The Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport

HOLY FAMILY PARISH & OUR LADY OF GOOD VOYAGE PARISH

United in Prayer, Fellowship & Service
First Week of Advent · November 29, 2026



OUR PASTOR'S MESSAGE

AN ENDOWMENT FOR JOY

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

Contact: 978-281-4820 or office@ccgronline.com
Website: ccgronline.com
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CALL TO PRAYER



Our Daily Prayer for Advent

A PRAYER REQUEST FROM FATHER JIM

Advent is a season for prayer and penance. It is a season dedicated to the virtues of hope, peace, joy, and love. It is a season of light that transcends the gathering darkness of winter. It is a season for growing closer to God and to our friends, families, and fellow parishioners. It is a season of patient longing for the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas.

Last year, Pope Leo XIV said about Advent: "Let us be careful not to get caught up in frenetic activity in preparing for the feast, which would lead us to experience it in a superficial way...Instead, let us take the time to make our hearts attentive and vigilant as we await Jesus, so that his loving presence may become the treasure of our lives and hearts forever."

This year, please join me in offering the following prayer each day during Advent as a shared spiritual exercise for the Holy Father's intentions of peace, truth, and justice in our world; for our brothers and sisters in Holy Family Parish in Gaza, and for all friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners of the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport.

A HOLY FAMILY PRAYER

Jesus, bless our families.
Inspire in us the gifts of peace,
unity, and mutual love
that your own family found
in the little village of Nazareth.

Mary, nourish our families
with faith, hope, and love.
Keep us close to your Son, Jesus,
in all our joys and sorrows.

Joseph, keep our families safe.
Guide us and protect us
during times of hardship,
anxiety, and discouragement.

Most Holy Family,
grant that love, strengthened by grace,
will prove stronger than any trials
through which our families may pass.

May God be always at the center
of our hearts and our homes
until we are all one family,
happy and at peace forever. Amen.

OUR PASTOR'S MESSAGE

An Endowment for Joy

BY FATHER JIM

In 1846, George Henry Lewes (1817-1878), an English philosopher and social critic, wrote: "The only cure for grief is action." When someone we love dies, we can find ourselves unable to move, unable to think, unable to live in the everyday. Beyond tears and sadness, our response to the desolation of death can be numbing, almost disabling. As impossible as it seems, however, the only way to transcend our pain is to forge ahead with the one life that we are all blessed to live.

Since Father Ben Madu's sudden death on July 2nd, many friends and fellow parishioners have been struggling to make sense of this senseless tragedy. Given Father Ben's youth and joyful spirit, we expected to know and love him for many years to come. We expected our friendship to grow and deepen with time. The consensus is that this time together was stolen from us.

Father Ben's passing prompts deep emotions, raises many questions, and provokes countless regrets. We will always second guess what was done and not done for him. We will always grieve the loss of a gifted priest who was devoted, heart and soul, to his ministries at Salem Hospital and here in the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport. We will always miss a good friend and a trusted co-worker in the Lord's vineyard. Our broken hearts may heal over time, but we will remember Father Ben for the rest of our lives.

If the only cure for grief is action, then we are now called to act. For the past two months, Brother Patrick and I have been researching charities through which we might memorialize Father Ben's life, ministry, and contribution to our community. We discussed our ideas with Father Isaac Ogba, one of Father Ben's closest friends. We considered non-profit organizations related to immigrants and refugees, pastoral care for priests, mental health and suicide prevention.

In the end, after much prayer, discernment, and consultation, we concluded that the best way to honor Father Ben's life was to create a charitable endowment in his name: *The Father Benjamin Madu Endowment for Joy*. Established under the banner of *The Assisi Project*, which is already a non-profit and tax exempt charitable organization, *The Father Benjamin Madu Endowment for Joy* will keep alive Father Ben's legacy of joy, love, and amazing grace for years to come. Our plan is support good works and worthy causes both around the corner and around the world.

Now we need your help! On November 28th and 29th (this weekend) a special collection will be taken at all weekend Masses in both Holy Family Parish and Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish for *The Father Benjamin Madu Endowment for Joy*. Our immediate goal is to raise $15,000 by the end of this year. In 2027, The Assisi Project will dedicate its 20th anniversary fundraiser to raising an additional $20,000 for the fund. All donations are tax deductible. Every penny raised will go toward good causes both at home and abroad.

In this spirit, please join me in giving whatever you can to make *The Father Benjamin Madu Endowment for Joy* a living reality. Every small donation makes a big difference! By your gifts and prayers, we can honor Father Ben's life and share his message of joy, love, and amazing grace with the whole world. All donations are tax deductible. All checks should be made payable to *Assisi Project - Endowment for Joy*. You can also give online at assisiproject.com or mail a donation: The Assisi Project, Post Office Box 3158, Gloucester, MA 01931. Thank you in advance for your generous support! Peace, blessing, and sincere thanks to all!

SEASON OF ADVENT



The Rosary by Candlelight
A Gathering of Prayer During Advent

BEGINS MONDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

Advent is a season of prayer and preparation for the coming Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas. It is also a time to open our hearts, minds, and souls to the Lord's gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love in our lives and in the lives of people all around the world.

In this spirit, all friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners of the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport are invited to join Father Jim for *The Rosary by Candlelight* on three consecutive Monday evenings during Advent in Our Lady of Good Voyage Church.

We will begin with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Father Jim will also offer brief reflections on peace, joy, and love. Each week, we will then offer a different version of the Holy Rosary: *A Rosary for Peace*, *A Franciscan Rosary*, and Bishop Bruce Lewandowski's *Rosary of Migration*. Each evening of prayer and devotion will conclude with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

A ROSARY FOR PEACE

Monday, December 7th at 5:30pm
With Reflection & Eucharistic Adoration
Our Lady of Good Voyage Church

A ROSARY FOR JOY

Monday, December 14th at 5:30pm
With Reflection & Eucharistic Adoration
Our Lady of Good Voyage Church

A ROSARY FOR LOVE

Monday, December 21st at 5:30pm
With Reflection & Eucharistic Adoration
Our Lady of Good Voyage Church

For more information about this special series of spiritual exercises for Advent, please contact Father Jim at 978-281-4820 or frjim@ccgronline.com. Please join us! Bring a friend! Bring your family! All are invited! All are welcome! Peace and blessings to all!

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE

Advent & Christmas Concert
An Annual Holiday Tradition

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH AT 2:00PM

All friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners of the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport are invited to join Tom Misuraca, LuAnn Pallazola, Patricia Natti, and our Adult Music Ministry for the 19th Annual Advent & Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 6th at 2:00pm in Saint Ann Church.

This year's musical selections have been carefully chosen by Tom and LuAnn to prepare our hearts to more faithfully celebrate the Holy Season of Advent and the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas. For more information about this beloved holiday tradition, please contact Tom Misuraca at tmisuraca@ccgronline.com or leave a message at 978-281-4820. Please join us! Bring a friend! Bring your family! All are welcome!

Sharing God's Love
Our Christmas Giving Trees

CONTINUES THIS WEEKEND!

This year, the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport is once again sponsoring the Christmas Giving Tree! Again this weekend, a Christmas Giving Tree has been placed at the entrances of Saint Ann Church, Saint Joachim Church, and Our Lady of Good Voyage Church.

Each tree is decorated with stars that include a Christmas wish for a local child in need. If you can make their wish come true, then please take the star! Every donated gift should be new and unwrapped, then placed under any Giving Tree no later than Sunday, December 6th.

For more information about the Christmas Giving Tree, please contact Lori Thorstensen at lorithor@hotmail.com or leave a message at 978-281-4820. As we deck the halls and celebrate the holiday season, let's share God's love with children and families that need our help! Thank you! May God bless us with an Advent Season filled with hope, peace, joy, and love! May God bless us, everyone!

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE

Our Weekly Gifts

WEEKEND OF NOVEMBER 21ST & 22ND

Holy Family Parish

Offertory	$7,810
Electronic	$732
Total	$8,542

Our Lady of Good Voyage Parish

Offertory	$4,538
Electronic	$481
Total	$5,019

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

The Immaculate Conception
A Holy Day of Obligation

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

In prayerful commemoration of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport invites you and your family to join us for Holy Mass:

HOLY DAY MASSES

8:00am at Saint Joachim Church
12:00pm at Saint Ann Church
5:30pm at Our Lady of Good Voyage Church

Since late antiquity, the People of God have believed that the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin in the womb of her mother, Saint Ann. In 1854, the Roman Catholic Church defined this ancient devotion as doctrine. Since then, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception has been venerated as patron of countless causes and countries, including the United States of America.

For more information about the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, please visit ccgronline.com; or contact Father Jim at 978-281-4820 or frjim@ccgronline.com. We hope and pray that you and your family will be able to join us for this Holy Day of Obligation! All are invited! All are welcome! Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, pray for us!

SEASON OF ADVENT



The Assisi Project
Franciscan Virtues - Witness

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5TH AT 8:00AM

This year marks the 800th anniversary of the life and death of Saint Francis of Assisi (1226-2026). In commemoration of this sacred milestone, Pope Leo XIV declared a Special Jubilee Year. In this spirit, the Assisi Project is going back to the basics, back to the life and good example of our patron to learn more about the virtues that can help us follow Saint Francis and live the Gospel of Christ in thought, word, and deed.

All friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners of the Catholic Community of Gloucester & Rockport are invited to join us on Saturday, December 5th at 8:00am in Our Lady of Good Voyage Church for a two hour mini-retreat that includes Holy Mass, a reflection by Father Jim and Brother Patrick, along with a period of prayer and faith sharing. At this gathering, we will focus on the virtue of giving *witness* to the Gospel.

Founded in 2007, 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 Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi. We are also dedicated to promoting a devotion to Pope Francis as a patron of peace, mercy, and fraternity in our troubled world.

For more information about the Assisi Project and its good work in our parishes, please contact Brother Patrick at 978-281-4820 or brpatrick@assisiproject.com. Please join us! Bring a friend! Bring your family! All are welcome! May God bless you! May the Lord give you peace!

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM SAINT FRANCIS

We are mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ
when we carry him in our hearts and bodies…
and give birth to him by the working of his grace in us
which shines forth as an example to others.

Saint Francis of Assisi's Letter to the Faithful (1220)

OUR MASS INTENTIONS

November 28th — December 6th

Saturday, November 28	**Vigil · First Sunday of Advent**
4:00pm Saint Ann Church	Bernadette & Anthony Pelosi, Jr.
6:00pm Our Lady's Church	Maureen Cusumano
Sunday, November 29	**First Sunday of Advent**
7:00am Our Lady's Church	John "Jack" Carrancho
8:15am Saint Ann Church	Robert Rose
10:00am Saint Joachim Church	Marie Larsen
11:45am Our Lady's Church	Elizabeth Brooke Benham
	Season of Advent
December 2 at 5:30pm Our Lady's Church	Anthony Souza
December 3 at 8:00am Our Lady's Church	Margaret Doherty
December 4 at 8:00am Our Lady's Church	Father Benjamin Madu
Saturday, December 5	**Vigil · Second Sunday of Advent**
4:00pm Saint Ann Church	The Giambanco Family
6:00pm Our Lady's Church	David Roach, Jr.
Sunday, December 6	**Second Sunday of Advent**
7:00am Our Lady's Church	The Bruni Family
8:15am Saint Ann Church	Doreen Spinola
10:00am Saint Joachim Church	Frank & Antonia Kaminsky
11:45am Our Lady's Church	Alex & Tina Borge

OUR WEEKLY MEMORIALS

Sanctuary Candles & Gifts

REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES & SUPPORTING OUR 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, November 29th, donations were offered for the following special intentions:

In Memory of Ann-Margaret Ferrante
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Ann-Margaret Ferrante
Sanctuary Gifts · Saint Ann Church

In Memory of Mary & Robert Walter Callahan
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Joachim Church

In Memory of Father Benajamin Madu
Sanctuary Candle · Saint Anthony Chapel

In Memory of Jack Carrancho
Sanctuary Candle · Our Lady's Church

In Memory of Jack Carrancho
Sanctuary Gifts · Our Lady's Church

In Memory of Marilyn Sweet
Sanctuary Candle · Chapel of the Archangels

In Memory of Priciliano Trejo
Pope Francis Candle · Our Lady's Church

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 Father Jim 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 ETTY HILLESUM

This is why I must try to live
a good and faithful life to my last breath:
so that those who come after me
do not need to start all over again.

Etty Hillesum (1914-1943)

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