

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

(Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston)



524 Holley Street, St Albans, WV 25177 304-727-3033

www.stfranciswv.org parish@stfranciswv.org www.facebook.com/stfrancisofassisisaintal



JULY 27, 2025 SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

OUR MISSION

~In the spirit of Saint Francis, we, the church family, strive to discover Christ's peace in us and in each aspect of creation by welcoming and walking hand in hand with our brothers and sisters on our faith journey~



"IF GOD CAN WORK THROUGH ME. HE CAN WORK THROUGH ANYONE." - SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

A WARM WELCOME TO SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH!

To register as a new or returning member of the parish, please contact the parish office at 304-727-3033. The parish community will be indeed delighted to have you.

SUNDAY READINGS P. 1156 YEAR C

PERSISTENCE^{IN}PRAYER



28 Monday	29 Tuesday	30 Wednesday	31 Thursday	01 Friday	02 Saturday	03 Sunday
Ex 32: 15-24, 30-34 Mt 13: 31-35 (401)	Ex 33: 7-11; 34: 5b-9, 28 (402) Jn 11: 19-27 Sts. Martha, Mary & Lazarus	Ex 34: 29-35 Mt 13: 44-46 (403) St. Peter Chrysologus	Ex 40: 16-21, 34-38 Mt 13: 54-58 (405) St. Ignatius of Loyola	Lv 23: 1, 4-11, 15-16, 27, 34b-37 Mt 13: 54-58 (405) St. Alphonsus Liguori	Lv 25: 1, 8-17 Mt 14: 1-12 (406) St. Eusebius, St. Peter Julian Eymard	Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23 Col 3: 1-5, 9-11 Lk 12: 13-21 (114)

PARISH INFORMATION

Date	Mass Time	Mass Intention	Lector	Extraordinary Minister (s)	Altar Servers	Rosary Leader
SAT JULY 26	5:00 pm	Intentions of the people of the parish	Jacque Switzer	Midge Butler (X) Leslie Huffman (C) Helen Musrock (C)	Volunteers	Midge Butler
SUN JULY 27	11:00 am	Mario Mendez, Jr By The Family	Youth Group	Suzanne Farley (X) Mark Muchow (C) Paul Tabit (C)	Carlee Stone Nathan Serna Jonah White	Tom Williams
MON JULY 28	—	—	—	—	—	—
TUE JULY 29	6:00 pm	Bob Dilley By Mary and The Girls	Pat Romanosky	Midge Butler	—	—
WED JULY 30	8:15 am	Joey Palmer By Jack & Sarah Palmer	Tom Liberatore	Pat Tabor	—	—
THU JULY 31	8:15 am	Pat Howley By The Howley's	Helen Musrock	Lynn Fenimore	—	—
FRI AUG 01	6:00 pm	Nanette Martin By Mark & Gwen Muchow	Dawna Kessler	Suzanne Farley	—	—
SAT AUG 02	5:00 pm	Al Romanosky By Pat Romanosky	Fred Heindl	Leslie Huffman (X) Midge Butler (C) Helen Musrock (C)	Volunteers	Helen Musrock
SUN AUG 03	11:00 am	Intentions of the people of the parish	Shaun Lopez	Paul Niedbalski(X) Bill Tabor (C) John Carnell (C)	Ethan Knapp Mairin Knapp Reagan Buscher	Mark Muchow

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday

Rosary: 4:30 pm
Mass: 5:00 pm

Sunday

Rosary: 10:30 am
Mass: 11:00 am

Weekdays

Tue: 6:00 pm
Wed: 8:15 am
Thurs: 8:15 am
Fri: 6:00 pm

Adoration

Friday 5:00 pm

Confession

Saturday 4:00 pm

For rental of church facilities (parish center, gym, cafeteria), please contact:

Mary Nichols
304-727-9832

St Francis of Assisi Parish And School Staff

Father Sojan Xavier, Pastor..... (304) 435-4342 / sxavier@dwc.org
Parish Secretary, Liz Liberatore..... (304) 727-3033 / parish@stfranciswv.org
Gwen Muchow, Bookkeeper..... (304) 727-3033 / gwenbmuchow@stfranciswv.org
Nanette Martin, Music Director..... (304) 727-3033 / nmartin@stfranciswv.org
Sandi Hudson, Religion Director.....(304) 549-4009 / shudson@stfranciswv.org
Erin Sikora, Principal..... (304) 727-5690 / esikora@sfsww.com
Kelly Oxley, School Office Manager..... (304)727-5690 / koxley@sfsww.com
Paul Niedbalski, Knights of Columbus.....(304)545-5100 / ginooffice@aol.com
Fred Heindl, Property Manager.....(304)415-5942

Pastoral Availability

Father Sojan is available any time of day or night for spiritual guidance. If you or a family member is sick / homebound & require Communion or Sacrament of Anointing, contact him (304-435-4342) or the parish office.

Marriage Preparation

Engaged couples planning to marry at St. Francis should be practicing Catholics & are required to participate in a Marriage Preparation Program. 6 months notice is required. Contact the office to discuss date of marriage.

Order of Christian Initiation

Children ages 7-17& adults who have not been baptized or baptized but not confirmed go through a faith formation program before they are admitted to the sacraments.

Parish Office Hours Tues-Fri 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

“KNOCK AND KEEP KNOCKING”



The Persistence of Prayer

In a world that often moves too fast, where noise drowns out silence and headlines feed anxiety, the Word of God comes to us each Sunday as a quiet invitation—to pause, to listen, to re-center. The Scriptures are not ancient relics, but living words for modern hearts—words that confront us, comfort us, and call us deeper.

This week, as we enter the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, we are offered a gift: a renewed

vision of prayer—not as a formality or emergency measure, but as a steady rhythm of grace in a broken world. The readings do not ask us to escape the pain and complexity around us; rather, they show us how to stand in the gap with faith, to hold on with hope, and to speak to God with the persistence of love.

Abraham stands before God and pleads for mercy on behalf of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. It's a stunning moment of bold intercession. Abraham isn't afraid to question, to challenge, to *wrestle* with the heart of God. He doesn't shy away from the mess of the world; instead, he steps into it, offering his voice and his courage for the sake of others. He teaches us that prayer is not passive—it's an act of justice, mercy, and radical love. And God listens.

In our own day, surrounded by injustice, and suffering, we too might feel like Sodom is all around us. Violence, addiction, loneliness, political and racial divisions—it's easy to wonder if our prayers can really make a difference. But Abraham reminds us that one voice—your voice—can move the heart of God. In a culture quick to numb, blame, or disengage, persistent prayer is a revolutionary act.

In the Gospel, we see the disciples, observing Jesus at prayer, ask Him to teach them how to pray. And Jesus offers the Our Father. We are so used to it, we might forget how radical it is. We address God not as a distant deity, but as *Father*. We ask for the coming of God's Kingdom, for our daily bread, for forgiveness, and for strength in trial. These are humble requests rooted in trust and intimacy. Jesus reminds us that prayer is not about fancy and lengthy words but it's about deep relationship.

And Jesus gives us a parable: a man knocking at midnight for help. It's not a lesson in pestering, but in *persistence*. Jesus is clear: “Ask, and it will be given. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened.” This is not about getting everything we want. It's about growing in trust, humility, and dependence on our loving God.

We are called to pray persistently—in our homes, in our workplaces, in the quiet of the night and the chaos of the day. It means we don't close our eyes to the struggles of the world, but bring them into our conversation with God. We pray not just for comfort, but for transformation. We intercede for the suffering, the marginalized, the lost. We pray for our leaders, our communities, and yes—even our enemies.

As Paul reminds us in his letter to the Colossians, we have been buried with Christ in Baptism and raised with Him through faith. We do not face this world alone. We pray as people of resurrection—people who believe in a God who brings light out of darkness and hope out of despair.

Let us be those persistent knockers—those faithful seekers—those who lift our voices like Abraham, trust like Jesus, and live as people raised with Christ. And when we feel lost for words, may we return again and again to that powerful prayer: **Our Father, who art in heaven...**

Catechetical Corner

PRAYER FEELS DRY?

GOD MAY SEEM SILENT, BUT HE IS NEVER ABSENT



Have you ever sat down to pray and felt... nothing? No inspiration, no sense of God's presence, no words that seem to come from the heart? If so, you're not alone. This experience—often called **“dryness in prayer”**—happens to even the most faithful and devoted Christians.

In fact, many of the saints, people we look up to as spiritual giants, went through this very same struggle. Saint John of the Cross

wrote about a time in his life when he felt completely lost and distant from God—what he called the “dark night of the soul.” Even Saint Mother Teresa, who spent her life serving the poorest of the poor, went through years of feeling spiritually empty, even as she continued to pray and serve faithfully.

Dryness in prayer often shows up when we feel like our prayers aren't “working.” Maybe we're asking God for something and not seeing results. Maybe we feel emotionally flat, or we're just going through the motions. We might think, *“What's the point? Is God even listening?”*

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 2729, 2735–2737) teaches us that dryness in prayer can be a kind of spiritual test. It's not a sign that we're doing something wrong—it's a moment that calls us deeper. Sometimes, it's not about using the right words or “feeling” something when we pray. What really matters is our **openness to God's will**, our **humility**, and our **faith that God hears us—even in silence**.

It can also be a moment to check our hearts: Are we coming to God to get something we want? Or are we coming to be with Him, to seek His will above our own?

So how do we respond when prayer feels dry? The answer is simple but not always easy: **Don't give up. Keep praying. Stay faithful.** Just like in any relationship, there will be times of great joy and times of quiet endurance. Prayer is not always about emotions or results—it's about relationship and trust.

Jesus invites us to be **persistent** in prayer. He tells us to ask, seek, and knock—not because God needs convincing, but because *we* need to stay connected. The more we stay with God, even in silence, the more our hearts will slowly begin to align with His.

We need to keep showing up in prayer, even when we don't feel like it. Let's pray with honesty, humility, and trust. And let's remember: **God may seem silent, but He is never absent.**

A WORD OF APPRECIATION



We extend our sincere gratitude to all who contributed to the success of our recent Bible Camp. We are deeply thankful for the many hands and hearts that made it possible.

A special thank you to **Lourdes, our youth coordinator**, and her family, who went above and beyond in making arrangements and taking care of the food for the children. Their generosity in providing a car for the Sisters' travels, along with their tireless support, played a crucial role in

the smooth running of the event.



Our heartfelt thanks also go to **Shaun and Jennifer Lopez and their family**, who graciously provided accommodation and transportation for the Sisters. Your hospitality and willingness to serve did not go unnoticed and are deeply appreciated.

We thank **Tamara and her family**, as well as **her friend Valerie**, for their generosity in preparing meals for the Sisters and taking them out for dinner. May the Lord bless you abundantly for your kindness. We also appreciate **Sandy Williams**, the **Stone and Lopez** families for coming over to tidy up the house for the sis-

ters to stay. God bless all of you!

To the parents who sent their children to the program—thank you for your trust and for allowing them to be part of this beautiful experience.



NEWS AND UPDATES



JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE

The Jubilee Pilgrimage to Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral is tentatively scheduled for **Saturday, September 6, 2025**, beginning at **9:00 a.m.** We will meet at the **State Capitol** and walk together down the sidewalk along **Kanawha Boulevard** to the **Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral**. Activities will include **Adoration, Confession, and Mass**.

As part of the **Jubilee Year of Hope**, we invite all parishioners who are interested in joining the proposed pilgrimage to kindly sign up.

In order to organize this event smoothly, we kindly ask that all sign-ups be completed by August 27th. A sign-up sheet will be placed **at the back of the church** for your convenience.

Please note: The pilgrimage will proceed **only if we have at least 15 participants**. We look forward to this special journey of faith and fellowship during this grace-filled Jubilee Year!

Lourdes will get a quote for T-shirts for the event.....Sponsors are welcome!



Saints Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, July 29

Martha, Mary, and their brother Lazarus were evidently close friends of Jesus. He came to their home simply as a welcomed guest, rather than as one celebrating the conversion of a sinner like Zacchaeus or one unceremoniously received by a suspicious Pharisee.

The sisters felt free to call on Jesus at their brother's death. Martha's great glory is her simple and strong statement of faith in Jesus after her brother's death. No doubt Martha was an active sort of person. On one occasion, she prepares the meal for Jesus and possibly his fellow guests and forthrightly states the obvious: All hands should pitch in to help with the dinner. The Lord recognizes that Martha is "worried about many things," also noting that Mary, who has spent the preparation time at Jesus' feet listening to his words "has chosen the better part." John 12:1-8 describes Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet at Bethany, an act which he praised highly. Immediately after we are told that the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus "because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him." Lazarus was the one of whom the Jews said, "See how much he loved him." In their sight Jesus raised his friend Lazarus from the dead. Legends abound about the life of Lazarus after the death and resurrection of Jesus. He is supposed to have left a written account of what he saw in the next world before he was called back to life. Some say he followed Peter into Syria. Another story is that despite being put into a leaking boat by the Jews at Jaffa, he, his sisters, and others landed safely in Cyprus. There he died peacefully after serving as bishop for 30 years. (abridged from franciscanmedia.org)

Saint Eusebius of Vercelli, August 02



Born on the isle of Sardinia, he became a member of the Roman clergy, and is the first recorded bishop of Vercelli in Piedmont in northwest Italy. Eusebius was also the first to link the monastic life with that of the clergy, establishing a community of his diocesan clergy on the principle that the best way to sanctify his people was to have them see a clergy formed in solid virtue and living in community.

"He who trusts himself is lost. He who trusts God can do all things."

— St. Alphonsus Liguori



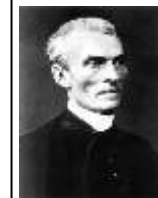
Saint Peter Chrysologus, July 30

St. Peter Chrysologus was a pivotal bishop who preserved the faith in his region of Italy in the fifth century. He was an adult convert to Christianity, then was ordained a deacon and priest before being raised to bishop of Ravenna in 433. He reformed and solidified the Church there with his preaching and by encouraging frequent reception of Communion. Many of his homilies, still intact, are brief because he didn't want to exhaust the attention of his listeners. He was known to have offered many works of mercy, and he attended to the people under his care with diligence. His title, "Chrysologus," means "golden-tongued" so we know that he had a great impact on those who heard him.



Saint Alphonsus Liguori, August 01

Alphonsus Liguori was born in 1696 near Naples, educated in philosophy, literature, & the arts. At 16 he was awarded doctorates of civil and canon law. At 18, he joined the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mercy, caring for the sick at the hospital for "incurables". He was ordained in 1726. In 1732, Alphonsus sought others called as he was, adopting a style of ministry to "mission among the people." So began the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, (Redemptorists). During a mission, a band of Redemptorists would come to an area to preach & conduct religious activities. St. Alphonsus was a brilliant, articulate, pragmatic preacher reaching ordinary people who had limited education and very real needs. Alphonsus appreciated how people expressed their realities through song. A gifted musician and composer, he wrote many popular hymns and taught them to the people in parish missions.



Saint Peter Julian Eymard, August 02

From an early age, Peter developed a profound devotion to the Blessed Mother and the Eucharist. He was ordained a diocesan priest in 1834, at the age of 23. He joined the Society of Mary and founded the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, a new congregation dedicated to Eucharistic adoration.

NEWS AND UPDATES



TEACHING OPPORTUNITY

Charleston Catholic High School is seeking a high school theology teacher for the 2025-2026 school year. The theology program forms students intellectually, morally and spiritually through Catholic teaching, striving to help students grow in faith by fostering gospel values within a religiously diverse school community. The candidate should be a practicing Catholic, have knowledge of Catholic teaching, hold at least a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field, and demonstrate a willingness to pursue certification as specified by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter

to colleen.hoyer@charlestoncatholic-crw.org.

If you are a new or returning member to Saint Francis of Assisi Parish please contact the parish office at 304-727-3033 to get registered.

The parish community welcomes you and are delighted to have you.



St. Francis Blessing Box is located at the corner of 6th Avenue and Park Street. Your donation is a gift to someone in need. A blue bin has been placed in the back of church to collect donated items. Items greatly needed are canned goods, noodles and toiletries

"Whatever you are, be a good one."

— Abraham Lincoln

GIFT ITEMS FOR SALE

Evelyn Benny has created a beautiful collection of handmade gift items.

Each item is available for \$10.00 each and portion of the sale will be used to support our school and to help individuals who are mentally challenged.

Evelyn will be at the parish picnic July 27th, with her pieces!

Your generosity can make a real difference-and bring a smile to someone's face.

Support the cause. Spread kindness. Make them smile.



Young Adults—We Need You!

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is forming a Young Adult Council to bring together faithful, passionate individuals (ages 18-39) from across the diocese who are ready to grow in faith, serve as leaders, and help spread the Gospel.

Our parish has been asked to submit 2-3 names of young adults who would be a good fit for this exciting new initiative. If you feel called-or know someone who might be-please contact the parish office at the earliest to express interest or for more information.

Let's build a community that brings young adults together from all corners of the diocese, from Chester to Bluefield and beyond!

Entrust. Engage. Evangelize.

-Uphold them in your prayers-

David DeLuca, Jay Dlugos, Suzanne Farley, Nona Fields, Jo Fletcher, Debbie Flinner, Liz Gadd, Barbara George, Alaina Rae Gilbert, Robin Gothard, Aubrie Hebb, Donna Hebb, Nancy Hillen, Diane Holley-Brown, Jane Howley, Max Huck, Kenny Huck, Virgil Huck, Bud Humphreys, Carmelina Kessler, Dawna Kessler, Tooter Kirk, Barbara Lambert, Larry Leroose, Madison Lopez, Susan Lopez, Sue Martin, Brent Marsteller, Mary McNeely, Joe McQuaide, Lillian Matheny, Kim McBurney, Mario Mendez, Susan Robinson, Diana Rossi, Patricia, Scarlett (child), Lillian Schilling, Michael Scott, Peggy Shelton, Matt Sowers, Becky Vannatter Smith, Joseph Swanson, Valerie Tabit, Pat Tabor, Colleen Ullmer, Joyce Weiskircher, Roberta Van Horn, Pat Vannatter, Robbie Vannatter, Barbara Yeager, Gordon Holbrook, Kraig Stutes, Allison Jones, Ralph Holland, Darlene Holland, Tracy McGrath, Nico Syre, Jason Zanatis

Immediate Prayer List:

Alaina Rae Gilbert	John Carnell	Mary Sanney
Rick Robinson	Josephine Fletcher	Michele Sturgeon
Terry DeLuca	Matt Sowers	Patty Young
Margaret McEvoy	Dave Lucas	Peggy Shelton
Anna Ng	Roy Burgess	Landen Chin
	Pearl Thompson	Carolyn Hanson

NEWS AND UPDATES

Sharing our Treasury

Listed below are collections for July 19 & 20, 2025

Collection for Church Operation..... \$2,703.00
 School.....75.00
 Diocese.....174.00
 Votive Candles.....61.00

Total.....\$3,013.00

Weekly Mass Attendance

Sat- 52 Sun- 119 TOTAL-171

Collections for Church Operations



Collections for Church Operations as of
 July 20, 2025

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH PICNIC

JULY 27TH
 MASS AT THE PARK
 WEATHER PERMITTED
 FOLLOWED BY THE
 PICNIC

**MEADOWOOD PARK
 TORNADO
 SHELTER 1**

**MEATS PROVIDED BY
 KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**
 FAMILIES A-L SIDES
 FAMILIES M-Z DESSERTS

*Don't forget your
 chairs! Feel free to
 bring lawn games or
 activities!*

EVANGELIZATION MEETING

The Evangelization meeting will be August 4th, 9 am at the home of Pat Tabor, 1209 Summit Circle, St. Albans.

For more information, contact Mary Sanney at 304-932-5674



The Catholic Sharing Appeal (CSA) is an opportunity for us to come together as one diocesan family to support the vital ministries and initiatives that strengthen our parishes and communities. Through your generosity, the CSA assists our parishes, shared ministries, Catholic education, and outreach efforts. Programs such as tuition assistance, food pantries, and Catholic Charities West Virginia benefit directly from CSA funds.

GOAL: \$21,500



Safe Environment Reporting Statement

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston maintains an Office of Safe Environment in accordance with the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. **To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:** The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing www.reportbishopabuse.org to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org. **To Report to Civil Authorities:** Contact your local law enforcement; numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. **To confidentially report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse,** contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families' Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. **To Report to Diocesan Authorities:** In addition to civil authorities, the diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. **To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese,** contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. Or you may call Rev. Don Higgs, 304.685.2367, the Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504, or Victims Assistance Coordinator Erin McFarland at 304.559.6742. In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the **EthicsPoint** platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "Accountability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected.