SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH

5265 PLACIDA RD. GROVE CITY, FL 34224 | 941-697-4899 | OFFICE@SFOACHURCH.COM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2024

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." - Lk 1:41-42

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Saint Francis of Assisi Church

5265 Placida Road Grove City, FL 34224 941-697-4899 Fax 941-697-0602 www.sfoachurch.com email: office@sfoachurch.com

Father Cory Mayer, Pastor Father Tony Chermeil, Parochial Vicar Father Edwin Mathias, Part Time Deacon Robert Godlewsky

PARISH STAFF

Robert Clark, Business Manager Aina Olonade, Director for Music and Cantors James Brantner, Director for Religious Education Gerry Chesney, Director, Parish Women's Guild Matt Egan, Director, Parish Outreach Martha Mingel, Coordinator, Homebound/Healthcare Janette Ash, Administrative Assistant & Accountant Kelly Kroll, Administrative Assistant (Part-Time) Jim Parent, Maintenance & Facilities Beth Hammond, Head Sacristan Penny Fleming, Ministry Scheduler/Communications

MASS SCHEDULE

SUNDAY VIGIL (SATURDAY)

After Easter to December 28 ... 4:00pm January 4 to April 12, 2025 ... 3:00pm & 4:30pm

SUNDAY

After Easter to December 29 - 8:00am & 10:00am January 5 through Easter Sunday 7:30am, 9:00am,10:30am

WEEKDAYS

Monday - Friday.....8:15 am Holy Days.....8:15 am & 6:00 pm

CHURCH OPEN HOURS

Monday - Friday 7am-4pm Saturday 2pm - 5pm Sunday 7am -11am

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Winter - September 4 through May 31 Mon - Fri 9:00am -12:30pm,1:00pm - 4:00pm

Summer - June 3 through Aug 31 Monday through Friday 9:00am - 2:30pm

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Thursday after Mass 9:00am - 9:15am After Easter to Dec 29 - Saturdays 3:00pm - 3:30pm Jan 4 to April 13 - Saturdays: 2:00pm - 2:30pm

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Call Parish Office at least six months in advance.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM Contact Parish Office

Mass Intentions and Scripture Readings for the Week

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23 8:15am †JOE MERCANTINI by Beth Hammond Reading: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24 Gospel: Luke 1:57-66

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 8:15am †JOY CAMPBELL by Stephen and Penny Fleming 4pm †DAVID PRESCOTT BROOKS by Pat Brooks 8pm †THE JELENIEWSKI AND CHESKE FAMILIES by Phil and Diane Jeleniewski 8:15am: Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Gospel: Luke 1:67-79 4pm: Vigil Mass Readings 8pm: Midnight Mass Readings

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25 8am **†NOEL HEBERT** by Daughter

10am **†RICHARD DEGNAN** by Mary Degnan 8am: Mass at Dawn Readings 10am: Mass During Day Readings

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

8:15am **†CHUCK KAHLER** by Wife Jo *Reading: Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59 Gospel: Matthew 10:17-22*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

8:15am **†MARY HELMBRIGHT** by Gil and Peggy Ulrich *Reading: 1 John 1:1-4 Gospel: John 20:1a, 2-8*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28 SUNDAY VIGIL (SATURDAY) 4:00pm FOR OUR PARISHIONERS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29

8:00am **†THOMAS CHESKE** by Phil and Diane Jeleniewski 10:00am **†FRANCES GERVAIS** by Chris Lewis **The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Reading 1: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 Reading 2: Colossians 3:12-21 Gospel: Luke 2:41-52**



Gospel Reflection Fourth Sunday of Advent

We have a tendency to see the future in two ways. One is to hate the future, to regard the way the world is going as pretty much hostile and out of control, at best drifting, and probably getting worse all the time. And our solution is to withdraw from it, probably seeking refuge in the past, maybe a past church, or a past world, or a past country that isn't here anymore.

The other way we handle the future is to privatize it.

And here, we do lots of thinking about the future, but this tends to be pretty defensive in nature. We think about the future, and our children's future, and we plan, and we prepare contingencies and map things out, but we're mostly concerned about how we're going to protect ourselves and our kids from all the hardships and tricks that the future is going to have in store. Maybe we can make our futures okay if we work hard enough.

In both of these scenarios it's hard to see the future as a stage on which great things are still going to happen in this world. Perhaps even as a place where God is still going to make good on some of the things he has promised to us.

We sometimes think only children, or young people who'll learn better, would look at the future this way. And yet, that is the approach to the future we hear about during Advent. Advent is all about the future. We know it's a season of expectation, but not just expectation of Christmas. Advent is getting us ready to think about the whole future, the future that stretches out from now until the second coming of Jesus, a second coming that we are preparing for and waiting for just as surely as we're waiting for and preparing for Christmas.

Our tendency, of course, is to think about our religion as centered in the past, full of events that have all already worked themselves out. We hear today's first reading from the prophet Micah, foretelling the messiah, and we say, well of course, that has already been fulfilled, it's miraculous that something that was foretold in this way did come to pass, but we no longer feel the expectation and the promise that this passage must have brought to those who were waiting for their messiah for so long.

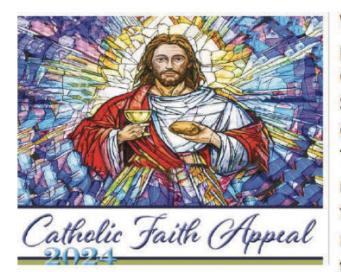
And today's gospel, the famous story of the visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, is also about expectation, and not just quiet expectation of the future, but openness to it, and excitement about it, and above all, willingness to participate in it. What strikes me about this story is that these two women, both expecting children under unusual and even stressful circumstances, and both of whom had plenty of good reasons to feel ambiguous or uncertain about their futures and their children, what's amazing here is that they could talk with each other so eagerly and with such certainty that what they were doing was part of a larger plan still working itself out.

Christianity is still working itself out, a story that isn't over. We have a future ahead of us that is hard to see. And yet all this talk during Advent about preparing a way for the Lord, about making the world ready for our Messiah to come, about justice for the poor, and about relief for the oppressed, that's all about our future, not the past. We may yet see all these things happen, and if we have given up looking for them Advent is telling us to change our expectations.

So how do we change our attitude about the future? With only a week left in Advent? If the gospel is our example, then attitude change comes with participation. The future will make no sense to us as long as we are only watching it and documenting its failings, and not helping to place one brick on top of the other in all the work of preparation still to be done. Advent is our time to do what Mary and Elizabeth did, to see the possibilities for us and the world clearly and do whatever it takes to participate. Give something away, be reconciled with someone you've given up on, make a change you long ago thought was impossible. The future will come whether we do those things or not, but the world won't be ready for the Messiah unless we do.

Gospel Reflection by Deacon Thomas Baker at St. David the King Parish in Princeton Junction, NJ. Brought to you by Penny Fleming, SFOA Communications Coordinator.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Mass Times Tuesday of the Fourth Sunday of Advent December 24 Daily Mass: 8:15am Christmas Eve, December 24 Mass Times: Vigil Mass: 4:00pm Midnight Mass: 8:00pm Christmas, December 25 Mass Times: 8:00am and 10:00am



We are pleased to share that our parish, Saint Francis of Assisi Church, has raised approximately \$187,000 toward our 2024 Catholic Appeal goal of \$219,000. Thank you to all who have helped make our campaign a success so far. If you have yet to give, we need your help! Please donate to help us reach our goal by the

end of the year. You can donate by completing a pledge form or using the blue envelopes in the pews. Please return pledge cards or blue envelopes at the December 7 and 8 Masses.

Campaign Status as of Saturday, November 9, 2024

CFA Goal	\$ 219,000.00
Total Pledges/Donations	\$ 187,660.00
Total Due	\$ 31,340.00

How do we Compare to Other Parishes in our area as of Saturday, November 9, 2024?

Local Parishes	Received	Percent of Goal	
Our Lady of Lourdes, Venice	\$ 296K	63%	
Sacred Heart Parish, Punta Gorda	\$ 355K	94%	
Saint Borromeo, Port Charlotte	\$ 82K	38%	
Saint Francis of Assisi, Grove City	\$ 188K	86%	
Saint Raphael, Englewood	\$ 133K	92%	
San Pedro Parish, North Port	\$ 148K	64%	

PARISH OUTREACH FOOD PANTRY ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITIES NOVEMBER 20 THRU DECEMBER 22, 2024

On November 23 and 24, our Food Pantry volunteers and baskets will be at the church entrance with **"Praying Hands" envelopes representing** a gift card request. You can provide a needy family or one of our own Saint Francis homebound, assistance during this Christmas season by donating a \$25.00 Publix, Winn-Dixle, Dollar Store, or Walmart gift card or a gasoline gift card from a local gasoline station. Please return your gift or gas card in the provided envelope by dropping them in the offertory basket or at the Parish Office during regular business hours on or before December 13th. You can pick up your envelopes from the Outreach volunteers at the two main doors after Mass.



Please donate a \$25.00 gift card from Publix, Winn-Dixie, Dollar Store, or Walmart or a \$25.00 gas card from a local gas station. Many thanks, and God bless you.

OUTREACH PRAYING HANDS

Return your envelope in the offertory basket or drop it off at the Parish Office during regular business hours on or before December 13, 2024.

Also, **donations to their annual Advent Food Drive**. Each week during Advent, a list of needed food items will be posted in the bulletin and on our church website. You can drop off food items weekly at the Parish Office or before and after Masses. You can use the Advent Food Drive calendar to understand what they can use. The holidays can be a difficult time for many of our families. Check out the food list and provide the most needed times during the holiday season.



PREPARE THE WAY FOR JESUS OUTREACH FOOD DRIVE ADVENT CALENDAR



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNE\$DAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 24	FIRST	WEEK	OF	ADVENT		NOVEMBER 30
	CANNED VEGETABLES	PORK 'N BEANS	CANNED SOUPS	CANNED TUNA	DELIVER	<u>i</u>
DECEMBER 1	SECOND	WEEK	OF	ADVENT		DECEMBER 7
<u>í</u>	PASTA SAUCE	PASTA	CANNED FRUIT	MAC 'N CHEESE	DELIVER	
DECEMBER 8	THIRD	WEEK	OF	ADVENT		DECEMBER 14
<u>í</u>	PEANUT BUTTER	JELLY	CEREAL	RICE	DELIVER	
DECEMBER 15	FOURTH	WEEK	OF	ADVENT		DECEMBER 21
	PAPER GOODS	LAUNDRY DETERGENT	TOOTHPASTE AND TOOTHBRUSHES	TOILETRIES	DELIVER	
DECEMBER 22				· · · · · · · · ·		
1	PLEASE DELIVER ITEMS TO THE CHURCH NARTHEX, BEFORE OR AFTER MASSES OR TO THE PARISH OFFICE DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS.					

	SATURDAY NOVEMBER 30	-	DECEMBER 7	•	DECEMBER 14	<mark>0 10) 1</mark>	DECEMBER 21	•	S OR TO THE	
400 400 400	FRIDAY	DELIVER		DELIVER		DELIVER		DELIVER	R AFTER MASSE S HOURS.	
	THURSDAY ADVENT	CANNED TUNA	ADVENT	MAC 'N CHEESE	ADVENT	RICE	ADVENT	TOILETRIES	PLEASE DELIVER ITEMS TO THE CHURCH NARTHEX, BEFORE OR AFTER MASSES OR TO THE PARISH OFFICE DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS.	
PREPARE THE WAY FOR JESUS OUTREACH FOOD DRIVE ADVENT CALENDAR	WEDNESDAY OF	CANNED SOUPS	Ģ	CANNED FRUIT	Ъ	CEREAL	Ŗ	TOOTHPASTE AND TOOTHBRUSHES	E CHURCH NART	
PREPARE OUTREA ADVE	Tuesday WEEK	PORK 'N BEANS	WEEK	PASTA	WEEK	JELLY	WEEK	LAUNDRY DETERGENT	er items to the Parish off	
Sant Strens of Hand	Monday FIRST	CANNED	SECOND	PASTA SAUCE	THIRD	PEANUT BUTTER	FOURTH	PAPER GOODS	PLEASE DELIVE	
	SUNDAY NOVEMBER 24		DECEMBER 1	≪,	DECEMBER 8	•	DECEMBER 15	0 10>	DECEMBER 22	

The Baptism of Aubrey Castaldo

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Savior who came to bring us eternal life. Through Baptism, we are united with Christ, cleansed of sin, and welcomed into His Church—a reflection of the new life He offers. Just as the birth of Christ brought hope to the world, Baptism renews us in His grace and makes us sharers in His divine life. This Christmas, may we give thanks for the gift of our Baptism and the joy of being part of God's family through His Son, born for our salvation.













Lessons and Carols was held on Friday, December 13 A bouquet of flowers was presented to Ann Reser in honor of her husband, long time Choir Member Lee Reser.

Hooks and Needles

Our Hooks and Needles have been working hard on handmade blankets, shawls, baby items, slippers and more for a local maternity home and nursing homes. They recently made a delivery to SOLVE Maternity Home and Englewood Health and Rehab. Next week they will deliver to Inglenook Assisted Living. Thank you Hooks and Needles!









St Francis of Assisi Youth Group

Everyone 14 -17 is invited to join-We'd love to have you!



Youth Group Meets 1st & 3rd Sundays until June in the Parish Center 5 pm - 6:30 pm

Dinner Discussions Fun



SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSIST

PARISHWOMENSGUILD

January Card Party 5265 Placida Rd. Grove City, FL 34224 January 8 2024 11:00am - 2:30pm

Reserve your table by January 6th Reserve your tables at sfoachurch.com Click Parish Forms, scroll down and click Parish Women's Guild Card Party Registration or by calling 941-697-4899 and Press 6 to leave a message with your name, phone number, and number of people at your table.

> \$12 per person includes lunch, card play, and door prizes. All are welcome!

Seasonal Mass Times Begin: January 4/5, 2025 **Saturday Confessions:** 2:00pm Saturday Vigil Mass Times: 3:00pm and 4:30pm **Sunday Mass Times:** 7:30am 9:00am 10:30am

Minis	try We	ek fo	r Saint Francis of Assisi Church
	Start	End	Event - Location
Mon Dec 23	7:50am	9:00am	Rosary/Mass/Anointing/Chaplet - Church
	9:00am	10:00am	Parish Stewardship Ministry - Church
	9:15am	11:30am	Parish Outreach Ministry - Parish Center
	9:15am	11:30am	Parish Rosary Makers - Room 6
	11:45am	12:30pm	Lectio Divina Gospel Prayer - Church
Tues Dec 24			Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord - Parish Office Closed
	7:50am	8:45am	Rosary/Mass - Church
	3:45pm	4:00pm	Children's Nativity Drama - Church
	4:00pm	5:00pm	Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord Vigil Mass - Church
	8:00pm	9:00pm	Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord Midnight Mass - Church
Wed Dec 25			Nativity of Our Lord - Parish Office Closed
	8:00am	9:00am	Nativity of Our Lord Mass
	10:00am	11:00am	Nativity of Our Lord Mass
	7:00pm	8:00pm	AA - Parish Hall
Thurs Dec 26	7:50am	8:45am	Rosary/Mass - Church
	9:00am	9:15am	Sacrament of Reconciliation - Church
	1:00pm	3:00pn	Hooks and Needles - Parish Conference Rooms
Fri Dec 27	7:50am	8:45am	Rosary/Mass - Church
	9:15am	11:30am	Parish Outreach Ministry - Parish Center
Sat Dec 28			Knights of Columbus Corporate Communion
	3:00pm	3:30pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation - Church
	4:00pm	5:00pm	Holy Sacrifice of the Mass - Church
Sun Dec 29	8:00am	9:00am	Holy Sacrifice of the Mass - Church
	10:00am	11:00am	Holy Sacrifice of the Mass - Church

For the most updated Calendar please go to www.sfoachurch.com

The Knights of Columbus **Communion Breakfast**, Sunday, December 29, 2023



After 10am Mass

American Legion Post 113

3436 Indiana Rd, Rotonda West, FL 33947

\$10 per person

All are Welcome!



Join the Knights of Columbus Council 7672 at kofc.org/join and use code: **BLESSEDMCGIVNEY** and get the first year FREE.

ON THE BEACH AG **\//**A| **K BARFFOOT** Local acupuncture clinic is treating the untreatable, peripheral neuropathy with incredible results

Pain comes in many shapes and sizes. One of the most debilitating being the burning and tingling that comes with peripheral neuropathy. A disease that comes with years heightened sensitivity to touch targets specific nerves in the of shooting, stabbing pain that making it almost impossible for gradually ends in numbness, balance problems, and on occasion, amputations. A disease that was once classified as irreparable.

David R. of Venice, FL was facing such a fate.

"I stopped golfing. I wasn't taking walks on the beach That is until he found Lauren with my wife. I was living on gabapentin and antidepressants and everywhere I went; my doctor, the specialists, the edge, medical solution to

pain institute, told me there was no cure. How are greatly reduce its symptoms you supposed to live your life knowing that everyday brings pain and suffering?

Peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves, commonly caused by a lack of blood flow to the nerves in the hands and feet.

to degenerate due to lack of nutrient flow.

Most peripheral neuropathy sufferers experience a those diagnosed to even wear shoes, much less enjoy life.

"It was like walking on sharp river rocks. I barely left my recliner." shares David, whose experience is not uncommon for those diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy.

Milligan of Sage Point Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine. Dr. Milligan and her staff have pioneered a cutting Success stories like David's are treat neuropathy, eliminate or and give people their lives back. Best of all, they're doing neuropathy," shares Dr. it without the use of prescription medications and The number of treatments invasive surgeries.

"Acupuncture is incredible at restoring blood flow and stimulating damaged

This causes the nerves to begin nerves, preventing them from dying off," tells Dr. Milligan.

further by integrating ATP **Resonance BioTherapy which** body using microcurrent. ATP therapy is like watering a plant. neuropathy was idiopathic, This treatment will stimulate the blood vessels to grow back unknown, Dr. Milligan's around the peripheral nerves and provide them with the proper nutrients to heal and repair."

Three months later David is thrilled with his progress, "I can walk barefoot on the beach again!"

not atypical for the staff at Sage Point AIM. "We have a 87% success rate in treating Milligan.

needed to allow the nerves to fully recover will vary from person to person and can only be determined after a detailed

neurological and vascular dying off," tells Dr. Milligan. evaluation. So long as you "We take our treatments a step have not sustained more than 90% nerve damage Sage Point AIM offers hope where there once was none.

> While David's peripheral meaning the cause is treatments can also help people whose neuropathy is caused by diabetes or chemotherapy.

"We have seen tremendous success in treating neuropathy of all types through very personalized treatments, specifically tailored to treat each individual case."

To schedule a consultation and complete evaluation call (941) 451 - 8154 but do so quickly because Sage Point AIM is taking a limited number of new neuropathy patients.

For more information and to take advantage of their new patient offer visit SagePointAcu.com.



For ad info. call 1-800-477-4574 • www.4lpi.com