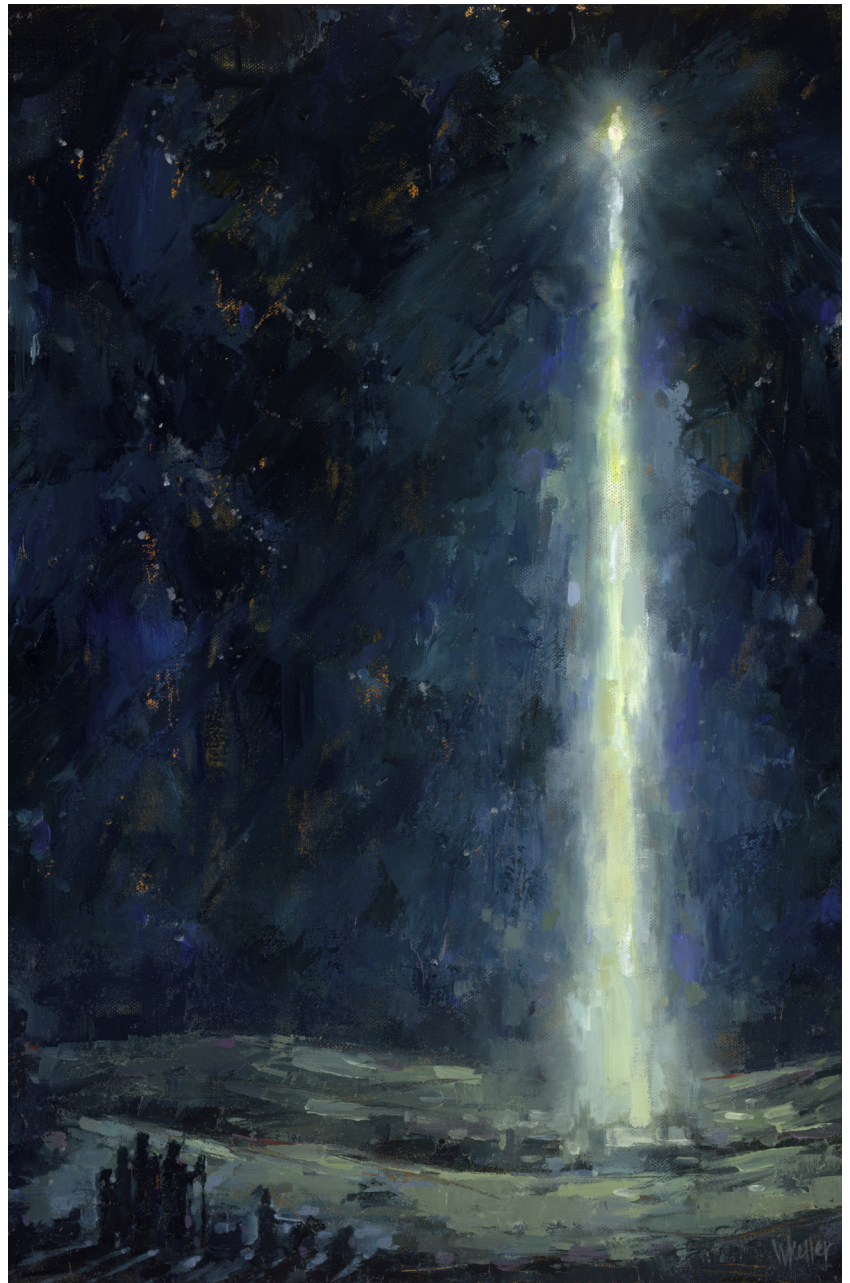


*Lord,
make us turn
to you;
let us see
your face
and we shall
be saved.*
—Ps 80



DECEMBER 22, 2024
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi • 135 West 31st Street, New York, NY 10001
tel 212.736.8500 • www.stfrancisnyc.org

The Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Midtown Manhattan is a parish in the Archdiocese of New York and an urban ministry center staffed by the province of Our Lady of Guadalupe and their partners in ministry.

Inspired by our faith in Jesus Christ, and rooted in the charism of St. Francis of Assisi, we actively WELCOME all people. We WORSHIP God through prayerful and inspiring liturgies, the celebration of the

Welcome  *Witness*
Worship

sacraments, and the devotional life of the Church. We WITNESS to our faith by ministering to everyone, especially those who are poor, alienated or oppressed.

Our Weekly Schedule

CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday Evening Vigil Masses

4:00, 5:15 PM

Please note that the 5:15 PM Saturday Mass will be discontinued as of December 22.

Sunday Masses

8:00 AM, 9:15 AM (Korean), 10:00 AM (en español),
11:00 AM, 12:30 PM, 5:00 PM

Please join us for our Sunday 11:00 AM or 5:00 PM livestreamed Masses. Special events will also be livestreamed.

Weekday Masses

Monday-Friday 7:30 AM; 12:00 PM, 5:00 PM; Saturday 11:00 AM

Please see the back of the bulletin for the Christmas and New Year's schedule.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

Monday - Friday 8:00 - 9:00 am; 11:00 am - 12:00 pm; 4:30 - 5:30 pm;
Saturday 10:00 - 11:00 am

DEVOTIONS

Monday: Devotions in honor of the Blessed Mother, after all Masses

Tuesday: St. Anthony Devotions, after all Masses

Wednesday: St. Jude Devotions, after all Masses

Thursday: The Sacrament of Anointing, after all Masses

Friday: Devotions in Honor of the Sacred Cross, after all Masses

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Monday-Saturday: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm (Lower Church)

Dated Mass and weekly Bread and Wine or Sanctuary Lamp intentions may be reserved at our Hospitality desk in the Francis House where Mass cards are sold.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, December 21, 2024

11:00 AM Prpic Ana (D); Leonida G. Soresca (D)

4:00 PM Mary & Samuel Nasoff (D); Wang Family

Sunday, December 22, 2024

8:00 AM Members Franciscan Mass League; Elizabeth Carole Michels (D)

9:15 Intentions of the Korean Community

11:00 Jose Medina (D); Maria, Mike, Gavin & Claire

12:30 PM Marie & Tom Finnerty; Celestin Lawson

5:00 Hank & Marta; Carol Kerr (D)

Monday, December 23, 2024

7:30 AM Erik Charles Cruz; Patrick McManus (D)

12:00 PM Jean & John Boyle; Birthday Ma. Victoria Robles

5:30 Teri & Barry Tillman; 1st Death Anniv James Pratap

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

7:30 AM Sung Hee Sophia Kim (D); Germaine Ndzana

12:00 PM Lillian De Paris & Mary Locz (D); Esther & Jose Medina (D)

4:00 No Intentions

5:30 Arthur & Mary Bazzurro; Thanksgiving & Blessings
Gotaco - Lee Families

MIDNIGHT MASS No Intentions

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

8:00 AM No Intentions

11:00 No Intentions

12:30 PM Elvira & May Miranda; Verna & Salvatore Bronzo (D)

Thursday, December 26, 2024

11:00 AM Herman Kleen (D); Jody Durham

Friday, December 27, 2024

7:30 AM St. Jude; St. Anthony

12:00 PM Celso M. Leona (D); All Souls

5:30 Fr. Tom Gallagher; Fr. Andrew Reitz

This week's Bread and Wine: Catherine Puangco

This week's Sanctuary Lights: Catherine Puangco, Intention of
Dolores Henry

Advent wreath donated by: Dolores Henry in memory of Carmelite and
Victor Maynard

Parish Staff

Father Brian Jordan, O.F.M., Pastor bjordan@stfrancisnyc.org

Father Frank Critch, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar, Adult Education Coordinator fcritch@stfrancisnyc.org

Father Jim Gannon, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar jgannon@stfrancisnyc.org

Father Carolo Kim, O.F.M., Director of Korean Ministry ckim@stfrancisnyc.org

Meredith Augustin, Director of Music Ministries maugustin@stfrancisnyc.org

Julie Berwick, Director of St. Francis Counseling Center jberwick@stfrancisnyc.org

Edward A. Trochimczuk, Director of Volunteer Ministry etrochimczuk@stfrancisnyc.org

Rebeca Peraza, Director of Church Development Office rperaza@stfrancisnyc.org

Tyler Mazza, Bookkeeper tmazza@stfrancisnyc.org

The Pastor's Corner



Dear sisters and brothers,

As we complete the octave before Christmas (December 17-23), we will have a brief Fourth Sunday of Advent. We will light the final candle on the Advent Wreath in joyful expectation of the birth of Our Savior, Jesus Christ.

On Christmas Eve we will have four Masses: 4 pm, 5:30 pm, 7 pm (in Korean) and yes, Midnight Mass at Midnight. On Christmas Day, there will be four Masses: 8 am, 9:15 am (in Korean), 11 am, and 12:30 pm. There will be no 5 pm Mass.

There is a wonderful verse from the Gospel of John which truly identified the spirit of Christmas: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus Christ was fully human and fully divine on earth. May we all share in that gift of divinity this Christmas season!

On behalf of the Franciscan friars and our parish staff, we wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Holy New Year.

Blessings to all!

Father Brian

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE OF LOVE, JOY AND HOPE FROM FATHER BRIAN

Last Christmas, in 2023, the Franciscan community celebrated the 800th anniversary of the first Christmas Creche. On that momentous Christmas Eve in 1223, in the medieval town of Greccio, Italy, St. Francis of Assisi initiated a live reenactment of the birth of Jesus. Townspeople portrayed the Holy Family, shepherds, and angels, accompanied by real livestock, bringing the Nativity scene to life. This historic event marked the first recorded Christmas Creche, establishing a cherished tradition that has since spread across the globe.

Next year, in 2025, we will celebrate another milestone — the 800th anniversary of "The Canticle of the Creatures," St. Francis's lyrical poem, recognized as the oldest piece of recorded Italian literature. This profound work highlights the importance of God's Creation, inspiring the papal encyclical *Laudato Si'* by Pope Francis, which means "In praise of." It is a call for all of us to praise and care for our common home, Earth. Throughout 2025, our parish will honor this legacy by focusing on the care and our shared responsibility for our planet, Holy Mother Earth!

During this blessed Christmas season, we are reminded of the words from the Gospel of John: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us." Jesus, fully human and fully divine, entered our world to bring hope and salvation. Our parish, having endured the challenges of the pandemic and other trials throughout its history, is now emerging to be fully alive once again.

As we navigate these difficult financial times, we approach you with humble hearts, asking you to be as generous as you can. Despite our best efforts, parish collections have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, while our expenses continue to rise. **Your financial support is essential to sustain our mission here in midtown Manhattan. You can give using the QR code here.**



We invite you to support our mission as we work to preserve our beloved sanctuary — to provide a spiritual home for all who seek peace, purpose, and inspiration through the Eucharist, homilies, and in Reconciliation; music, Adult Education Courses, other programs and ministries, or merely find a quiet place. These simple acts renew our spirits, open our hearts to receive the Christ Child and allow the true meaning of Christmas to guide our lives.

This Christmas, let us bring the spirit of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jerusalem into our homes, neighborhoods, and parish churches — especially here at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi!

I close with a stanza from the famous poem by Madeline Sweeny Miller "How Far to Bethlehem." She also believes we should bring the spirit of Bethlehem to our homes.

It isn't far to Bethlehem Town!
It's anywhere that Christ comes down
And finds in people's friendly face
A welcome and abiding place.
The road to Bethlehem runs right through
The homes of folks like me and you.

On behalf of our Franciscan friars and staff of the Church of St. Francis of Assisi, I wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Holy New Year!

2024 CHRISTMAS CARDS

Our 2024 Christmas cards are still available!

You can get them at our Hospitality desk in the Francis House, or online at stfrancisnyc.org/st-francis-mass-cards-and-gifts





LAUDATO SI ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRY

Blessed Are You Who Believe

Jesus breathed air just like us. He walked under the same sun. He needed food and clean water. We are called to clear a path for him to come again. Do we really want him to find people starving on a beach wasted with plastic and dead fish?

In this time of active waiting, we are pregnant with a jubilee tradition. 2025 will be a time to forgive debt, rest the land, and slow down production and consumption. May our hearts overcome our throwaway culture of indifference and self-interest. Instead, let us share our possessions and care about strangers. Let our time and our smiles be the gifts we give. For the sake of our common home, will you commit to doing something differently? Blessed are you who say yes.

“To be made flesh is the glory of humanity. It means that we are teachable, malleable, and full of possibility.” — Joan Chittister

To learn more about the Laudato Si Circle at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi, email stfrancislaudatosi@gmail.com

The next in-person meeting of the Laudato Si Circle will be Thursday, December 26th 6:30 – 8:00 PM in the 1st Floor Conference Room of the St. Francis House. All are welcome.

REASSESSMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK

After a careful reflection with the friars, staff members and fellow parishioners, we are making a pastoral change on how we administer the anointing of the sick on Thursdays. Beginning on Thursday, January 2, the communal anointing of the sick will be administered at the 12 noon Mass only for the seriously sick, the elderly, those preparing for a medical procedure, and those suffering from mental illness.

The US Catholic Catechism for Adults teaches of the sacrament of the anointing of the sick that “this sacrament of healing is given to a person who is seriously ill or in danger of death due to sickness or old age. Elderly people may be anointed if they are in a weak condition though no dangerous illness is present.” We ask that everyone at the 12 noon Mass on Thursdays to abide by this church teaching. The parish staff will plan 4 communal anointing of the sick ceremonies on weekends during the calendar year.

CHRISTMAS, FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY, AND NEW YEAR’S SCHEDULE

Our full Christmas schedule is now available. On Tuesday December 24, we will have two daytime Masses at 7:30am and 12pm. Confessions will be available at 8am-9am, 11am-12pm, and 1pm-2pm.

Christmas Masses are as follows:

CHRISTMAS EVE: 4:00pm • 5:30pm • 7:00pm (Korean) • 12am
Midnight

CHRISTMAS DAY: 8:00am • 9:15am (Korean) • 11:00am • 12:30pm
Please note that there are no confessions or evening Masses on Christmas Day.

On Thursday, December 26, the Feast of St. Stephen, there will be one Mass at 11:00am. There will be no confessions, and church offices will be closed.

We will celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family on Sunday, December 29. Masses will be held at our regular times.

On Monday, December 30, New Year’s Eve, and Thursday, January 2, we will have Masses at 7:30am, 12:00pm, and 5:30pm. Confessions will be available from 11am-12pm only.

On New Year’s Day, there will be one Mass at 11:00am. There will be no confessions, and church offices will be closed.

WINTER PARISH RETREAT: JUBILEE — LIBERTY AND RENEWAL

Our Adult Education with the support of Converge Ministry will hold our Wappingers Falls winter retreat January 31-February 2, 2025. The retreat is open to all church ministers, volunteers, parishioners and friends.

In keeping with a centuries-old tradition of celebrating a Jubilee Year every 25 years, Pope Francis has proclaimed a Jubilee for 2025. During the ancient Jubilee, prisoners would be released, slaves would be set free, and justice would be restored. On this retreat we will reflect on this special time of Jubilee and how God sets us free to be people of peace, justice and equality.

Join us to spend time with other parishioners to pray, reflect and reconnect with God and each other. Joseph Nuzzi, our former Director of Evangelization, will be joining us as retreat master.

Registration is \$300. If you would like to reserve your spot, you can register now with a deposit of \$100.00 and make partial payments so long as your payment is complete by January 15, 2025.

For more information and to register, go to stfrancisnyc.org/st-francis-weekend-retreat-2025