

# 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/stfrancisofassisisaintalbans



MARCH 29, 2026 PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

## 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 delighted to have you.

## READINGS P. 1042 (YEAR A)



# PASSION SUNDAY

30 Monday Is 42:1-7 John 12:1-11	31 Tuesday Is 49:1-6 Jn 13:21-33, 36-38	01 Wednesday Isaiah 50:4-9a Matthew 26:14-25	02 Thursday Ex 12:1-8, 11-14 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 Jn 13:1-15  <b>EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER</b>	3 Friday Is 52:13—53:12 Hb 4:14-16; 5:7-9 Jn 18:1—19:42  <b>GOOD FRIDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION</b>	04 Saturday Gen 1:1—2:2 Gen 22:1-18 Ex 14:15—15:1 Rom 6:3-11 Matt 28:1-10  <b>EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT OF EASTER</b>	05 Sunday Acts 10:34a, 37-43 Colossians 3:1-4 Jn 20:1-9  <b>THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD</b>
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# PARISH INFORMATION

Date	Mass Time	Mass Intention	Lector	Extraordinary Minister(s)	Altar Servers	Rosary Leader
SAT MAR 28	5:00 pm	Bertha DeLuca By Dave & Terry DeLuca	Jacque Switzer	Dave DeLuca (X) Leslie Huffman(C) Midge Butler (C)	Volunteers	Jacque Switzer
SUN MAR 29	11:00 am	Intentions of the people of the parish	Mark Muchow Tom Williams	Paul Niedbalski(X) Tom Liberatore(C) Bill Tabor (C)	Matt Matheny Fred Heindl Jack Palmer Mike Allen	Tom Williams
MON MAR 30	—	—	—	—	—	—
TUE MAR 31	6:00 pm	Mary Jane Gertz By Tony Gertz	Pat Romanosky	Midge Butler	—	—
WED APR 01	8:15 am	Rita M. Kirkwood By Tony Gertz	Tom Liberatore	Midge Butler	—	—
THU APR 02	8:00 am	In Memory of the Deceased Members of the Fletch Family By Jo Fletcher	Lisa D'Esposito	Lynn Fenimore	Hadley Heumann Jonah White Emmett Heumann	—
FRI APR 03	6:00 pm	—	Shaun Lopex  Helen Musrock	Midge Butler	Georgia Kail Diondrae Johnson Eliza Berry	—
SAT APR 04	8:00 pm	Marilyn Arose By Kim Keiffer Arose	Dawna Kessler Mark Muchow Jacque Switzer Tom Williams	Tom Liberatore(X) Midge Butler (C) Mark Muchow(C)	Lily Palmer Sadie Palmer Jonah White	—
SUN APR 05	11:00 am	Intentions of the people of the parish	Fred Heindl	Jennifer Lopez (X) Shaun Lopez C) Suzanne Farley(C)	Mighty Lopez Reed Wriston Miguel Matheus	Tamara Buel

### ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH AND SCHOOL STAFF

Father Sojan Xavier, Pastor..... (304) 435-4342 / sxavier@dwc.org  
 Liz Liberatore, Parish Secretary.....(304) 727-3033 / parish@stfranciswv.org  
 Gwen Muchow, Church Bookkeeper..... (304) 727-3033 / gwenbmuchow@stfranciswv.org  
 Angie Pugh, School Bookkeeper .....(304)807-5160/bookkeeper@stfranciswv.org  
 Sophia Chaskes Vecchio, Music Director.....(240)454-2749/sochaskes@gmail.com  
 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  
 Matthew Matheny, Knights of Columbus.....(304)545-8534/ mlmatheny1@gmail.com  
 Shaun Lopez, Pastoral Council President.....(681)439-0421 / shnlopez@gmail.com  
 Fred Heindl, Property Manager.....(304) 415-5942/wvheindls@gmail.com

#### 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**

#### NORMAL 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

Fri: 5:00 pm

##### Confession

Saturday 4:00 pm

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

**Mary Nichols**  
**304-727-9832**

# PASTOR'S NOTE & CATECHETICAL CORNER



We begin the Holy Week with the Palm/ Passion Sunday. And we begin this week with two very different scenes. At first, we see Jesus triumphantly entering Jerusalem as the crowds proclaim, “*Hosanna to the Son of David!*” They welcome Him as King. Yet, only days later, those same voices cry out, “*Crucify Him!*” How quickly our human hearts can turn.

In today’s Passion reading from the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 26:14-27:66) we encounter every kind of human response to Jesus—Judas who betrays Him, Peter who denies Him, and the crowd that turns against Him. Yet through it all, Jesus remains silent, patient, and full of love. He does not run from

suffering; He embraces the Cross—out of love for us. Not because we earned it, but because we needed it.

The Passion is not merely a story from long ago. It speaks to each of us today. Sometimes we are like Judas when we choose sin. Sometimes we are like Peter when we deny Christ by our actions. And sometimes we are like the crowd when we follow the world instead of truth. But Holy Week invites us not to remain in those moments.

As we walk with Jesus from the joy of Palm Sunday, through the sorrow of Good Friday, to the triumph of Easter morning, let us stay close to Him—in prayer, in sacrifice, and in love. May we stand by the Lord not only when life is joyful, but also at the foot of the Cross, trusting that His love will lead us to resurrection and new life.

## HOLY WEEK: ENTERING THE MYSTERY WE CELEBRATE



**Introduction:** We are about to enter the Holy Week and the Church invites us not just to “attend” ceremonies, but to enter deeply into the mystery of Jesus’ passion, death, and resurrection. The different days and rituals can seem complex, yet each one reveals

God’s love and our salvation in a beautiful and powerful way. This brief catechesis explains the main signs and celebrations of Holy Week so that we may participate with greater understanding and devotion.

**Why is this week called Holy Week?** For us Christians, this is the holiest week of the year because we remember and relive the final days of Jesus’ earthly life: the Last Supper, his passion, death, and resurrection. The Church invites us to more intense prayer, fasting, and participation in the liturgy, so that we can walk closely with the Lord in his saving work.



**Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday and the Passion readings:** We call the first day of the Holy Week, Palm Sunday and also Passion Sunday. We call it Palm Sunday because we recall Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when people welcomed him with palm branches and cries of “Hosanna.” It is also called Passion Sunday because, in the same Mass, we listen to the full Gospel of the Passion, from the Last Supper to the burial.

The Passion is proclaimed twice—on Passion Sunday and again on Good Friday—to help the whole community “stand with” Jesus in his suffering and death. Hearing the story in full prepares us first to enter Holy Week and then to stand spiritually at Calvary on Good Friday.



**Why did Jesus ride on a donkey?:** Some wonder why Jesus rode on a donkey. Jesus enters Jerusalem riding on a donkey to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah: the king comes “humble and riding on a donkey.”

This shows that he is a peaceful, humble Messiah, not a warrior king on a horse. He comes not to conquer by force, but to save through the humility of the cross.

**What is the Sacred Triduum: Three Holy Days:**

“Triduum” means “three days” and refers to one great celebration that stretches from the evening Mass of Holy Thursday through Good Friday to the Easter Vigil. These three days form a single mystery: Christ’s suffering, death, rest in the tomb, and glorious resurrection.



**Holy Thursday / Maundy Thursday and the washing of feet:** Holy Thursday celebrates the Last Supper, when Jesus gave us

the Holy Eucharist and instituted the priesthood. The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin *mandatum*, “commandment,” from Jesus’ words: “Love one another as I have loved you.” (Jn 13:34)



# CATECHETICAL CORNER



**The washing of the feet** makes that command concrete. Jesus, the Lord and Teacher, kneels to wash the feet of his disciples and says, “I have given you an example.” (Jn 15:12) By repeating this act, the Church reminds us that true Eucharistic worship always leads to humble service of our brothers and sisters.

**Why is the Eucharist taken to a place of repose?:** After the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, the consecrated Hosts are taken in procession to a place of repose, often called the Altar of Repose. There will be no Mass on Good Friday, so the Eucharist reserved there will be used for Communion on that day. This procession also invites us to “watch and pray” with Jesus in his agony, like in the Garden of Gethsemane. Many faithful remain in silent adoration, accompanying the Lord in his loneliness and sorrow.



**Why is Friday on which Jesus died called Good Friday? Why no Mass?:** We call this day “Good” because, through the terrible suffering and death of Jesus, God has brought about the greatest good: our salvation and reconciliation with Him. It is a day of fasting, silence, and deep reverence for the mystery of the cross.



**There is no Mass on Good Friday.** The Mass is the sacramental representation of the sacrifice of the cross, and on this day the Church simply stands before that sacrifice as it happened in history. Holy Communion is given from hosts consecrated on Holy Thursday to emphasize that we are at the foot of the cross, not at a festive Eucharistic banquet.

**Why the veneration of the Cross?** During the Good Friday liturgy, we venerate the cross because it is the instrument through which Christ redeemed the world. By kissing, touching, or kneeling before the cross, we are not adoring a piece of wood, but honoring Jesus whose love is revealed in his crucifixion. The cross, once a sign of shame, has become for us the “tree of life.” (...)



**What is the Easter Vigil?** The Easter Vigil, celebrated after nightfall on Holy Saturday, is the high point of the entire liturgical year. We begin in darkness, bless a new fire, and light the Paschal candle, which symbolizes the risen Christ, “light of the world.” In this liturgy the Church proclaims the great story of salvation, blesses water, baptizes new members, and renews our own baptismal promises. The Easter Vigil is where the Church most solemnly celebrates the Resurrection.



**What is the Exsultet?:** On the Easter Vigil, when the people reach the church in procession, the liturgy begins with a proclamation known as Exsultet. The Exsultet is the great Easter Proclamation sung at the beginning of the Vigil after the Paschal candle enters the dark church. It calls heaven and earth to rejoice, praising the night when Christ broke the prison-bars of death and rose victorious from the grave. It also beautifully explains the meaning of this holy night and of our redemption.



**Why is holy water blessed at the Vigil?:** At the Vigil, the priest blesses the baptismal water, often by lowering the Paschal candle into it. This water is used for baptisms and is also taken as holy water for the faithful. The blessing shows that, through the Resurrection, we are given new life in Christ, especially through baptism. The prayers recall creation, the Red Sea, and Christ’s death and rising, showing that water becomes a sign of our rebirth as children of God.

**Why so many readings at the Easter Vigil?:** The many readings at the Easter Vigil are not “extra,” but essential. They tell the whole history of salvation—from creation, through Abraham and Moses, through the prophets—leading up to Christ. By listening to this long story, we see that Jesus’ Resurrection is the climax of God’s loving plan for humanity. When the Gloria and the Alleluia return and the Gospel of the Resurrection is proclaimed, we understand it in the light of everything God has done.



**Why is the Easter Vigil called the “night of all nights”?:** This holy night is called the “night of all nights” because on it Christ passed from death to life, and in him all creation begins anew. Every Sunday and every sacrament flows from this mystery of the Resurrection. For this reason, the Vigil is the heart of the liturgical year and the greatest celebration of the Church.

**Why are statues covered during Holy Week?** In many places, statues and images are veiled in the last part of Lent, especially during Passiontide. The veils create a sense of emptiness and deprivation, helping us focus more intensely on Christ and his passion. When the veils are removed at Easter, the return of sacred images mirrors the joy and glory of the Resurrection.

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**Easter Egg:** The Easter egg is a symbol of new life and resurrection in the celebration of Easter. For Christians, it represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ—just as a chick breaks out of the egg, Jesus rose from the tomb and brought new life to the world. The egg also reflects the theme of renewal in spring, and over time it became a joyful tradition that reminds people of hope, new beginnings, and the victory of life over death.

**Easter Egg hunt,** in the same spirit, turns this symbol into a playful search, echoing the women and disciples who went looking for Jesus and discovered the empty tomb, and inviting children and families today to “seek and find” the good news of risen life and joy.

**Conclusion:** Holy Week is not just a series of ceremonies to get through, but a living encounter with Jesus who loved us “to the end.” Each day and every symbol—palms, water, fire, silence, the cross, the empty tomb—helps us enter more deeply into his suffering, death, and resurrection. By understanding the meaning of these celebrations and participating with faith and love, we allow the Lord to renew our hearts and our parish. May this Holy Week be a time of grace for all, so that, passing with Christ from death to life, we may share more fully in the joy of Easter.

# EASTER FLOWERS

## In Memory Of:

- ◆ Carl L. Fletcher — by Josephine and family
- ◆ Sam & Marilyn Arose — by Kim Keiffer
- ◆ Melton–Quinlan families — by Mike & Jan Quinlan
- ◆ Eileen Orland — by Tom & Kim Williams
- ◆ Michael & Bertha DeLuca, Fred & Ruth Barnhill — by David & Terry DeLuca
- ◆ Joe & Faye Bohnert — by Marti Lucas
- ◆ George, Teddy & Tim Gabbert — by family
- ◆ Loretta J. Duran — by Paul Duran
- ◆ Peduzzi and Ramella families — by Nilda Ramella
- ◆ Al Romanosky and the Dumas and Romanosky families — by Pat Romanosky
- ◆ Louis & Norma Paulin, Bill, Betty & Mark Heindl — by Fred & Jean Ann
- ◆ Kelly Libertore — by Tom & Liz Libertore
- ◆ Mary Jo Hannah — by Bobbi Hannah
- ◆ Bob Dilley, Nina & Paul Groh, and the Dilley family — by Mary Dilley
- ◆ William S. White — by Vivian & Sherman White
- ◆ Frank & Josephine LeDonne, deceased members of the LeDonne and Kovach families
- ◆ John Hebb II & Margie Cecil Broom — by Donna Hebb
- ◆ All the lost souls — by Joe & Tracy McGrath
- ◆ Bill & Jo Taylor and Rudy & Lou Gruse — by family
- ◆ Anne & King Philips and Joan & Ralph Muchow — by Mark & Gwen Muchow
- ◆ Dennis Espinoza-Matheus — by Maria Espinoza-Matheus
- ◆ Sam & Angie LeRose and Francis & Margie Hoh — by Mike & Cay Hoh
- ◆ Rogers and Vannatter families — by Howard & Peggy Rogers
- ◆ Roger Randolph — by family
- ◆ Ray & Helen Rogers — by Dave, John, and family
- ◆ Matthew Tabor — by Bill & Pat Tabor



### EVANGELIZATION MEETING

The Evangelization committee will meet Monday, April 6th at the home of Mary Sanney. Mary's address is 2126 Lincoln Ave, St. Albans. For more information call Mary Sanney at 304.932.5674.



### Knights Serve at the Altar on Palm Sunday

We appreciate their exemplary service and dedication.

**If you would like to join the Knights of Columbus, please contact Matt Matheny at 304-545-8534.**

# NEWS AND UPDATES



Thank you to Tamara Buel's ballet dancers for the beautiful performance before Mass!



Heartfelt thanks Jordan Ferrel , Kelli Hope, Eriel Lauffer, Kelley Oxley, Sarah Palmer, Laura Smith, Megan Smith, Natalie Swartz, Dina Wyrick who organized the Ceili Dinner, and to the parents and well-wishers who joined us for this wonderful event. Your support and love for our school mean the world to us!



Knights – Eager learners in the service of the Altar

# NEWS AND UPDATES

## BLESSING OF HOMES

It is a tradition in the Catholic Church for the pastor to bless the homes of parishioners. If you wish to have your home blessed, Father will be available during the Lenten and Easter seasons. Please contact the parish office and provide your mobile number and address.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### HOLY THURSDAY — APRIL 2

6:00 PM — Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper - Adoration after the Mass

### GOOD FRIDAY — APRIL 3

5:30 PM — Stations of the Cross  
6:00 PM — Celebration of the Lord's Passion

### EASTER VIGIL — APRIL 4 AT 8:00 PM

### EASTER SUNDAY — APRIL 5 AT 11:00 AM

## BAKE SALE

Saturday, March 28  
before & after Mass

Sunday, March 29  
before & after Mass

Delicious  
homemade baked  
goods for sale in the  
school cafeteria



The 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 at the back of the church to collect donated items. Items most needed include canned goods, noodles, peanut butter, jelly, bread, hats, scarves, gloves, and soups

## -Uphold them in your prayers-

David DeLuca, Jay Dlugos, Suzanne Farley, Nona Fields, Jo Fletcher, Debbie Flinger, Liz Gadd, Barbara George, Robin Gothard, Aubrie Hebb, Donna Hebb, Nancy Hillen, Diane Holley-Brown, Jane Howley, Max Huck, Kenny Huck, Virgil Huck, Carmelina Kessler, Dawna Kessler, Tooter Kirk, Barbara Lambert, Larry Lerose, Madison Lopez, Susan Lopez, Sue Martin, Brent Marstellar, 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, Alaina Rae Gilbert, Tracy McGrath, Nico Sayre, Pearl Thompson, Ralph Holland, John Hebb III, Jan Quinlan, Kate Lichtenfels, Darlene Holland, Ty Laughery

## IMMEDIATE PRAYER NEEDS:

Carolyn Hanson	John Carnell	Patty Young
Rick Mullins	Josephine Fletcher	Peggy Shelton
Rick Robinson	Matt Sowers	Allison Grinstead
Terry DeLuca	Dave Lucas	Brody Fulk
Margaret McEvoy	Landen Chin	Pam Burton White
Anna Ng	Michele Sturgeon	Brandi Authur



If you have any meetings or important information you would like included in the bulletin, please email it to: [parish@stfranciswv.org](mailto:parish@stfranciswv.org) by Wednesday at noon to be printed in that weeks bulletin. Thank you

# NEWS AND UPDATES

## SHARING OUR TREASURE

Listed below are collections for  
March 21 & 22, 2026

Collection for Church Operation.....\$3,474  
School.....\$0  
Diocese.....\$30  
Votive Candles.....\$116

Total..... \$3,620.00

**Weekly Mass Attendance**  
Sat – 67 Sun – 128 Total—195

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS—LIVE

5.30 pm for Parishioners



### COLLECTIONS FOR CHURCH OPERATIONS

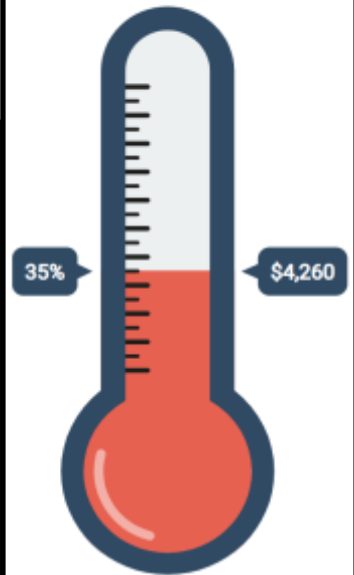


Collections for Church Operations as of  
March 22, 2026



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.

GOAL: \$12,100



## SHARE YOUR TREASURE

The Catholic Church emphasizes the importance of giving from the heart and encourages individuals to give according to their ability. Your donation, no matter how large or small, is significant to our Church. A QR code has been created for you as an option vs weekly envelopes for our parishioners and visitors.



### 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](http://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](http://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](http://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.