

† † † **MASS INTENTIONS** † † †

Monday, February 12

8:00 AM + Eugene Schranz
Req. by Terry & Mary Ann Swift

Tuesday, February 13

8:00 AM + Robert Kerrigan
Req. by Mary Bannister

Wednesday, February 14

ASH WEDNESDAY

7:00 AM Members Of Our Faith Community

12:00 PM (Noon) + Audrey McNeill

Req. by Marie Davis & Family

7:00 PM + Elizabeth Pike & + Margaret Conlon

Req. by Family

Thursday, February 15

8:00 AM For God's Graces & Good Health

Req. by Jane Dana

Friday, February 16

8:00 AM + Andrew & + Laura Starzer

Req. by Ann Francis

Saturday, February 17

8:00 AM + Henry Smialkowski

Req. by Margaret Hendrak

4:00 PM + Carol Pienta

Req. by Georgette & Chuck Damon

Sunday, February 18

8:30 AM For the intentions of Russell Bardell

Req. by Bernice Matteo

11:00 AM + Mark Prusak

Req. by Nancy Prusak

6:00 PM + Connie Mazzulla

Req. by Margaret Hendrak

OUR FAITH COMMUNITY'S GIFT TO GOD

February 3/4, 2018

Attendance. 529

Regular Offering. \$5,584

Church In Central & Eastern Europe. \$460

Regular Offering same Sunday last year \$5,035

January E-Giving Regular Collection. \$3,043

January E-Giving Maintenance Collection. \$1,308

From Fr. Ross: Please remember that I am very aware of all the sacrifices you make and that what you contribute I consider as your offering to the Lord and something very sacred. Thank you for the continued support and generosity you offer to your parish family. May God bless you always.

ASH WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 14

NO BINGO

Masses at 7:00 AM, 12:00 PM (Noon) & 7:00 PM

THE VIGIL CANDLE

If you would like to make a donation (\$10) for a vigil candle in memory of someone (living or deceased) or for a special intention, please fill out the form below. It can be returned via the mail, parish office or placed in the collection basket at Mass. Each week there is one candle available for the Church and two for the Friary.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Intention _____

Friary

Church

Checks should be made payable to *St. Francis Church*

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK



Marie Brittain, Patricia Brown, George Bussi, Donna Carloni, Carl Casper, Michele Chmura, Edward Cieslica, Gerald Davis, Jeffrey Garringer, Carol Gasinski, Marlin & Sarah Gress, Fred Horos, Lillian Hosie, Helen

Jurewicz, Rita LaBasco, Alex Lissitschenko, Christine Lopinski, Mary Jo Monheim, Meghan Quinn, Evelyn Rutkowski, Betty Schaefer, Jewell Schmittendorf, Jack Schultz, Terry Swift, Ed Szarowicz, Cynthia Towne, Daniel Weiss, Christopher Winkleman, and all others who are ill or suffering. *It is very important that the Parish Office be notified if a family member is in the hospital.* By law, the hospitals may no longer call the Church to inform us when someone is hospitalized. Please contact Sharon Gruver, our parish secretary, if you would like to place the name of someone on our *Sick List*. Unless we are notified otherwise, the names will remain on the list for one month.

IF YOU OR A LOVED ONE IS ILL

If you or someone in your family is ill, homebound, in the hospital or a nursing home, please let us know. We have members of our Faith Community who would love to visit and bring Holy Communion. However, we need you to call us. Too often we find out after the fact. We also have a Monthly Newsletter that we send out to those who cannot join us at church. Again, please give us a call!

OUR LENTEN LIBRARY SELECTIONS

To assist you in your Easter preparations, you will find a new selection of Lenten-theme books on the cart that is always accessible in church. Many more titles are also available in the full library in the office area which is open during the regular parish office hours.



CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

- February 12: **Altar & Rosary Pierogi Making**–9:00 AM (Kitchen)
Faith Formation 9th Grade Visit Autumn View Nursing Home
Cub Scouts Pack Meeting–6:30 PM (Gym)
Scouts Venture Crew Meeting–6:30 PM (Meeting Room 1)
Buildings & Finance Committee Meeting–7:00 PM (Parish Office Meeting Room)
Boy Scout Meeting–7:30 PM (Gym)
- February 13: **Altar & Rosary Society Meeting**–1:00 PM (Meeting Room 1)
Mardi Gras Volunteer Appreciation Evening–7:00 PM (Social Center)
- February 14: **Ash Wednesday – No Bingo**
Ash Wednesday Masses–7:00 AM, 12:00 PM (Noon) & 7:00 PM
Altar & Rosary Pierogi Making–9:00 AM / **Selling**–10:00 AM (Kitchen)
Prayer Shawl Ministry–10:30 AM (Library)
Holy Name Society Fish Fry–4:00 PM (Social Center)
- February 15: **Yoga**–10:00 AM (Meeting Room 1)
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Meeting–5:30 PM (Meeting Room 1)
Civil Air Patrol–7:00 PM (Gym, Meeting Room 1)
- February 16: **Sanctity of Life Ministry**–8:00 AM (Church)
Altar & Rosary Pierogi Making–9:00 AM (Kitchen)
Stations of the Cross–7:00 PM (Church)
Faith Formation Open Gym–7:00 PM (Social Center)
- February 17: **Altar & Rosary Pierogi Making**–9:00 AM / **Selling**–10:00 AM (Kitchen)
Lottery Ticket Sales–Before/After 4:00 PM Mass
- February 18: **Lottery Ticket Sales**–Before/After All Masses

HAVE YOU JOINED FORMED YET?

Take advantage of wonderful movies, great bible studies, and wholesome Catholic content on Formed.org. Register with our Parish Code 7Q378B

LOTTERY TICKETS



Next week the folks on the Lottery Committee will be available in the front vestibule of the church to assist you in purchasing lottery tickets. Please stop and buy a ticket or two and help support our parish. A ticket is still only \$5.00!

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The Cub Scouts will be having a All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, March 4. The Scouts will be selling tickets the weekend of February 24/25 BEFORE all the Masses.



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH PIEROGI SALE SPRING SESSION



Homemade pierogi are now available for sale in the Social Center on Wednesdays and Saturdays, January 31 until March 24, 2018, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The varieties include a selection of farmer's cheese, sauerkraut, and potato with cheddar cheese.

Orders must be placed by March 1, 2018 in order to ensure availability. A donation of \$5.00 per 1 / 2 dozen and \$10.00 per dozen is requested. For more information or to place an order, please contact Geri Koss at 627-5680.

CATHOLIC MISSIONS AMONG THE BLACK AND NATIVE AMERICANS

Next weekend there is a special collection to help local African American and Native American Diocesan Communities throughout the United States spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and respond to real and pressing needs on the ground. Thank you in advance for your prayers and generosity.

PRAYER SERVICE FOR AN END TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human Trafficking continues to be one of the worst evils of our time. The Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph are hosting an anti-trafficking prayer event to awaken our hearts and deepen our commitment to work for a world where every person is free and able to live with dignity and freedom. The service will highlight the life of St. Josephine Bakhita, herself a victim of this evil practice and patroness of all those who are trafficked. Please join us at St. Francis Park Chapel, 5229 South Park Avenue, Hamburg, NY on February 20 at 6:30pm. Reception to follow. RSVP at 649-1205.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE

+ Arthur J. Macie was called home to the Lord and heaven last week. Our prayers and thoughts are with the family members at this time. May the Lord strengthen and comfort them with His peace.





ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES

Our schedule of Masses for Ash Wednesday, February 14, is as follows: **7:00 AM, 12:00 Noon and 7:00 PM.** Please plan to attend and try to encourage family members and friends to join you.

Holy Name Fish Fry's

(Catered by BW's Catering)



Take your Valentine out for a dinner at St. Francis for a Fish Fry

Please join us in the Social Center
From 4:00 PM To 7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday, February 14

OR

Good Friday, March 30

☞ Eat in or Take Out ☞

Dinner Includes:

Haddock, French fries, Cole Slaw,
Macaroni Salad and Beverage.

☞ Tickets are \$11 per person ☞

☞ Children's meal (cheese pizza) are \$3 ☞

Come and Enjoy

Good Food & Good Company

Please join us & bring a friend or 2

Our Famous Pierogies

will be sold during the Fish Fry

☞ ☞ There will be Door Prizes ☞ ☞

☞ ☞ At the Ash Wednesday Fish Fry ☞ ☞

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENING

"MARDI GRAS"



For those volunteers and their immediate families who will be attending our Volunteer Appreciation evening, we will be gathering this Tuesday, February 13. We will begin with a short Pre-Lenten Prayer Service in church at 7:00 PM and then move over to the Social Center for some refreshments, fun and fellowship. This will be a good time to get together with all those who work for the good of our Faith Community and who are essential to the continued growth of our Parish.



FINANCE AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE



Our Finance and Buildings Committee will be meeting this Monday, February 12 at 7:00 PM in the Parish Office Meeting Room. The purpose of the Committee is to oversee our finances to insure that we are being good stewards with the blessings we have received. If you have a financial background and/or are interested in this area of the Faith Community, please join us. For more information, please contact Fr. Ross.

READERS FOR STATIONS OF THE CROSS

During most Friday's during, Lent we will be having the Stations of the Cross at 7:00 PM. If you would like to be a reader or cross bearer, sign up in the sacristy or contact Fr. Ross.



UPDATED ONLINE GIVING PROGRAM



We are pleased to announce that we are using a new online giving provider, upgrading our Online (E-Giving) Program to simplify the process and to offer more options.

Those who have already signed up for it have found it very user-friendly. For more information and/or to sign up using the new provider go to our parish website (st.francischurch.us) and on the right side of the home page, under "ONLINE GIVING" click on to **ONLINE GIVING LINK** and you will be taken to the page where you can sign up. If you have any questions, please call the parish office. You can also get to the online giving site with your iphone or ipad using this QR Code:



LENTEN BULLETIN INSERTS



Beginning next weekend, you will find an insert in the bulletin that offers a daily meditation and reflection during Lent. We hope that you will refer to it each day and use it as a way to make this holy season of Lent a little more holy.

BUFFALO PEACE HOUSE

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY / FUND RAISER

The Buffalo Peace House will be having a Fund Raiser on Saturday, March 3, 2018, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. There will be Beer, Wine, Hors d'oeuvres, Live Music, Basket Raffle and 50/50. The cost per person is \$25.00 or \$40.00 a couple. Please join us at St. Francis of Assis Parish in the Social Center for an evening of fun and fellowship. For more information please call 627-9800.



If God is for us, We have nothing to fear.



REFLECTIONS FROM FR. ROSS

If there is any such thing as an immortal saying, one of them concerns fear. It was FDR who said, “The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself.” This doesn’t mean that we should ignore our fears or that if I am afraid, that means I’m a coward. Just the opposite. It means that we need to confront our fears when faced with a difficult situation. The courageous person is not the person who is not afraid; it is the person who does not let fear stop them from doing the right thing and moving forward.

What is fear? It is an emotion. It is a reaction. It is a response. It is very uncomfortable. It is a universal experience; every person has experienced it and will experience it. Sometimes it is a result of our own actions. Like Adam and Eve, we have done wrong and now we are afraid of the consequences. Sometimes it is a result of a situation: in front of me there is a big dog with big teeth. Sometimes it is the result of an emotional problem that expresses itself through an irrational fear or phobia, or paranoia. Sometimes it is a momentary experience or it can last for a long time.

We have all noticed when we are afraid that it affects our whole being. Sometimes the physical changes are very dramatic. Faster heartbeat, tense muscles, etc. It is a reaction that gets us ready to flee or to fight. Do I pick up a stick when I see the dog is running at me or do I turn and try to escape. I remember one time when I was running in a rural area and a big dog came after me. As a child I had been bitten several times and as an adult I was afraid of them. At one point I realized that I was not going to out run the dog. So I stopped, picked up a few stones and turned and ran yelling at the dog like a crazy man. If ever a dog could show terror in their face, this one did and ran away yelping. Needless to say that my attitude toward dogs has changed.

But sometimes, when the situation is not so dramatic, one can find themselves in a state of chronic fear that might be better named anxiety. Anxiety is being afraid but not knowing exactly why. Sometimes it is not very black or white. What do I mean? Let us think of the child whose father is an alcoholic. He or she is never sure how he will arrive home. Will he be drunk and out of control? There is a constant uncertainty which can cause serious and lasting problems. Let us think of the person who lives with an abusive person whether it be verbal, physical or sexual. To live with that fear and to be unable to break free is the real tragedy. We can also think of the elderly person who no longer has family or friends, the spouse who has lost his or her partner after many, many years together. There is the fear of facing the future alone with the many worries. We can become afraid and anxious about many things.

At the heart of fear is the feeling of being alone and helpless. The little child who is afraid feels alone and runs to the embrace of mommy and daddy and finds comfort. “No, I am not alone,” she or he says. Many times we think of fear

as bad in the same way that we think of anger being bad. Both are emotions or reactions to situations. What we do with them makes them good or bad. If I am angry with someone because I think that they have offended me; if I go to that person and speak of my anger and try to resolve it, that experience of anger can be positive and can even bring me into a closer friendship with that person. But if I respond with revenge, then it is negative. If I don’t do anything, then it works like a cancer in me and gets in the way of my peace and tranquility.

We can also be afraid because if something is wrong in our lives, it might mean that something is wrong with me. It is so easy to be blind to my faults, failings and inappropriate ways of acting and thinking. To really look at myself demands a lot of courage, humility and strength. It means real and honest openness to God, what he says and points out to us, and to his grace which will lead me on the road I need to take.

The prophets, the saints, and other “holy people” were not immune to these things. They were really honest—not blind. They could pour out their soul to God; they let God know what was going on. They emptied their hearts before God in honesty and in faith. In doing so they left an opening for God to be their strength in the midst of their difficulties. They were so secure that God was with them and that God would never go back on his promises. At times, God would hit them between the eyes with what they were doing that was wrong, selfish, willful or unloving. He would point out to them what they needed to change. While at times it is difficult to hear and face, it will turn out for our good if we truly listen to God and do something about it.

All of us, sometimes alone or sometimes together, are confronted with things that cause us to be afraid or anxious. When fear comes our way let us not be embarrassed. Fear is part of our existence; even Jesus was afraid the night before he died. Fear is normal and it can be helpful. Sometimes fear can save us. When we experience fear our first tendency is to think that we are alone. Love and faith remind us that we are never alone. So, fear can be the beginning of wisdom; it can remind us of the truth that we are never alone and that we shouldn’t try to act alone. For the friend of Jesus, fear can be our friend. It can serve as an opportunity to turn to Christ and enter his loving embrace. Let us listen to the consoling words of Jesus in the Gospel as he reminds us how special we are to God and how much he cares for us even to knowing the number of hairs on our head whether they be many or few.

Let us be there for one another. Let us be the visible proof that we are not alone. Let us be supportive of one another when fear or anxiety comes our way. Blessed are we if we can go to one another, to those special people we call friends and, together with God and each other, face and overcome whatever is out there. In the end, there really is nothing to fear—only true freedom to be enjoyed. fr.ross@verizon.net