

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 Baptism of the Lord · January 11, 2026



THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUST DO IT

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

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SAINTS FOR ALL SEASONS



The First Franciscan Martyrs Friends of Francis 2026

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14TH
BEGINS WITH MASS AT 5:30PM

All Christians are called to holiness. All Christians are called to be saints. A saint is a person who has lived a courageous and virtuous life; a life lived for God; a life lived for others; a life worthy of imitation by others. Pope Leo XIV recently proclaimed: "The lives of the saints teach us that it is possible to live passionately amidst the complexities of the present time without neglecting [Saint Paul's] mandate to 'shine like stars in the world (Philippians 2:15).'"

This year, the Catholic Church marks the 800th anniversary of the life and legacy of Saint Francis of Assisi (1226-2026). As part of our commemoration of this special year, we look not just to Saint Francis, but to the friends who knew him best; to the holy men and women who sought to follow in his footsteps; to the "shining stars" who sought to live the Gospel of Christ with every thought, word, and deed.

In this spirit, all are invited to join Father Jim and Brother Patrick for this year's first *Saints for All Seasons Mini-Retreat* which will begin with Holy Mass on Wednesday, January 14th at 5:30pm in Our Lady of Good Voyage Church. After Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Brother Patrick will offer a reflection on the Franciscan Protomartyrs, the first followers of Saint Francis to lose their lives for simply living and preaching the Good News of the Poor Christ.

After our reflection, Father Jim will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (for those who feel called to confession) during a period of silent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. This special evening of prayer and devotion will conclude with Benediction and veneration of a relic of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Throughout the year, our challenge will be to turn what we learn about the Friends of Francis into living more faithfully as disciples. After all, Saint Francis once said: "What a great shame that while the saints actually followed the Lord, we expect glory and honor simply because we can recite what they did." Mindful of this counsel, we will seek to renew our timeless mission to live the Gospel, share God's love and rebuild the Church.

For more information about our *Saints for All Seasons Mini-Retreats*, please contact Brother Patrick at brpatrick@ccgronline.com or 978-281-4820. Our complete schedule of mini-retreats is now posted at ccgronline.com/formation. 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! Please join us! All are welcome!

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

Just Do It

BY BROTHER PATRICK

As a spiritual director, I am often asked: How should I pray? When should I pray? Where should I pray? Which prayers are best? The answers can be boiled down to an iconic advertising slogan: *Just do it!* It doesn't matter how we pray, when we pray, or where we pray. It doesn't matter which prayers we say as long as those prayers deepen our relationship with the Lord. What matters is that we actually do pray; that we pray often; that we cultivate a habit of prayer that becomes an important part of our lives.

History teaches us that the great saints, mystics, and religious orders often prayed according to a timetable or rule of life. Father Jim and I recently made a short pilgrimage to Saint Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts. The abbey is home to a vibrant community of Trappist monks who gather six times everyday to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. This fixed schedule of prayer has been part of the Benedictine tradition for fourteen centuries. Diocesan priests and deacons, along with consecrated persons like me, are also called to mark the "hours" of the day with this kind of prayer.

What about the rest of God's family? Over the years, I have been blessed to learn from Jesuits, Franciscans, Benedictines, and other holy men and women about how a life of discipleship can be built on a fixed schedule of daily prayer. And thanks to the good advice of my longtime spiritual director, Father Mark Noonan (1934-2025), I begin each day with an hour of prayer and spiritual reading. In addition to books about the scriptures and lives of the saints, I am deeply grateful for these three daily devotionals:

Through the Year with Francis of Assisi (241 pages) offers daily quotes or short stories from the life of the Little Poor One. Edited by Father Murray Bodo, OFM, one of the world's best loved friar and writer, this book presents the good example of Saint Francis through his own words, through his life and legend, and through reflections by his most famous biographers: Saint Bonaventure (1221-1274) and Blessed Thomas of Celano (1200-1260). This volume has been part of my morning routine for nearly twenty years. Because of its profound holiness, this book always seems new and fresh.

All Saints by Robert Ellsberg (582 pages) contains a daily reflection on saints, prophets, and witnesses from various cultures and faith traditions. Almost all of these reflections are about Christian men and women who devoted themselves to living the Gospel, sharing God's love, and rebuilding the Church. Some are martyrs. Some are mystics. Some are miracle makers. Some are peacemakers. Some are even troublemakers. But all of them offer good guidance and real inspiration for living our shared faith.

You Are Beloved by Father Henri Nouwen (417 pages) features a daily meditation from one of the twentieth centuries most popular and prolific Christian authors. Father Nouwen (1932-1996) wrote more than forty books. Rooted in his personal loneliness and longing for deep human friendships, his writings remind us again and again of God's abiding love for each and every person. All of Father Nouwen's books are worth reading. But this book provides both a good introduction and a daily dose of practical inspiration for people of all ages, backgrounds, and life experiences.

When asked over the years for recommendations about what books to read or what prayers to pray, Father Mark always said: "Follow the good instincts that lead you to the Lord." So whether we have our own spiritual libraries or take a chance on the recommendations of a humble hermit, let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us find prayers and other faith resources that bring us all closer to Christ, closer to the Church, and closer to each other. May God bless us, everyone, with lives filled with good books, beautiful prayers, and abundant graces! May the Lord give you peace!

SHARING GOD'S LOVE



First Penance & Reconciliation

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24TH AT 9:00AM

As a new year begins, fifty-seven young disciples from Holy Family Parish and Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish are preparing for First Holy Communion. As part of their ongoing formation to receive the Body & Blood of Christ, these young fellow parishioners will soon participate in the Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation (Confession) for the first time.

This celebration is an important milestone in every child's faith journey. It teaches them and reminds us all about the importance of conscience, forgiveness, humility, and God's boundless gifts of love, mercy, and friendship. As our young disciples make their first confession, we entrust them into God's loving care:

All good and gracious God,
 help our children to be kind and patient.
 Do not let pride or envy take root in their hearts.
 Keep them from being angry and hateful.
 Help them to forgive others
 and to let go of grudges and rivalries.
 Help our children preserve family ties,
 love each other, hope for the future,
 and build up their community
 in prayer, fellowship, and service.
 We make this prayer through Christ Jesus,
 our Risen Lord and Savior. Amen.

Our celebration of First Penance & Reconciliation is scheduled for Saturday, January 24th at 9:00am in Our Lady of Good Voyage Church. For more information about youth faith formation in the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport, please contact Betsy Works at 978-281-4820 or bworks@ccgronline.com.

As our children, godchildren, and grandchildren continue to prepare for the Sacraments of First Penance and First Eucharist, please pray for them and for their families. May God bless us with faith, hope, love, and true happiness throughout the new year! Peace and blessings to all!

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE

The Bare Necessities

EVERY DOLLAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

The Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport is alive and well! Babies are being baptized. Confessions are being heard. Funerals and weddings are being celebrated. Our online ministries attract more than 2,000 visitors every week. Our young disciples are preparing for Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Our service organizations and adult faith formation programs are bringing together people of all ages in prayer, fellowship, and service. And best of all, more and more of our friends and neighbors are coming home to church.

Nevertheless, the challenges of midwinter are upon us. Our churches and parish buildings must be cleaned, heated, and insured. Basic repairs are ongoing and everyday. Parking lots must be plowed. Steps and sidewalks must be shoveled and kept clear of ice. And our hardworking pastoral team (including me and our assisting clergy) must be paid a fair wage. Here is just a small sampling of some recent monthly expenses:

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

Saint Ann Campus Electricity \$831
 Saint Joachim Campus Heating \$2,347

OUR LADY OF GOOD VOYAGE PARISH

Our Lady's Church Heating \$2,399
 Our Lady's Campus Electricity \$948

As you know, my parents taught me how to pinch pennies at a very young age. Believe me, we are doing all we can to control costs. But the financial stability and pastoral viability of both Holy Family Parish and Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish depends entirely on us. We are solely responsible for paying our bills.

How can you help? Give what you can. Give an extra dollar or two every week. Use our electronic giving program. Encourage your families, friends, and neighbors to chip in. For more information about you can help, please see me before or after Mass or contact me at 978-281-4820 or frjim@ccgronline.com. Thank you for your ongoing encouragement and generous support for our beloved home parishes! Peace and blessings to all for a happy and healthy year! — Father Jim

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE

Our Weekly Gifts

WEEKEND OF JANUARY 3RD & 4TH

Holy Family Parish

Offertory	\$5,498
Electronic	\$1,074
Total	\$6,572

Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish

Offertory	\$3,150
Electronic	\$837
Total	\$3,987

Thank you for your generous support
for Holy Family Parish
& Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish!

The Assisi Project We're Praying for You!

IN CONSTANT PRAYER

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!

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM SAINT FRANCIS

The Lord called me into the way
of simplicity and humility...
He told me that I am to be
a new kind of fool in this world.

From the Mirror of Perfection

CALL TO PRAYER



Sacrament of Confirmation

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24TH AT 4:00PM

Along with Baptism and Eucharist, Confirmation is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation in the Roman Catholic Church. The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism through the outpouring of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Courage, Knowledge, Wisdom, Reverence, Right Judgment, Understanding, and Wonder & Awe of the Lord.

These powerful gifts seal or confirm the mystical union between Jesus and the candidates. These precious gifts also prepare the candidates to actively participate in the prayer, fellowship, and service of God's family in their home parish and beyond.

This year, sixty-four students from Holy Family Parish and Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish have completed the requirements of our Confirmation Preparation Program. During the past two years, they prayed together, attended Mass together, and completed a rigorous journey of formation as a community of young disciples. They are now well-prepared to publicly renew their baptismal vows, profess their faith, and live as faithful and faith-filled Catholic Christians.

The Very Reverend Brian Flynn, Episcopal Vicar for the North Region of the Archdiocese of Boston, will join us as special guest celebrant and homilist for our annual celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation on Saturday, January 24th at 4:00pm in Saint Ann Church and on Saturday, February 14th at 10:00am in Our Lady of Good Voyage Church. Welcome to the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport, Father Brian!

As we make ready for these celebrations, please pray for all of our candidates, sponsors, parents, and catechists. In a special way, we pray in thanksgiving for Betsy Works, Associate Minister of Youth Faith Formation, for her good work, dedication, and creative spirit. Peace, blessings, and congratulations to all! Come, Holy Spirit! Enkindle in us the fire of your love!

OUR MASS INTENTIONS

January 10 – January 18

Saturday, January 10	Vigil · Baptism of the Lord
4:00pm Saint Ann Church	Annette Mannone
6:00pm Our Lady's Church	William Vitagliano
Sunday, January 11	Baptism of the Lord
7:00am Our Lady's Church	John & Anna Barbosa
8:15am Saint Ann Church	Gilbert & Nancy Gossom
10:00am Saint Joachim Church	Frank LaFrance
11:45am Our Lady's Church	John Orlando
	Ordinary Time
January 14 at 5:30pm Our Lady's Church	Sr. Elaine McTaggart
January 15 at 8:00am Our Lady's Church	Paul Parisi
January 16 at 8:00am Our Lady's Church	Peggy Elwell
Saturday, January 17	Vigil · Second Sunday
4:00pm Saint Ann Church	Sara Jean Tarr
6:00pm Our Lady's Church	Sebastian Mocerì
Sunday, January 18	Second Sunday
7:00am Our Lady's Church	John Feeney
8:15am Saint Ann Church	Cheryl Doucette
10:00am Saint Joachim Church	Nicolo Sanfilippo
11:45am Our Lady's Church	Alex & Tina Borge

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, January 11th, donations were offered for the following special intentions:

In Memory of Katelyn Caruso
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Katelyn Caruso
Sanctuary Gifts · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Katelyn Caruso
Sanctuary Flowers · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Jerry Russo
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Joachim Church

In Memory of John & Anna Barbosa
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Anthony Chapel

In Memory of Matteo Russo
Sanctuary Candle · Our Lady of Good Voyage

In Memory of Mary Piscitello
Sanctuary Candle · Chapel of the Archangels

In Memory of Msgr. Richard Cunningham
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 LEO XIV

Peace is a breath of the eternal.
While to evil we cry out 'Enough!',
to peace we whisper 'Forever.'

World Day of Peace - January 1, 2026

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