

The Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport

HOLY FAMILY PARISH & OUR LADY OF GOOD VOYAGE PARISH

United in Prayer for Peace, Truth & Justice in Our World
The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ · December 25, 2025



OUR PASTOR'S MESSAGE
WE NEED EACH OTHER

The Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport
United in Prayer, Fellowship, and Service

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THE ASSISI PROJECT



The Franciscan Virtues Fifty-Two Steps to Conversion

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3RD AT 8:00AM

The coming year marks two important anniversaries in the life of the Catholic Church. It is the 10th Anniversary of the Extraordinary Year of Mercy (2016) and the 800th Anniversary of the Transitus (Death) of Saint Francis of Assisi. As part of its ongoing mission to help us more faithfully live the Gospel of the Poor Christ in the spirit of Saint Francis and Saint Clare, the Assisi Project is going back to the basics, back to the life and good example of our patron saint and his first followers.

On the First Saturday of every month, the Assisi Project gathers for a two-hour mini-retreat that includes Holy Mass, a reflection by Father Jim or Brother Patrick, and a period of prayer and faith sharing. All are invited to join us on Saturday, January 3rd beginning at 8:00am in Our Lady of Good Voyage Church as we begin our reading and discussion of an amazing book called *Franciscan Virtues Through the Year: Fifty-Two Steps to Conversion*.

This beautiful but sometimes challenging little book includes fifty-two weekly short reflections on the virtues practiced by Saint Francis of Assisi and the saints and sinners who have tried to follow him during the past eight centuries. In January, for example, we will read and reflect on *Attentiveness, Confession, Courage, and Detachment*. At our monthly gatherings, we will focus on one of more of these compelling Franciscan virtues.

Founded in 2007 by Father Jim and Brother Patrick, the Assisi Project is a Fellowship of Franciscans in Spirit with friends and followers around the world. We are dedicated to helping believers of all ages more faithfully live the Good News in the spirit of Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi. We are also dedicated to promoting a devotion to Pope Francis (1936-2025) as a patron of peace, mercy, and fraternity in our sick and suffering world.

For more information about the Assisi Project and its good work in our parishes and beyond, please contact Brother Patrick at 978-281-4820 or brpatrick@assisiproject.com. Please join us! Bring a friend! All are invited! All are welcome! Saint Francis of Assisi, pray for us! Saint Clare of Assisi, pray for us! Our Lady of the Angels, pray for us! Pope Francis, pray for us! May God bless you! May the Lord give you peace at Christmas and always!

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Everyday he humbles himself as he did
when he came into the Virgin's womb from his royal throne.
Everyday he comes to us with the same humility.
Everyday he descends from his Father's arms
into the hands of the priest at the altar.

Saint Francis of Assisi
Creator of the First Christmas Creche
1181-1226

OUR PASTOR'S MESSAGE

We Need Each Other

BY FATHER JIM

In a recent address to recipients of the Zayed Award for Human Fraternity, Pope Leo said: "In a time marked by increased conflict and division, we need authentic testimonies of human kindness and charity to remind us that we are all brothers and sisters. Words are not enough. Indeed, our love and our deepest convictions must be continually cultivated; and we do this through our concrete actions." Here in our small corner of the world, nestled between sea and sky, we are called by the Holy Father to prayerfully consider what it means to be a community; what it means to be a family of disciples that prays together, works together, and journeys together in search of the peace, truth, and justice that the Christ Child offers us at Christmas.

At this time of year, our churches are more crowded than usual. This is a great blessing. Some of the people you see are here each weekend. Some come to church once or twice each month. Some join us once or twice each year. And some are taking a chance on God and on us. Do we welcome them with open arms and open hearts? Do we make room for them in our favorite pew? Do we greet them with a smile, kind word, or best wishes for the Christmas Season? When we do these things, we do more to nurture our shared faith than any hymn, any homily, or any parish program could ever do.

Let's be honest. We are living during a time when too many people are afraid, angry, and anxious about the future. We grieve over so much that has been lost. We distrust so many of our civic and religious leaders. We lack faith in our institutions. We feel alienated from each other. We lack a sense of belonging to our community and to one another. All too many of us do not come home to church because we don't see the point, because we don't feel welcome, or because we don't feel worthy to be here. But as Pope Francis (1936-2025) so often reminded us: "We all need each other. Our greatest and yet most fragile treasure is our shared humanity as brothers and sisters, as children of God. And none of us can be saved alone."

As this year ends and a new year begins, it is long past time for us and for the Universal Church to embrace the reality that we cannot prevail against the darkness of these times by retreating into our comfort zones. First Pope Francis and now Pope Leo call us to be a community of missionary disciples that opens wide the doors; welcomes the stranger; embraces those who feel left behind; and preaches the Good News of Jesus with every thought, word, and deed. It is long past time for us — all of us — to become instruments of God's peace and fraternity in a world that is being torn apart by hatred, bigotry, division, and violence.

At Christmas and beyond, let us renew our core values of prayer, fellowship, and service. Let us reaffirm our mission to live the Gospel, share God's love, and rebuild the Church. Let us open our hearts, our minds, and our arms to embrace anyone and everyone who seeks to know the Lord. Pope Francis once said: "The time has come for all of us to endeavor to hear our society and our planet, to lay the foundations for a more just and peaceful world, and to seriously commit ourselves to pursuing the common good." In this spirit, let us pray together. Let us walk together. And let us work together to take care of each other and our common home. On behalf of our senior priests and pastoral team, welcome home for the holidays! Thank you for your encouragement and generous support of our beloved home parishes! Peace and blessings to all for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

CALL TO PRAYER



Every Family Is A Holy Family A Christmas Meditation

BY CAMERON BELL

Every family is a holy family,
if you look closely enough,
because every person bears
the breath of God.

Isn't that the wonder of the incarnation?
It's Joseph who waits in a cold parking lot,
hoping for a day's work to feed his family.

It's Mary who cradles a crying Jesus
under the blue tarp of a refugee camp.

It's Joseph, too, who changes your oil,
Mary who scrubs your toilet,
Jesus who plays hide and seek
in the crowded aisles of your laundromat.

Just as the holy family
sought admittance to the inn,
so these holy families
seek admittance to our hearts.

May we not only gather them in,
but may we accept their welcome, too.

And as we dine together,
at their table, at ours,
may we know that
the bread we break is a sacrament,
the communion between us,
something sacred. Amen.

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM SAINT OSCAR ROMERO

No one can celebrate Christmas without being poor.

The self-sufficient, the proud,
those who because they have everything
look down on others,
those who have no need ever of God:
for them there will be no Christmas.

Only the poor, the hungry,
those who need someone to come on their behalf,
will have that someone.
That someone is God, Emmanuel, God-with us.

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE

Christmas Faith & Family Mass A Youth Faith Formation Special Event

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3RD AT 4:00PM

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says: "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belong (9:14)." In response to the Lord's call, all young disciples and their families are invited to join Father Jim for our Christmas Faith & Family Mass on Saturday, January 3rd at 4:00pm in Saint Ann Church.

During Mass, the children who are preparing for First Holy Communion will dramatize the gospel stories of Christmas and Epiphany in our annual pageant. This portrayal of the Nativity will include the Holy Family, angels and shepherds, the Magi and King Herod.

Participating in this beautiful holiday tradition is a great way for our young disciples to take part in parish life and learn more about the teaching and traditions of the Catholic Church. Please save the following dates for our upcoming Faith & Family Masses:

LENT FAITH & FAMILY MASS

Sunday, February 22nd at 11:45am
Our Lady Good Voyage Church

PALM SUNDAY FAITH & FAMILY MASS

Sunday, March 29th at 11:45am
Our Lady Good Voyage Church

EASTER SEASON FAITH & FAMILY MASS

Sunday, April 12th at 11:45am
Our Lady Good Voyage Church

If your child or grandchild is interested in serving as an altar server or cross bearer, please contact Father Jim at frjim@ccgronline.com or 978-281-4820. Boys and girls are welcome to serve at God's table!

For more information about youth faith formation in the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport, please contact Betsy Works at bworks@ccgronline.com or 978-281-4820. Mass is our class! Jesus is our teacher! Please join us! All are welcome! Peace and blessings to all for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE

The Assisi Project

IN CONSTANT PRAYER FOR YOU!

Founded in 2007 by Father Jim and Brother Patrick, the Assisi Project is a Fellowship of Franciscan in Spirit with friends and followers around the world. We are dedicated to helping believers of all ages more faithfully live the Gospel of the Poor Christ through the inspiration of Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi. We are now also dedicated to promoting Pope Francis (1936-2025) as a patron of peace, mercy, and fraternity in our world.

Members of the Assisi Project range in age from 17 to 101 years old. We pray every day for peace, for the poor, and for the persecuted in our midst. We also pray for all who ask for our prayers of intercession. If you would like our fellowship to pray for you, your family, or your special intention, please contact Brother Patrick at 978-281-4820 or brpatrick@assisiproject.com. Brothers and sisters all! May God bless you! May the Lord give you peace!

We Share!

EVERY TIME WE GIVE, IT IS CHRISTMAS. DALE EVANS

Electronic giving has become an essential component of parish support in the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport; and it is available in both Holy Family Parish and Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish. It is safe and easy to make online donations to your home parish using a credit card, debit card, or electronic check.

Donations can be made on a weekly, monthly, or one-time-only basis; and it takes just a few minutes to set up a secure personal account. In addition to the weekly offering, you can also give electronically to our church restoration funds which helps us plan for the repair and maintenance of our beloved and historic churches.

Holy Family Parish and Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish need your support more than ever! Please prayerfully consider enrolling in our electronic giving program! For more information about creating a new account or assistance with an existing account, please contact Father Jim at 978-281-4820 or frjim@ccgronline.com. Peace, blessings, and many thanks to all! Merry Christmas!

CALL TO PRAYER



The Christmas Season Our Worship Schedule

The Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport joyfully invites you and your family to join us for Holy Mass in celebration of the New Year and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Here's our upcoming schedule:

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD NEW YEAR'S EVE - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

Our Lady of Good Voyage Church at 5:30pm

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD NEW YEAR'S DAY - THURSDAY, JANUARY 1ST

Saint Ann Church at 8:15am

Saint Joachim Church at 10:00am

Our Lady of Good Voyage Church at 11:45am

A PRAYER FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Most High God,
you come near to us
in the Child born of the Virgin Mary.
In deepest darkness, she gave birth to Light.
In deepest silence, she brought forth the Word.
As we ponder these mysteries in our hearts,
bless us with the grace and courage
to embrace the Christ Child
as our friend and brother,
as our Savior and Redeemer,
who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

All friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners are advised that we are no longer welcome to park in the Shaw's parking lot near Saint Ann Church. Violators are being towed. Please plan accordingly.

On behalf of our pastor, senior priests, and pastoral team, we wish you peace, good health, and every happiness at Christmas and throughout the coming new year! Now more than ever, let's pray together! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! Please join us! All are welcome!

OUR MASS INTENTIONS

December 27 – January 4

Saturday, December 27	Vigil · Feast of the Holy Family
4:00pm Saint Ann Church	Joseph Nicastro
6:00pm Our Lady's Church	Patty Wall
Sunday, December 28	Feast of the Holy Family
7:00am Our Lady's Church	Jeremias & Maria Matos
8:15am Saint Ann Church	Salvatore & Patricia Garrisi
10:00am Saint Joachim Church	Rosa Lucido
11:45am Our Lady's Church	Julia & José Goulart
	Christmas Season
December 31 Our Lady's Church	Janice Hurst
January 1 New Year's Day	Mass for the People
January 2 at 8:00am Our Lady's Church	Samuel Nigro, Jr.
Saturday, January 3	Vigil · Epiphany of the Lord
4:00pm Saint Ann Church	Maria "Enza" Noto
6:00pm Our Lady's Church	Rosa Lucido
Sunday, January 4	Epiphany of the Lord
7:00am Our Lady's Church	Robert & Bernadette Kerrigan
8:15am Saint Ann Church	Ann-Margaret Ferrante
10:00am Saint Joachim Church	Virginia "Ginny" Waitkus
11:45am Our Lady's Church	Matteo & Vincenza Cusumano

OUR WEEKLY MEMORIALS

REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES & SUPPORTING OUR HOME PARISHES

At each of our churches in the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport, sanctuary candles and sanctuary gifts (hosts and wine) can be donated for a special intention or in memory of a friend or loved one. The requested donation for both sanctuary gifts and candles is now \$25 per week. For the week of Sunday, December 28th, donations were offered for the following special intentions:

In Memory of Thomas Lupo, Jr.
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Angela Noto
Sanctuary Gifts · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Cinira Vicente
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Joachim Church

In Memory of Thomas Lupo III
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Anthony Chapel

In Memory of the Girard Family
Sanctuary Candle · Our Lady of Good Voyage

In Memory of Thomas & Rose Lupo
Sanctuary Gifts · Our Lady of Good Voyage

In Memory of the Sallah Family
Sanctuary Candle · Chapel of the Archangels

In Memory of Peter Feeney
Pope Francis Candle · Our Lady of Good Voyage

If you would like to donate a sanctuary candle, sanctuary gifts, or sanctuary flowers in memory of a loved one in any of our churches or chapels in the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport, please contact Melissa Joseph at office@ccgronline.com or 978-281-4820. Thank you for your generous support! May God bless our departed brothers and sisters! Peace & blessings to all!

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM POPE FRANCIS

The Christmas angels are you,
when you sing to the world
a message of love, peace, and justice.

Pope Francis – Christmas Day 2014

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