridad.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish

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MISSIONS

Our Lady of the Valley St. Stephen's
43434 Hwy. 299E 201 Hwy. 299E
Fall River Mills Bieber

MASS SCHEDULE

See "Parish Calendar" (opposite) for changes.

Weekends

Saturday	4:30 pm	Our Lady of the Valley
Sunday	9:00 am	St. Francis
	11:00 am	Our Lady of the Valley (Spanish)
	1:00 pm	St. Stephen's

Weekdays

Mon, Tue, Fri	9:00 am	St. Francis
Thursday	6:00 pm	St. Francis (Spanish)
Friday	6:00 pm	Our Lady of the Valley (Spanish)

ADORATION

1st Friday	9:30 am—Noon	St. Francis
1st Saturday	3:30 pm	Our Lady of the Valley
1st Sunday	11:45 am	St. Stephen's
Thursdays	3—6:00 pm	St. Francis
Fridays	11 am—6 pm	Our Lady of the Valley

First Sunday of the Month: All the Masses are said for the sick and following Mass, Anointing of the Sick will be administered.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

Confession is available one-half hour before scheduled Masses. Otherwise, call the parish for an appointment.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOOD BANK

Food is available on request. Call the parish at 335-2372 for food anytime you are in need or call Bob Gartner at 249-8641.

NEW PARISHIONERS

Please register at our website www.stfrancisburney.org

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION FOR CHILDREN (CCD)

Please contact
Elaine Shields (336-1003) or
Estella Valdovinos (524-6434) Spanish

MUSIC: WEDDINGS & FUNERALS

Please contact Joan Knapp (530) 294-1234

BECOMING CATHOLIC (RCIA)

Program of study for non-Catholic adults or Catholics seeking the Sacrament of Confirmation. Contact Bob Gartner at (530) 249-8641 or email: bobgartner@gmail.com

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please contact Bob Gartner (bobgartner@gmail.com)

LECTORS

March 20
Tom Weber
Justin Olesen

March 27
John Klobas
Sandy Ogden

CALENDAR

Sat/Sun	March 26-27	Catholic Relief Services Collection
Wed	March 30	Lenten Penance Service 6:30pm OLV
Sat	April 9	Pastoral Council Meeting at 3:00pm OLV
Friday	April 15	Good Friday
Sunday	April 17	Easter Sunday

For more information see our website at www.stfrancisburney.org

Offertory Collections

Fiscal Year-to-Date

	Actual	Budget	Difference	%
St. Francis	29,964	32,362	-2,398	-7.4%
OLV-English	16,032	14,531	1,502	10.3%
OLV-Spanish	13,239	13,386	-146	-1.1%
St. Stephen's	16,903	18,542	-1,639	-8.8%
WeShare	8,320	6,708	1,612	24.0%
Other	180	0	180	
Total Collections	84,638	85,527	-890	-1.0%

REFLECTION

Jesus, full of love and mercy, gives us every chance to repent and follow him. As we continue our Lenten pilgrimage of repentance and renewal, we put our trust in the Lord and keep turning to him for forgiveness. Let us humbly open our hearts to his presence in all the circumstances of our life so that we may reflect his love and mercy in the world.

Hospitality at St. Stephen's

Every Sunday is hospitality Sunday at St. Stephen's. Please join us for a nice lunch with soup/casserole, salad, bread, dessert and drinks. All are welcome, bring something to share if you can.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Next week**, our parish will take up **The Catholic Relief Services Collection**. Funds from this collection provide food to the hungry, support displaced refugees, and bring Christ's love and mercy to all people here and abroad. Please give generously to the collection and help Jesus in disguise. Learn more about the collection at www.usccb.org/catholic-relief.
- **Rosary Group/Legion of Mary** meets this **Thursday, March 24th**, 4:30pm, at St Francis Parish Hall.
- **Lenten Penance Service: Wednesday, March 30th**, at 6:30pm, at Our Lady of the Valley.
- **Parish Council Meeting** is scheduled for Saturday, April 9th, at 3:00 pm, at Our Lady of the Valley.
- **Offertory Collections** are 1.0% under budget.

Gospel Reflection by St. John XXIII

Our first need is for internal repentance; the detestation, that is, of sin, and the determination to make amends for it. This is the repentance shown by those who make a good Confession, take part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and receive Holy Communion. The faithful should be specially encouraged to do this during the novena to the Holy Spirit, for external acts of penance are quite obviously useless unless accompanied by a clear conscience and the detestation of sin. Hence Christ's severe warning: "Unless you repent you will all perish in the same manner." God forbid that any of Our sons and daughters succumb to this danger.

But the faithful must also be encouraged to do outward acts of penance, both to keep their bodies under the strict control of reason and faith, and to make amends for their own and other people's sins. St. Paul was caught up to the third heaven—he reached the summit of holiness—and yet he had no hesitation in saying of himself "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection." On another occasion he said: "They who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires." St. Augustine issued the same insistent warning: "It is not enough for a man to change his ways for the better and to give up the practice of evil, unless by painful penance, sorrowing humility, the sacrifice of a contrite heart and the giving of alms he makes amends to God for all that he has done wrong."

But besides bearing in a Christian spirit the inescapable annoyances and sufferings of this life, the faithful ought also take the initiative in doing voluntary acts of penance and offering them to God. In this they will be following in the footsteps of our divine Redeemer who, as the Prince of the Apostles said, "died once for sins, the Just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God. Put to death indeed in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit." "Since, therefore, Christ has suffered in the flesh," it is only fitting that we be "armed with the same intent."

It is right, too, to seek example and inspiration from the great saints of the Church. Pure as they were, they inflicted such mortifications upon themselves as to leave us

almost aghast with admiration. And as we contemplate their saintly heroism, shall not we be moved by God's grace to impose on ourselves some voluntary sufferings and deprivations, we whose consciences are perhaps weighed down by so heavy a burden of guilt?

And who does not know that this sort of penance is the more acceptable to God in that it springs not from the natural infirmities of soul or body, but from a free and generous resolve of the will, and as such is a most welcome sacrifice in God's sight?

From the General Audience of Pope Francis

Should we give credit to some recent theories, which denounce the human race as an evolutionary detriment to life on our planet? All negative? No.

Indeed, we are under pressure, exposed to opposing stresses that confuse us. On the one hand, we have the optimism of an eternal youth, kindled by the extraordinary progress of technology, that depicts a future full of machines that are more efficient and more intelligent than us, that will cure our ills and devise for us the best solutions so as not to die: the world of robots. On the other hand, our imagination appears increasingly concentrated on the representation of a final catastrophe that will extinguish us. What happens with an eventual nuclear war. The "day after" this – if there will still be days and human beings – will have to start again from scratch. Destroying everything to start again from scratch. I do not want to trivialize the idea of progress, naturally. But it seems that the symbol of the flood is gaining ground in our subconscious. Besides, the current pandemic puts a heavy weight on our carefree representation of the things that matter, for life and its destiny.

In the bible story, when it comes to saving life on earth from corruption and from the flood, God entrusts the task to the fidelity of the eldest of all, the "righteous" Noah. Will old age save the world, I wonder? In what sense? And how will old age save the world? And what is the prospect? Life after death or just survival until the flood?

A word of Jesus, that evokes "the days of Noah", will help us to explore more deeply the meaning of the bible passage we have heard. Jesus, speaking about the end times, says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all" (Lk 17:26-27). Indeed, eating and drinking, taking a husband or wife, are very normal things and do not seem to be examples of corruption. Where is the corruption? Where is the corruption there? In reality, Jesus stresses the fact that human beings, when they limit themselves to enjoying life, lose even the perception of corruption, which mortifies their dignity and poisons meaning. When the perception of corruption is lost, and corruption becomes something normal: eve-

rything has its price, everything! Opinions, acts of justice, are bought and sold. This is common in the world of business, in the world of many professions. And corruption is even experienced in a carefree way, as if it were part of the normality of human wellbeing. When you go to do something, and it is slow, that process of doing things is a bit slow, how often do you hear: "Yes, but if you give me a tip, I will speed it up". Very often. "Give me something and I will take it further". We are well aware of this, all of us. The world of corruption seems to be part of the normality of the human being, and this is bad. This morning I spoke with a woman who told me about this problem in her homeland. The goods of life are consumed and enjoyed without concern for the spiritual quality of life, without care for the habitat of the common home. Everything is exploited, without concerning themselves with the mortification and disheartenment of which many suffer, nor with the evil that poisons the community. As long as normal life can be filled with "wellbeing", we do not want to think about what makes it empty of justice and love. "But I am fine! Why should I think about problems, about wars, about human suffering, all that poverty, all that evil? No, I am fine. I don't care about others". This is the subconscious thought that leads us towards living in a state of corruption.

Can corruption become normal, I wonder? Brothers and sisters, unfortunately, yes. We can breathe the air of corruption just as we breath oxygen. "But it is normal; if you want me to do this faster, what will you give me?" It is normal! It is normal, but it is a bad thing, it is not good! What paves the way for this? One thing: the carefreeness that turns only to self-care: this is the gateway to the corruption that sinks the lives of all of us. Corruption benefits greatly from this ungodly carefreeness. When everything is going well for someone, and others do not matter to him or her: this thoughtlessness it weakens our defenses, it dulls our consciences and it turns us – even involuntarily – into accomplices. Because corruption is not solitary: a person always has accomplices. And corruption always spreads, it spreads.

Old age is in a good position to grasp the deception of this normalization of a life obsessed with enjoyment and empty of interiority: life without thought, without sacrifice, without beauty, without truth, without justice, without love: this is all corruption. The special sensibility of us old people, of old age for the attention, thoughts and affections that make us human, should once again become the vocation of many. And it will be a choice of the love of the elderly towards the new generations. We will be the ones to sound the alarm, the alert: "Be aware, this is corruption, it will bring you nothing". There is a great need today for the wisdom of the elderly to counteract corruption. The new generations expect of us, the elderly, a word that is prophecy, that opens the doors to new perspectives outside that carefree world of corruption, of the habit of corrupt things. God's blessing chooses old age, for this charism that is so human and humanizing. What is the meaning of my old age? Each one of us elderly people can ask ourselves this. The

PLEASE PRAY FOR

St. Francis

Pete Giachetti, Ray Wanat, Irma Welty,
Melba Facey, Christina Mora, Glenda Pearson &
Barbara, Bob Heisinger

Our Lady of the Valley

Rick Phay, Eva Rebay, Gary Freeland

St. Stephen's

Olivia Cox, Ryan Graham, Vernon Ferreira,
Trish Bautista, Nancy Fenner, Liz Paul,
Breen Hofmann, Carl & Mary Doyle, Carol Mitchell,
Joan Knapp

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention (March) For a Christian response to bioethical challenges

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges;
may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life
with prayer and action.

meaning is this: being a prophet of corruption and saying to others: "Stop, I have taken this road and it does not lead you anywhere! Now I will tell you about my experience". We, the elderly, should be prophets against corruption, just as Noah was the prophet against the corruption of his time, because he was the only one in whom God trusted. I ask you all – and I also ask myself: is my heart open to being a prophet against corruption today? It is a bad thing, when seniors do not mature, and become old people with the same corrupt habits of the young. Think of the bible story of the judges of Sussanna: they are the example of a corrupt old age. And we, with this type of old age, would not be capable of being prophets for the young generations.

And Noah is the example of this generative old age: it is not corrupt, it is generative. Noah does not preach, he does not complain, he does not recriminate, but rather he takes care of the future of the generation that is in danger. We seniors must take care of the young, of children who are in danger. He builds the ark of acceptance and lets people and animals enter it. In his care for life, in all its forms, Noah obeys God's commandment, repeating the tender and generous gesture of creation, which in reality is the very thought that inspires the command of God: a new blessing, a new creation (cf. Gen 8: 15-9,17). Noah's vocation remains ever relevant. The holy patriarch must once again intercede for us. And we, women and men of a certain age – so as not to say elderly, as some will be offended – let us not forget that we have the possibility of wisdom, of saying to others: "Look, this path of corruption leads nowhere". We must be like the good wine that, once aged, can give a good message, not a bad one.

I appeal today to all those people who are of a certain age, so as not to say elderly. Be careful: you have the responsibility to denounce the human corruption in which we live and in which this way of living of relativism goes on, totally relative, as if everything were legitimate. Let us move forward. The world needs strong young people, who move forward, and wise elders. Let us ask the Lord for the grace of wisdom.