



Mass Intentions

April 30 - May 6

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Monday: 4/30 | 9:00 a.m. Ann Prebilic |
| Tuesday, 5/1 | 9:00 a.m. Helen Mooney |
| Wednesday, 5/2 | 9:00 a.m. Russell Strand 7:30 p.m. Phil Balcita |
| Thursday, 5/3 | 9:00 a.m. Dick Hunt |
| Friday, 5/4 | 9:00 a.m. Don Smith 7:30 p.m. Barbara Lynn Beall |
| Saturday, 5/5 | 9:00 a.m. Thomas McCann 5:00 p.m. Gena Asuncion |
| Sunday, 5/6 | 8:00 a.m. Magdalena Heinrich 9:30 a.m. <i>Pro populo</i> 11:15 a.m. Armando Taborga 5:00 p.m. Jimmy Gierula |

+ In Memoriam Aeternam +

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of Monsignor James Beattie, Archdiocese of Washington.

Please pray for the sick... Fred Theurer, Dianne Palmer, Maria Patterson, Betty White, Nick Powers, Carol Toney, Eusebia Lo, Ed Dudenhoeffer, Bob Coyne, Jackie Roebuck King, Jeni Stepanek.. (Names will remain on this list for four consecutive weeks, but can be repeated by calling the Office.)

Readings for the Week of April 29, 2018

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Sunday: | Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32 [26a]/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8 |
| Monday: | Acts 14:5-18/Ps 115:1-2, 3-4, 15-16 [1ab]/ Jn 14:21-26 |
| Tuesday: | Acts 14:19-28/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13ab, 21 [cf. 12]/Jn 14:27-31a |
| Wednesday: | Acts 15:1-6/Ps 122:1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5 [cf. 1]/ Jn 15:1-8 |
| Thursday: | 1 Cor 15:1-8/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5 [5]/Jn 14:6-14 |
| Friday: | Acts 15:22-31/Ps 57:8-9, 10 and 12 [10a]/ Jn 15:12-17 |
| Saturday: | Acts 16:1-10/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 5/Jn 15:18-21 |
| Next Sunday: | Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4 [cf. 2b]/1 Jn 4:7-10/Jn 15:9-17 |

THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR

Cardinal Wuerl promulgated a Pastoral Plan to implement Pope Francis' post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* (AL), on Sunday March 4, 2018. The fourth section of the Pastoral Plan stresses the importance of parish life.

Today I want to present some thoughts for accompanying engaged couples that are presented in this section of the pastoral plan.

Being engaged and planning a wedding is both exciting and overwhelming. Pope Francis offers practice advice for engaged couples: "Short-term preparations for marriage tend to be concentrated on invitations, clothes, the party, and any number of other details that tend to drain not only the budget but energy and joy as well. The spouses come to the wedding ceremony exhausted and harried, rather than focused and ready for the great step that they are about to take, ... Here let me say a word to fiancés. Have the courage to be different. Don't let yourselves get swallowed up by a society of consumption and empty appearances" (AL, 212). The period of engagement is not only a time to prepare for a wedding day but for a lifetime of marriage.

Engaged couples tell us that for them it is or was a great help to discuss together how they can begin to put into practice the qualities they want to live out as a married couple. Other ways that they suggest might help couples deepen their wedding planning process include:

- Reaching out to your local parish about wedding dates when the church is available, before you book a reception venue;
- Attending Mass and praying together, to establish a spiritual bond that will endure;
- Remembering that you are planning a life-long marriage, not simply a one-day wedding! Invest time in the busy months leading up to the wedding day to read a book together about marriage and take part in Catholic marriage preparation that will help prepare you for a lifetime of happiness.
- Finding a married couple you look up to and ask to meet them for dinner to talk with them and learn from their experience. If you don't have one, you should ask your priest for someone to recommend;
- Starting your marriage off by being generous. Make a donation to the poor as part of your wedding budget or in lieu of party favors; and
- Learning more about Natural Family Planning including fertility, intimacy, and planning for children.

Let me close my remarks today by asking engaged couples if they have considered learning about Natural Family Planning (NFP)? NFP is a morally sound and highly effective method for couples to manage their fertility in a way that respects God and each other. Instead of wrestling with their fertility or working against it, couples are trained to understand, and then cooperate with, their naturally occurring fertility signals in order to make informed and prayerful decisions regarding the growth of their family.

Continued in the column to the right.....

Fifth Sunday of Easter

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

How do I think God will prune my branch of the vine? What part of me is withered and should be burned? What part of me is bearing the most fruit? How can I make the vine stronger and healthier?

LECTIO DIVINA:

A BROWN BAG CONVERSATION

St. John Paul II explains *Lectio Divina*: "It is especially necessary that listening to the word of God should become a life-giving encounter, in the ancient and ever valid tradition of *lectio divina*, which draws from the biblical text the living Word which questions, directs and shapes our lives." Learn this method for praying with the Scriptures at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, **April 29 in the St. Francis Rectory's Assisi Room**. Bring a Bible and lunch and join in the conversation which will be led by Adult Faith Formation Committee member Medy DeAussen. Drop-ins are welcome!



MOTHER'S DAY MASS CARDS

Cards will be available this weekend in the Gathering Space. This is a wonderful way to remember your Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandmother, Aunt or anyone special at all the Masses on Mother's Day. Please return your spiritual bouquet envelope to the parish office on or before Wednesday, May 9.

THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR (continued)

NFP is a modern, scientifically proven method that seeks to identify the naturally occurring changes a woman's body goes through during the window of her fertility in each cycle. Based on their observations, couples are empowered to act accordingly, either to seek pregnancy or to avoid it for the time being.

Couples who incorporate NFP into their lives experience many benefits not limited to the following:

- Better communication between spouses
- Increased respect for each other
- Peace of mind, heart, and body
- Increased awe and wonder at the potential of fertility
- A deeper appreciation for children

Some other benefits of Natural Family Planning are:

- It is extremely **effective**.
- It is **green**. It is **all natural**, completely **safe** and there are **no harmful side effects**.
- It is **virtually free** and very **easy to learn** and practice.
- It is useful throughout a woman's reproductive years including breastfeeding, peri-menopause, post-partum.
- It is custom tailored to each woman's cycle, regular or irregular.

For more information on NFP, please check out the Archdiocese of Washington website, from which I have drawn the information that I have presented here.

Until next week,

Fr. John

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

All are welcome! Join the Ministry of Eucharistic Adoration and assist with adoration in the following manner:

- *Become a regular attendee at adoration in the Parish.*
- *Pray that Eucharistic Adoration will increase.*
- *Foster Eucharistic Adoration in our parish by evangelizing His Eucharistic Presence.*
- *Deepen your personal relationship with Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.*

First Friday Mass will be at 7:30 p.m., May 4, followed by adoration until 9:00 p.m. in the Church.

ON MAY 19, ST. FRANCIS HOSTS INTERFAITH DISCUSSION AMONG MUSLIMS, JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

St. Francis parishioners interested in interfaith relations may want to attend the interfaith panel discussion to be held Saturday, May 19, in the Parish Center. Fr. James Crossin, who worked with the U.S bishops promoting work on global issues, will lead the panel discussion held from 9:45 a.m.-12:00 Noon in the Parish Center. Representatives from other faith traditions are expected to join the panel to provide additional viewpoints.

For more information, please contact St. Francis Social Concerns Minister Tony Bosnick at abosnick@sfadw.org.

SPIRITUAL READING GROUP INVITES NEW MEMBERS TO START SATURDAY WITH JOY

Are you interested in building your faith life and having lively conversations over books? If so, then join the Saturday Morning Spiritual Reading Group, a diverse group of adults who read a wide variety of book selections suggested by members and chosen by consensus. On Saturday, May 5, the group will begin discussing *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor and Laughter Are the Heart of the Service* by Rev. James Martin, S.J.

All those interested in reading and discussing the book are invited to join the small group sessions at 8:00 a.m. every Saturday in the Assisi Room. Come for coffee and plenty of mirth! For more information, contact Ministry Coordinator Trish Olin at mpo-olin@comcast.net.



MAY 2018 LUNCH – The St. Francis Lunch Bunch will meet on Wednesday, May 2 at 12:00 Noon at Clyde's Oakes Lodge, 2 Preserve Parkway, Rockville MD 20852. Phone (301) 294-0200. If you are planning to attend, please contact Mary Lou Habib and she will save a seat for you, (301) 417-0243.

Altar Servers Schedule

Please check online for upcoming Altar Server assignments.

It is the responsibility of the Altar Server to get a replacement if you cannot serve at your scheduled time

April 29, 2018

LAMB OF GOD PRAYER MEETING Join the Lamb of God Prayer Group for worship and the study of Scripture on Tuesday, May 1, 7:30 p.m., St. Clare's Chapel in the Rectory. For details, please call Louise, (301) 977-5217.

POOR BOX DONATION – The donations for next week-end will go to Gaithersburg Help. *Thank you for your generosity.*

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRAYER CHAIN If you have a prayer request, please contact Marianne Bullen, (301) 963-3420 or mariannebu@comcast.net with your requests.

ROSARY FOR PRIESTS

Every Wednesday evening at 6:45 p.m. we pray the rosary for our priests before the 7:30 p.m. Mass.

HOLY HOUR FOR THE DYING

On Thursday evenings in the St. Clare's Chapel in the Rectory, a prayer group meets at 7:00 p.m. to pray for the dying. This is a Holy Hour Devotion for the Dying. As a central work of our Catholic faith, we are called to pray for the dying, especially for those who may die suddenly, unprepared to face God. For additional information, please call the Parish Office, (301) 840-1407.

ROSARY CENACLE OF OUR LADY, QUEEN OF PEACE
Cenacle of Our Lady, Queen of Peace to pray for priests and vocations, 2:00 p.m. in the St. Clare's Chapel (Rectory) every Sunday. Please join us.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - COUNCIL 2323

The Knights of Columbus are actively pursuing new members. Our council incorporates members from St. Francis, St. Mary's and St. Martin's. Though best known for our many charitable projects, we also have a lot of fun with dinners, fund raisers, family nights, and many other fraternal social occasions. If interested in learning more, please contact Gary Palmer, (301) 948-6494 or e-mail gtdbpalmer@verizon.net.

MONTHLY ROSARY CALL

Mary, Our Blessed Mother, asks us to pray very much, especially the Rosary. Please join the Washington Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (ACCW) to pray the Rosary on the 4th day of each month at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern time). We welcome all to phone into our ACCW Rosary by calling 605-468-8016 and insert access code: 357090# to pray the Rosary as a community. Our next call is scheduled for May 4, 2018 at 8:00 p.m. We look forward to your joining us! Thank you

GAITHERSBURG HELP DELEGATE POSITION

Are you interested in giving back to the Gaithersburg community? The position of St. Francis of Assisi delegate to the Board of Directors of Gaithersburg HELP is open. The job requirement includes attending several (evening) Board meetings annually, providing publicity and support for HELP through the parish bulletin as well as serving as a liaison to the parish community. Each member congregation and organization is expected to provide ongoing, year-round support to the best of its abilities. The delegate will encourage parish members to volunteer for HELP by participating in food drives, fundraising activities, and the routine operation of HELP. Please contact Patty Bronson at pattymbronson@comcast.net if you are interested in the delegate position.

ANNUAL YARD SALE IN THE PARISH CENTER

Saturday, May 12
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon

Please sign-up *this weekend* to help with the Annual Yard Sale. We need lots of volunteers. You can also sign up by calling the Parish Office (301) 840-1407. This is a good fundraiser for the parish and a great chance to meet fellow parishioners. *Also, time to spring clean - we welcome your stuff you want to get rid of!*

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE:

Come for the whole time or just a few hours. Whatever time you can work will be appreciated!

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Wednesday, May 9, | 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, May 10, | 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. |
| Friday, May 11, | 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. |
| Saturday, May 12, | 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. |

DROP OFF YOUR DONATIONS IN THE PARISH CENTER

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Wednesday, May 9 | 2:00 - 8:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, May 10 | 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. |
| Friday, May 11 | 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. |

HOST FAMILIES SOUGHT FOR TWO PROGRAMS ENCOURAGING INTERFAITH RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAELI & PALESTINIAN TEENS

The St. Francis of Assisi Pax Christi Ministry is supporting two organizations that promote peace in the Holy Land. St. Francis parishioners who can open their homes and their hearts are being sought as host families for these two organizations this summer:

- New Story Leadership is an organization that selects young emerging leaders from Israel and Palestine and gives them the necessary tools to build a better future for their communities. By giving them an experience of living, working and learning together over a summer in Washington DC, New Story Leadership challenges the prevailing mood of cynicism and despair, sparking a new story of possibility. The organization promotes the personal and professional development of each fellow and teaches them how to become agents of change.
- The Israeli-Palestinian Initiative of the Cyprus Friendship Program seeks to develop friendship, trust and respect between Israeli and Palestinian teens. During the last two weeks of July, two teens (an Israeli and a Palestinian) live with a host family. During their visit, they learn leadership, team building and conflict resolution skills. Teens participate in local community service projects sponsored by Cyprus Friendship Program, gaining a larger vision of how their lives are interconnected. Diversity learning and social gatherings are also part of the program.

If you are interested in learning more about these two programs, wish to make a financial contribution or would like to serve as a host family, please contact Pax Christi members Mary Kate Ryner at rynoslp@msn.com or Bob Cooke at cookeh1251@gmail.com.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS/EVENTS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES

Next week (Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, May 6, 7 and 8) is the final week for Religious Education classes for PreK-Grade 8 for this school year. Thank you to our catechists and volunteers who have helped to make this a successful year for our Religious Education Program. This parish is blessed to have so many wonderful catechists who volunteer their time each week to teach and share the faith. We pray that God will continue to bless each of them with his gifts of joy and peace!

As we look ahead to next year's Religious Education program, please consider whether you can serve as a catechist for our children and young people. If you would like to learn more about this important ministry, please contact Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

CATECHESIS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Our parish offers monthly catechetical sessions specifically designed for children and youth with special needs and their families. Our next session is next Sunday, May 6, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the St. Clare Room. If you would like to learn more about these sessions, or if you are interested in serving as a catechist or aide for children with special needs, please call Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

REMINDERS FOR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES

Our Confirmation program continues as follows:

- Confirmation Candidate Session: Mon., May 14, 6:45-8:30 pm
- Rehearsal with Sponsor: Fri., May 18, 6:45-8:30 pm
- Confirmation: Mon., May 21, 7:00 pm

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REGISTRATION: 2018-2019

We are now accepting registration for next year's Religious Education Program! Our program offerings for children and youth include:

- Pre-school and Kindergarten classes on Sunday mornings, 11:10-12:15 p.m. (*Preschool classes are for children age 3 or 4 by September 1*)
- Grade 1-5 classes offered at two session times:
 - Sunday mornings, 9:20-10:35 a.m.
 - Monday afternoons, 4:45-6:00 p.m.
- Grade 6, 7, and 8 classes offered at two session times:
 - Monday evenings, 6:45-8:00 p.m.
 - Tuesday evenings, 6:45-8:00 p.m.
- Grades 9-12 (Youth Group) meet Sunday evenings 6:00-8:00 p.m. (following the 5:00 p.m. Youth Mass)

Since the curriculum of the Religious Education Program is designed to be taught in sequence and each year builds on the content presented in previous years, families should plan for their children to participate in Religious Education classes each year.

Registration forms were mailed home to families with children currently attending RE classes. For those new to our program, and if additional forms are needed, blank forms will be available on the parish web site (www.sfadw.org), in the Gathering Space of the Church, and in the Parish Offices. Completed forms can be returned to RE classes this week, sent in by mail, or dropped off in person at the Rectory Office (Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.). Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please complete and return the registration forms as soon as possible!

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS/EVENTS

ST. FRANCIS YOUTH MINISTRY

Upcoming Events

FRED

APRIL

28-29 Krispy Kreme/Jewelry Sale
29 Be Real - Romans 12:9

MAY

6 Be Eucharistic - 1 Corinthians 11:26
11/12 Montgomery County Lockout
(See Fr. Jack for more details)
13 NO FRED (Mother's Day)
20 Be Marian - Luke 1:27
27 NO FRED (Memorial Day)

JUNE

3 Aloha Party

GET SOCIAL

Follow us on Instagram & Twitter @ SFAFRED.

FORMED

THE CATHOLIC FAITH ON DEMAND

The best Catholic content. All in one place. It's EASY and FREE to Register!

- 1) Go to sfadw.formed.org
- 2) Click "Register" and enter your name, email address, and desired password
- 3) You're all ready to access the inspiring and Engaging content on FORMED!
- 4) Enjoy and share with others in our local community!

FORMED is available 24/7 for you to grow in your faith. St. Francis has purchased this gift for parish use.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (continued)

REGISTERING FOR SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Sacramental preparation for 1st Reconciliation, 1st Eucharist, Confirmation, and Christian Initiation for Children/Teens (CIC/CIT) is not grade specific and involves preparation in addition to grade level Religious Education classes. At minimum, children are expected to have participated in religious education in the year prior to preparing for a sacrament. *Please note: students preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation will attend their grade-level Religious Education classes as well as monthly Confirmation sessions.* Families requesting sacramental preparation for their child are asked to mark their registration form accordingly so that additional information can be provided. Please note that there is a separate materials fee for sacramental preparation programs. More details will be provided at the parent meetings next year. If you have any questions, please call the Religious Education Office at 301-258-9193.



Teen volunteer positions are filled!
Thank you for your support.
Camper spots are filling quickly!

Register NOW

**Vacation Bible Camp 2018 SHIPWRECKED:
 Rescued by Jesus!**

Join us for an "island adventure" filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, touch, and even taste! Daily art projects, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. At Shipwrecked VBC, kids will discover that Jesus is with us always, and rescues us through life's storms!

Who: Children age 4 by 6/24/2018 through those who are completing 5th grade June 2018

Where: St. Francis of Assisi Church Parish Center

When: June 25th – 29th, 2018 from 9:00am – 12:30pm

Cost: \$50 per child

How: Complete the Registration Form found in the Church Gathering Space and on our parish website (sfadw.org/vbc) and return by mail or in person to the Parish Office during business hours (Mon-Fri; 8am – 4pm) with the Registration Fee via Check or Faith Direct. (For Faith Direct information contact the Parish Office, 301-840-1407 for details.)

St. Francis of Assisi Church
Religious Education Office – VBC
6701 Muncaster Mill Road, Derwood, MD 20855

**BULLETIN ADVERTISING
 OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE**

Paul Robertson from Liturgical Publications will be in our office the week of April 30, working on securing new ads for the advertisement section of our bulletin. We need your help! Please consider purchasing an ad. Your ad and participation makes our bulletin successful, and you attract customers! If you would like to run an ad or would like more information please call Paul at (301) 252-6236 or via e-mail probertson@4lpi.com.



**PLANT SALE
 SATURDAY/SUNDAY MAY 19/20**

(Annuals, Herbs, Hanging Baskets, Potted Plants!)

See today's bulletin insert for details!

Bereavement Support (continued)

Parent Loss Support Group

For adults who have experienced the death of one or both parents.

Dates & Time: Thursdays, May 17 through June 21, 6:30-8 pm

Location: St. John's Episcopal Church-Norwood Parish, 6701 Wisconsin Ave, Chevy Chase

Loss of a Child Support Group:

For parents grieving the death of a child of any age.

Dates & Time: Wednesdays, May 16 through June 20, 6:30-8 pm

Location: Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville

SFA Health Ministry

Encouraging health and wellbeing in body, mind and soul

National Healthcare Decisions Day

National Healthcare Decisions Day on April 16 appropriately coincides with the Easter Season when we are poignantly reminded of the eternal life we share with our Risen Lord. Through His Resurrection, Christ has conquered death and secured our everlasting life with Him. It is fitting then that during this glorious Easter Season we turn attention to the passage from our temporal to our eternal life.

National Healthcare Decisions Day is a nationwide initiative endorsed by the Catholic Medical Association to ensure that all adults with decision-making capacity have the information and opportunity to be informed and document their healthcare decisions. Such a document is called an advance directive and can be prepared without expense.

An excellent resource to inform and guide healthcare decisions in accordance with Church teaching is *Comfort and Consolation – Care of the Sick and Dying*. This informative booklet outlines the foundational principles of the Church's approach to the care of the sick and dying. This booklet and its companion texts, *Comfort and Consolation Questions and Answers* and *Health Care Directives*, are excellent resources that guide parishioners through conversations with loved ones on end-of-life issues. These resources can be obtained from the St Francis Rectory or purchased at www.mdccathcon.org. Additionally, St. Francis priests, deacons and the parish nurse, Betty Baklarz, RN are available for spiritual guidance and consultation.

Bereavement Support

Support Group for Families after Miscarriage, Infant Death or Stillbirth When a family experiences the loss of a child, the grief journey can be a lonely one. This parent-to-parent support group will provide a safe place to share feelings and receive comfort from others who have experienced a similar loss.

Date & Time: Tuesdays, April 24 through June 5, 7 pm-8:30 pm

Location: River Room, second floor near Emergency Room Entrance, Shady Grove Medical Center, 9901 Medical Center Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850

Registration: Jeanine L. McGrath, RN,
jeaninemcgrath@gmail.com (240) 481-3903 or

The Adventist HealthCare Parent Education Office (301) 315-3130 or -3131

Montgomery Hospice Workshop and Support Groups

Serving Montgomery County residents, Led by professional counselors. Registration and Information: (301) 921-4400

Grief Workshop: Remembering Mom and Dad

For adults who have lost a parent or parents.

Date & Time: May 9, 7-8:30 pm

Location: Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Suite 100, Rockville

Afternoon Grief Support Group

For anyone grieving the death of a loved one.

Dates & Time: Tuesdays, May 15 through June 19, 1:30-3 pm

Location: North Bethesda United Methodist Church, 10100 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda

Evening Grief Support Group

For anyone grieving the death of a loved one.

Dates & Time: Wednesdays, May 16 through June 20, 6:30-8 pm

Location: Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Suite 100, Rockville