



# ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

4000 W. Tidewater Lane • Madison, MS 39110 • 601-856-5556 • Fax: 601-856-2849 • [stfrancismadison.org](http://stfrancismadison.org)

**February 1, 2026 – Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**



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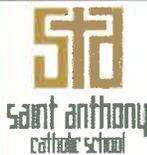


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### MASSES:

**Saturday Vigil: 5:00 PM**

**Sunday: 8:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 5:00 PM**

*10:30 am Sunday and daily Masses are  
live-streamed on our YouTube channel  
and our Facebook page.*

### WEEKDAY MASSES:

**Monday-Friday: 7:00 AM**

**Holy Day: 7:00 AM, 6:30 PM**

### O.C.I.A. (formerly R.C.I.A.)

**Wednesday: 6:30 - 8:00 PM**  
New inquirers welcome year round.

### ROSARY:

**Thursday: 6:40 AM**

### ADORATION:

**Thursday: 5:00 - 7:00 PM**

Divine Mercy Chaplet prayed at 6:30 PM

### RECONCILIATION:

**Saturday: 4:00 - 4:30 PM & by request**

**From the Desk of Msgr. Elvin**

Jesus, after seeing His crowd of followers, sits down and decides to teach them. Something He saw in the people propelled Jesus to take the time to sit down on the side of a mountain and teach what we would come to know as the Sermon on the Mount. In part of this teaching, Jesus leads the people through a series of statements highlighting the blessings of divine happiness. One of these blessings reveals how deeply Jesus cares about and understands the nature of our human hearts. He desires our holiness so that we might share in the Father's Kingdom with Him. According to Matthew, Jesus says, "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God." Let us make every effort to tend to our hearts so that as we seek God, we might also see Him. Just as the simple attention to the task of cleaning a window can make it shine and sparkle, so too that type of attention applied to the care of our own hearts will allow God's light to move through freely. And suddenly the view becomes very clear.

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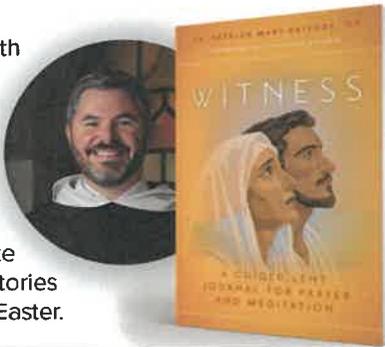
**ASH WEDNESDAY'S MASSES**

Wednesday, February 18  
7 am & 6 pm Masses

The Collection will support Habitat for Humanity.

**LENTEN BOOK STUDY**

Join our parish this Lent with Fr. Patrick Mary Briscoe's daily devotional *Witness*. Walk the road to Calvary alongside biblical figures who encountered Christ in his Passion—from Mary Magdalene to Pontius Pilate—and discover how their stories mirror our own journey to Easter.



St. Francis Lenten Book Study will take place every Thursday evening beginning February 19<sup>th</sup> in the FLC. Registration after this weekend's Masses and online.

**UPCOMING EVENTS AT ST. FRANCIS**

**Sunday, February 1**

- 9:00 am Sunday School for Pre-K4-6th grades.
- 9:00 am Coffee & Creed in St. Clare Hall.
- 9:00 am Bible Buddies in the Family Life Center Lounge.
- 6:00 pm Life Teen for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders resumes.

**Tuesday, February 3**

- 7:00 pm TMIY evening session in St. Clare Hall.

**Wednesday, February 4**

- 10:00 am Martha and Mary Group in St. Clare Hall.
- 6:00 pm WOW for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders in the FLC.
- 6:00 pm Wednesday's Grace in St. Thomas Hall.
- 6:15 pm Adult choir practice.
- 6:30 pm OCIA session in St. Clare Hall.

**Friday, February 6**

- 6:30 am TMIY morning session in St. Clare Hall.

**Sunday, February 8**

**FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION WEEKEND.**

- 3:30 pm Baptism Session in St. Clare Hall.



**Altar Flowers this weekend are in memory of Edith Lockard Fairbank**

by Amanda & Chris Williams and Lockard

The love you shared with the one you miss so much, live on in the light of Christ's great love. 1 Corinthians 13:8

**Events & Religious Education**

**Pre-K4-6<sup>th</sup> grade Children's Ministry and Sunday School**

**Save the dates for VBS 2026: June 15-18!** Many volunteers are needed to make this an awesome event for our children!  
**Children's Sunday School:** All Pre-K-6<sup>th</sup> grade children are invited to join us every Sunday, 9-10:15 am. Parents are invited to attend one of the adult faith formation classes during this time.

**7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Life Teen and Youth Ministry:**

**Life Teen:** All sessions for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, including Confirmation prep, resume this Sunday, February 1, 6-7:45 pm.  
*There will be NO Life Teen sessions on February 8 or 15.*  
**WOW (Worship On Wednesday):** We welcome all 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders this Wednesday, 6:00-7:30 pm for food, fellowship, and faith-sharing!

**Confirmation Retreat:** All 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> grade candidates getting confirmed this Spring should make plans to attend your retreat on **February 22, 9:30 am check-in till about 5:00 pm**, at Camp Garaywa! Indemnity forms are due this Sunday.

9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth, register now for the annual high school **Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference, March 20-22, 2026!** Registration link has been sent in Flocknote emails or contact Maggie for more information.



**FINANCIAL GIVING**



<b>Weekly Goal:</b>	<b>\$30,000.00</b>
Collection Basket	\$15,401.52
Children's Offering	\$ 15.00
Online	\$ 3,313.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,730.36</b>

Even during bad weather conditions, remember your contributions. You can always mail your check to the parish office; donate online: <https://www.strancismadison.org/give-st-rancis-madison>; or consider monthly bank draft by calling the parish office to speak with Sallie Ann at 601-856-5556.

**February:** Capital Campaign.

**February 14 & 15:** St. Anthony Tuition Assistance. *Please make checks payable to St. Francis of Assisi.*

**February:** Catholic Service Appeal Pledge. *Please make checks payable to CSA.*

**HOPE RISING**  
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# OCIA

## ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

This week Doug and Kimberly Harkins lead OCIA we reflect on **Mary and the Communion of Saints**. The Church teaches that Mary is “full of grace”—chosen by God to bear His Son and honored as the Mother of God—whose faithful “yes” points us always to Christ. United with her are all the saints: the faithful on earth, the souls being purified, and the saints in heaven, joined together as one Body in Christ. In this communion, we support one another through prayer and charity, confident that nothing can separate us from God’s love. OCIA meets at 6:30 on Wednesday nights in St. Clare Hall. Inquirers are welcome to join us at any time. More information about the OCIA program can be obtained by calling the church office or visiting the church website at [www.stfrancismadison.org](http://www.stfrancismadison.org).



## MASS INTENTIONS

- Sat., Jan. 31** 5:00 PM **VIGIL MASS**  
 Mass † **Richard Michael Amidei**
- Sun., Feb. 1** 8:00 AM **FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
 Mass † **Patricia Mangialardi**  
 9:10 AM Mass - St. Catherine † **Kathryn East**  
 10:30 AM Mass - Missa Pro Populo  
 5:00 PM Mass ♥ **Pha Hall**
- Mon., Feb. 2** 7:00 AM **THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD**  
 Mass † **Joseph Gandolini**
- Tue., Feb. 3** 7:00 AM **ST. BLAISE**  
 Mass ♥ **Rebecca Hayes**  
 8:30 AM Mass - St. Catherine † **Ken Robinson**
- Wed., Feb. 4** 7:00 AM **WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
 Mass † **Rita Barrau**
- Thurs., Feb. 5** 7:00 AM **ST. AGATHA**  
 Mass † **Mina Carollo**  
 8:30 AM Mass - St. Catherine † **Joy Gillis**  
 5:00-7:00 PM **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**
- Fri., Feb. 6** 7:00 AM **ST. PAUL MIKI**  
 Mass † **Mary & Ken Brown**  
 8:30 AM Mass - St. Catherine † **Kathleen Bonelli**

† Praying for Deceased ♥ Praying for Special Intention

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



The Diocese of Jackson is seeking a **faith-filled and organized Event Planning Coordinator** to help bring our diocesan gatherings, meetings, and donor events to life. This role is ideal for someone who enjoys serving others, coordinating meaningful events, and supporting the mission of the Catholic Church. If you or someone you know feels called to serve the Church through this work, we invite you to apply by submitting a résumé and cover letter to [Rebecca.harris@jacksondiocese.org](mailto:Rebecca.harris@jacksondiocese.org).

### MILLIONS OF MONICAS – PRAYING WITH CONFIDENCE FOR OUR CHILDREN

Many people have children who are struggling to embrace their Catholic faith or have left the Church entirely. Meetings every Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at St. Joseph Catholic Church. For more information call the parish office at 601.856.2054, email [millionsofmonicas@stjosephgluckstadt.com](mailto:millionsofmonicas@stjosephgluckstadt.com) or visit [www.millionsofmonicas.com](http://www.millionsofmonicas.com).

Adults 21 and Older are Invited to the

### THEOLOGY ON TAP

February 3, 2026 - Ann Cook  
 Blaylock Photography 117 N. Wheatley, Ridgeland, MS 39157

### PRAY FOR OUR SOLDIERS



Revell Patterson, Mark Vincent, John Logan, Christopher Hanneke, Brian Flaherty, Garrett Kennedy, Caroline Grace Smith, Greg Weatherford, James Kaiser, Dagan Nations, Lee Greco, Liam Nethery, Tristan Nethery, Kelly Yonko, and Willy Gabriel Cardona.

Thank you for protecting our country.  
 May the Lord keep you safe.

**2026 Black History Month: Celebration of Black Saints**  
**Joseph Lawson Howze (1923-2019) American Catholic Prelate**  
 When Pope Paul VI erected the Diocese of Biloxi on March 1, 1977, he named Howze who served as the first bishop of Biloxi in Mississippi from 1977 to 2001. He was the first openly Black bishop to head a diocese in the United States. He was a Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Peter Claver and a Third Degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

**St. Richard BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP MEETS**  
**Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m.**  
**in the St. Richard Mercy Room**  
**Topic “The Gift of Grief”**

St. Richard Catholic Church is offering bereavement support meeting EVERY 2nd Thursday of each month. They always have different speakers. St. Francis parishioners are invited to join these meetings. This group is for all who are hurting from losing a loved one or for those who are trying to comfort and understand the grief of a family member or friend. **It is open to all.** For more information, call **Suzie Cranston 601-573-3347** or **Nancy McGhee 601-942-2078** or email [ncmcghee@bellsouth.net](mailto:ncmcghee@bellsouth.net)

### PLEASE PRAY FOR HEALING



**Parishioners:** Rick Mills, Amanda Williams, Dora Thomas, Ann George, Michael Schenk, Tina Coats, Kathleen Hood, Elvie Clement, Chris Smith, Terry Grabiak, Louis Pellegrine, Ethan George, Betty Ravenstein, Leslie Philipp, Sieger Sims, Tom Miller, Brandy Tucker, Kregg Jones, Pat Rogers, Shannon Moody, Davis Oltremari, Marilyn Hansen, Lauren Kalka, Michelle Harrison, Joe Ellis, Barbara Willis, Mary Conner, Bernard Dreiling, Lucy Hilton, Molly Hoke, Elizabeth Winter, Mike Robinson, and Christine School.

**Family:** Joseph Edge, Jerry Thomas, Austin Stewart, Isabella Saab, Robert Smith, Kay Wittenberg, Donna Stanley, Keely Ramshur, Desiree Savoie, Angela Gaiter, Martha Hall, Marinella Davis, Amy McManus, Dan Nguyen, Rebecca McManus, Porter Antici, Selema Rookis, Marie Chipley, Troy Plaisance, Robin Ballough, Fred Delahoussay, Hap Post, Nancy Watts, Wells Heier, Caroline Duckworth, Dr. Sherrill Evans, Raymond Sahut, Ann Porcello, Celia Bustillos, Margaret Barber, Shirley Burns, Ellen Joiner, Jim Stewart, Willie Crotty, Dane Taylor, and Paul Bolus.

**Friends:** Lorene David, Lynn Goodman, Genesis Moore, Carrie Maniscalco, Lindsay McCollum, Consha Sims, Tommy Chifoln, Laura Higgins, Ruby Joblin, Travis Griffin, Shirley Jones, Patsy Meyer, Kay Beggerly, Gene Fox, Phil Cook, Brenda Dehm, Shannon Gilmer, Zayden Washington, Adele Brown, Carl Fields, Elizabeth Albertson, Jimmy Haltam, Mary Bradley, Gail Madden, Ethan Parker, Linda Parish, Fr. Michael O’Brien, and Robert Blount.

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday** Zep 2:3; 3:12-13; Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 5:1-12a
- Monday** Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22-32
- Tuesday** 2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30; 19:3; Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mk 5:21-43
- Wednesday** 2 Sm 24:2, 9-17; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 6, 7; Mk 6:1-6
- Thursday** 1 Kings 2:1-4, 10-12; 1 Chr 29:10, 11ab, 11d-12a, 12bcd; Mk 6:7-13
- Friday** Sir 47:2-11; Ps 18:31, 47 and 50, 51; Mk 6:14-29



**St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Madison, MS**

Rev. Albeenreddy Vatti, Pastor Rev. Jason Johnston, Assc. Pastor Rev. Alfred Camp, In residence

**One Minute Meditations**

**St. Onesimus**

Born in Phrygia, St. Onesimus was enslaved to Philemon of Colossae in present-day Turkey. He encountered St. Paul during the apostle's imprisonment in Rome, where Onesimus had fled after stealing from his master. Moved by Paul's witness, he repented, was baptized, and later gained his freedom. Onesimus became a trusted companion and co-worker of St. Paul and was eventually martyred for the faith during the persecutions under Emperor Domitian.

**God's Valentine to us**

If God sent a Valentine, it might sound something like this: "My darling child" (Jeremiah 31:20), "You are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you" (Isaiah 43:4). "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love" (John 15:9). "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends..." (John 15:13-14). "Do you love me?" (John 21:16) That makes the Bible the world's longest love letter.

"God is not the enemy of our freedom but its ground. That is something we ought to relearn in these days. Only love that is almighty can ground a joy that is free from anxiety." Pope Benedict XVI

**"What do you seek?" (John 1:38)**

Have you ever felt restless or quietly dissatisfied, sensing that something in your life needs changing? Lent offers that opportunity. It is a spiritual reset, inviting us to reorient our hearts toward Christ, the true source of peace, joy, purpose, and meaning. Here are practical ways to deepen your encounter with God and His love this Lent.

**Faith is relational, not informational.** The first disciples were not content with simply hearing about Jesus. They wanted to be with Him and to know Him personally. Christ extends that same invitation to us today. We respond by making room for Him through prayer and meditation, regular participation in Mass, and time with Scripture, not as duties to complete, but as ways of choosing a living relationship with the One who loves us most.

**Choose trust over control.** "Let Him lead and guide you," Pope Leo has urged. God's invitation to deeper friendship is renewed each day, and Lent is a privileged time to respond with intention. Begin each morning by

offering your day to God, placing your work, relationships, and uncertainties in His hands. This simple act of trust opens the door to genuine freedom.

**Share what you have received.** A true encounter with God naturally leads to what Pope Leo called "missionary

*"If you sense the Lord calling you, do not be afraid...He alone knows the deepest, perhaps hidden, longings of your heart — the path that will lead you to true fulfillment." (Pope Leo XIV)*

zeal," the desire to share with others what we have received. After meeting Christ, St. Andrew simply brought his brother, Simon Peter, to Him. Likewise, sharing your faith is often as simple as an honest conversation with a friend about the source of your hope. You are not persuading or performing; you are inviting someone you care about to meet the Friend who has changed your life.

This Lent, let renewal take root. Choose presence, trust, and generosity, and allow God to do the rest.

**Why Do Catholics Do That? Why do Catholics give up meat on Fridays in Lent?**

Abstaining from meat on Fridays in Lent is not merely a rule, but a reverent sacrifice rooted in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice on Good Friday. By giving up something we enjoy but do not need, we unite a small, bodily sacrifice to His offering on the Cross.

This "prayer of the body" strengthens the prayer of the soul, training our hearts in discipline and gratitude. It keeps our focus on Christ and serves as a quiet, outward sign of faith. For the same reasons, the Church encourages Friday penance throughout the year.

## When things go wrong, choose charity

When difficulties arise, our instinct is often to complain, assign blame, or turn inward with harsh self-criticism. These reactions rarely solve the problem. More often, they weaken charity, cloud judgment, and strain relationships. A more constructive response is to choose kindness deliberately, in thought, speech, and action.

**Practice kindness in thought:** When self-pity, resentment, comparison, or harsh self-judgment appear, treat them as temptations rather than truths. Pause and redirect your thinking. Replace them with a steady reminder such as, "This is difficult, but I can respond well." Offer yourself the same patience you would give a friend.

**Practice kindness in speech:** Before speaking, ask whether

your words will help or simply vent frustration. If you would not say something to or about someone you love, refrain. When emotions run high, bring your complaints to prayer first. Naming them before God can bring clarity and restraint.

**Practice kindness in action:** Focus on what you can do rather than what you cannot control. Choose one concrete act of goodwill: express gratitude, offer help, listen attentively, or perform a small, unnoticed kindness. These simple actions restore perspective and soften difficult moments.

Responding with kindness does not ignore problems. It creates the conditions for peace, clearer judgment, and constructive action to take root.

### from **S**cripture

#### Matthew 4:1-11, He chose us

In this passage, Jesus is tempted by the Devil. First, Satan tempted Jesus to satisfy His hunger with a miracle – to put physical needs above spiritual needs. Jesus showed us that spiritual needs come first, and to entrust both to God’s care. Next, Satan commanded Jesus to jump from the temple roof, forcing God’s hand. Again, Jesus refused: serving God means doing things God’s way.

Finally, Satan offered to surrender all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would worship him. While horrible, it

promised a “painless” way to save the world. Jesus rejected it, choosing the Cross because it was the only way to save us. He chose us. When tempted to do what’s “easy” versus what’s morally right, ask for the strength to choose what’s right.

The season of Lent is a powerful opportunity for spiritual renewal and growth in love. We can take comfort knowing Jesus faced the same temptations we do and conquered them. If we stay close to Jesus, He will lead us to victory.

### **Q & A** What to do with dryness in prayer

**A** God never leaves us, yet our experience of prayer can ebb and flow. There are times of joy and peace, and others marked by dryness and difficulty. While dry seasons can be discouraging, that is often when our faith can grow the most. Don’t avoid them, but live them well.

**Ask why.** Dryness in prayer can point to areas that need attention. Chronic stress, lack of rest, constant busyness, excessive screen time, or unresolved sin can weaken our attentiveness to God. Examine your habits and ask what may be interfering with prayer.

**Remember the good times.** When times are tough, memory sustains love. Follow Mary’s example, who “kept all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). Recall the ways God has acted in your life. Remembering His faithfulness restores confidence.

**Renew your “yes” daily.** Mary’s consent to God’s will was a daily surrender, even amid suffering. Resist the temptation to abandon prayer. Each day, echo her words: “Let it be done unto me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).

### Feasts & Celebrations

**February 5 – St. Agatha (c.251).** Born to a noble Sicilian family, St. Agatha dedicated herself to God at the age of fifteen. The governor Quintianus was determined to marry her and threatened her if she refused him. She kept her vow despite torture, and imprisonment. God sent her a vision of St. Peter to comfort her, heal her, and fill her dungeon with heavenly light.

**February 18 – Ash Wednesday.** The first day of Lent. The ashes of old palms are placed on the forehead in the shape of a Cross, as a sign of penance. It’s

also a day of abstinence from meat and fasting – one regular meal and two small meals that together don’t equal a full meal.

**February 22 – St. Margaret of Cortona (1297).** St. Margaret’s conversion came after the sudden death of the man she was having an affair with. Shaken, she repented and became a Franciscan tertiary. She founded a hospital and an order of Tertiary sisters — *le Poverelle* — to operate it.

**February 22 – The Chair of St. Peter.** Today marks St. Peter’s establishment of the Holy See, the “seat” of authority, in Rome. We thank God for His Church and pray for its holy preservation.

#### Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.  
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