

I give My sheep eternal life.

*Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 8, 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 Eucaristía. 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 "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

May 8

Carolyn Garfield
John Klobas

May 15

Justin Olesen
Bob Gartner

CALENDAR

Sat/Sun	May 28/29	Second Collection: Catholic Communications Campaign
Sun	May 29	Ascension of the Lord
Tue	May 31	Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sun	June 5	Pentecost
Sun	June 12	Most Holy Trinity

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

Offertory Collections

Fiscal Year-to-Date

	Actual	Budget	Difference	%
St. Francis	39,184	38,484	700	1.8%
OLV-English	18,691	17,280	1,412	8.2%
OLV-Spanish	16,401	15,918	483	3.0%
St. Stephen's	20,956	22,050	-1,094	-5.0%
WeShare	10,871	8,594	2,277	26.5%
Other	180	0	180	
Total Collections	106,284	102,326	3,958	3.9%

REFLECTION

As followers of the Risen Lord, we are called to embrace his mission and "feed" the sheep of his flock with his love. He is the source of new life for all who believe in him. Let us respond with joy and love as we offer our lives for his Kingdom, in complete abandonment to his will. Radiating his sacrificial love, let us care for the people he loves and died for.

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

- Save the date, **July 31st**, for our **2022 Parish Picnic** at the Lion's Park in **Fall River Mills**. This is a potluck so bring your favorite dish to share.
- Youth Event for Shasta Deanery, Month of June, Sacred Heart Parish, Anderson. See Fr. Pol for information.
- **Parish Council Meeting May 21, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.** at Our Lady of the Valley.
- **RCIA Class** meets on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at Our Lady of the Valley, 2:30-4:00.
- **Offertory Collections** YTD are **\$3,958 over budget**. Thank you for your generosity.
- Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose Center for Education & Spirituality and the South County Deanery Parishes present: **Tolton—From Slave to Priest** Performed live by Jim Coleman **May 14, 2022 2 pm Holy Spirit Parish Center**. \$20. For more information and to register see: **www.msjdominicans.org** Call **(510) 933-3546** for more information.
- The lucky **winner** of the **St. Vincent de Paul Raffle** for the trip to Hawaii is Deacon Dave Campbell from Our Lady of Grace Parish, Sacramento. Thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets this year and also those who support SVDP throughout the year with their financial help. Next year in Hawaii!

Gospel Reflection from a Homily by St. John Paul II

'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' And he said: 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; but rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do" (Acts 9:4-6).

The extraordinary event was decisive for the future of Paul and the Church. The Apostle's meeting with Christ radically changed his life, because it affected him at the most intimate level of his being and made him fully receptive to divine truth. Paul freely accepted this truth and freely agreed to commit his life to the following of Christ. By welcoming the divine light and receiving baptism, his deepest being was conformed to Christ. His life was thus transformed and he discovered happiness in placing his faith and trust in the One who had called him from darkness into his own wonderful light (cf. 2 Tim 1:12; Eph 5:8; Rom 13:12). Meeting the Risen One in faith is truly a light on man's journey, a light which calls one's whole life into question. On the shining face of Christ, God's truth manifests itself in a spectacular way. May we too keep our gaze upon the Lord! O Christ, light of the world, cause to shine upon us and all men and women the heavenly light which surrounded your Apostle! Enlighten and purify the eyes of our heart, so that we may learn to see all things in the light of your truth and love of humanity!

The Church has no other light to pass on to the world than the light which come to her from her Lord. We have been baptized into the Death and Resurrection of Christ, we have received light from God and we have been made children of the Light. Let us recall the beautiful exclamation of Saint John Damascene which emphasizes the origin of our common ecclesial vocation: "You have made me come into the light by adopting me as your son, and you have counted me among the members of your holy Church which is without stain" (De

Fide Orthodoxa, 1)! On our journey, the word of God is a shining lamp; it enables us to know the truth that sets us free and makes us holy.

Like Paul, the disciples of Christ face a great challenge: they are to transmit the Good News by expressing it in a manner suited to each culture, without losing its content or altering its meaning. Do not be afraid to bear witness to this joyful news among your brothers and sisters, by your word and by your whole life: God loves everyone and calls them to be one family in love, for they are all brothers and sisters!

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I shall give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:27-30).

These are the words of today's Gospel, by which Jesus Christ himself shows us the admirable dynamism of evangelization. God, who in many and various ways spoke to our fathers by the prophets, finally spoke by his Son (cf. Heb 1:1-2). This Son, one in substance with the Father, is the Word of life. It is he who gives eternal life. He came so that we might have life and have it abundantly (cf. Jn 10:10). At the gates of Damascus, when he met the Risen Christ, Saint Paul learned this truth and made it the content of his preaching. The wonderful reality of the Cross of Christ, upon which the work of the world's Redemption was wrought, became present before him. Paul understood this reality and consecrated his whole life to it.

Brothers and sisters, let us lift our eyes to the Cross of Christ to find the source of our hope! In it we find a genuine path of life and happiness. Let us contemplate the loving face of God who gives us his Son to make us all "of one heart and soul" (Acts 4:32). Let us welcome him into our lives to inspire us and bring about the mystery of communion which embodies and makes manifest the very essence of the Church.

From the General Audience of Pope Francis (5/4/22)

On the path of these catechesis on old age, today we meet a biblical figure – and old man – named Eleazar, who lived at the time of the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. He is a wonderful character. His character gives us a testimony of the special relationship that exists between the fidelity of old age and the honor of faith. He's a proud one, eh? I would like to speak precisely about the honor of faith, not only about faith's consistency, proclamation, and resistance. The honor of faith periodically comes under pressure, even violent pressure, from the culture of the rulers, who seek to debase it by treating it as an archaeological find, or an old superstition, an anachronistic fetish, and so on.

The biblical story – we have heard a short passage, but it is good to read it all – tells of the episode of the Jews being forced by a king's decree to eat meat sacrificed to idols. When it's the turn of Eleazar, an elderly man highly respected by everyone, in his 90s; highly respected by everyone – an authority – the king's officials advised him to resort to a pretense, that is, to pretend to eat the meat without actually doing so. Hypocrisy. Religious hypocrisy. There is so much! There is so much religious hypocrisy, clerical hypocrisy, there is so much. These people tell him, "Be a little bit of a hypocrite, no one will notice. In

this way Eleazar would be saved, and – they said – in the name of friendship he would accept their gesture of compassion and affection. A hypocritical way out. After all, they insisted, it was a small gesture, pretending to eat but not eating, an insignificant gesture.

It is a little thing, but Eleazar's calm and firm response is based on an argument that strikes us. The central point is this: dishonoring the faith in old age, in order to gain a handful of days, cannot be compared with the legacy it must leave to the young, for entire generations to come. But well-done Eleazar! An old man who has lived in the coherence of his faith for a whole lifetime, and who now adapts himself to feigning repudiation of it, condemns the new generation to thinking that the whole faith has been a sham, an outer covering that can be abandoned, imagining that it can be preserved interiorly. And it is not so, says Eleazar. Such behavior does not honor faith, not even before God. And the effect of this external trivialization will be devastating for the inner life of young people. But the consistency of this man who considers the young! He considers his future legacy, he thinks of his people.

It is precisely old age – and this is beautiful for all you old people, isn't it! – that appears here as the decisive place, the irreplaceable place for this testimony. An elderly person who, because of his vulnerability, accepts that the practice of the faith is irrelevant, would make young people believe that faith has no real relationship with life. It would appear to them, from the outset, as a set of behaviors which, if necessary, can be faked or concealed, because none of them is particularly important for life.

The ancient heterodox "gnosis," which was a very powerful and very seductive trap for early Christianity, theorized precisely about this, this is an old thing: that faith is a spirituality, not a practice; a strength of the mind, not a form of life. Faithfulness and the honor of faith, according to this heresy, have nothing to do with the behaviors of life, the institutions of the community, the symbols of the body. Nothing to do with it. The seduction of this perspective is strong, because it interprets, in its own way, an indisputable truth: that faith can never be reduced to a set of dietary rules or social practices. Faith is something else. The trouble is that the Gnostic radicalization of this truth nullifies the realism of the Christian faith, because the Christian faith is realistic. The Christian faith is not just saying the creed: it is thinking about the Creed and understanding the Creed and doing the Creed. Working with our hands. Instead, this gnostic proposal pretends, but [imagines] that the important thing is that you have an interior spirituality, and then you can do whatever you please. And this is not Christian. It is the first heresy of the Gnostics, which is very fashionable at the moment, in so many centers of spirituality and so on. It makes void the witness of this people, which shows the concrete signs of God in the life of the community and resists the perversions of the mind through the gestures of the body.

The gnostic temptation, which is one of the – let us use the word – heresies, one of the religious deviations of this time; the gnostic temptation remains ever present. In many trends in our society and culture, the practice of faith suffers from a negative portrayal, sometimes in the form of cultural irony, sometimes with covert marginalization. The practice of faith for these Gnostics, who were already around at the time of Jesus, is regarded as a useless and even harmful external, as an antiquated residue, as a disguised superstition. In short, something for old men. The pressure that this indiscriminate criticism exerts on the younger generations is strong. Of course, we know that the practice of faith can be

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, Chris Patterson

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention (May) For faith-filled young people

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.

come a soulless external practice. This is the other danger, the opposite, isn't it? And it's true, isn't it? But in itself it's not so. Perhaps it is for us older people – and there are still some here – to give faith back its honor, to make it coherent, which is the witness of Eleazar: consistency to the very end. The practice of faith is not the symbol of our weakness, no, but rather the sign of its strength. We are no longer youngsters. We were not kidding around when we set out on the Lord's path!

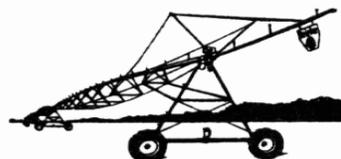
Faith deserves respect and honor to the very end: it has changed our lives, it has purified our minds, it has taught us the worship of God and the love of our neighbor. It is a blessing for all! But the faith as a whole, not just a part of it. Like Eleazar, we will not barter our faith for a handful of quiet days. We will show, in all humility and firmness, precisely in our old age, that believing is not something "for the old." No. It's a matter of life. Believing in the Holy Spirit, who makes all things new, and He will gladly help us.

Dear elderly brothers and sisters – not to say old, we are in the same group – please look at the young people: they are watching us. They are watching us. Don't forget that. I am reminded of that wonderful post-war film: The Children Are Watching Us. We can say the same thing with young people: young people are watching us and our consistency can open up a beautiful path of life for them. Hypocrisy, on the other hand, will do so much harm. Let us pray for one another. May God bless all of us old people. Thank you.

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