



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH DUNEDIN, FL

Welcome-Come Worship with Us

Our parish is a member of the Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States.

We are called to be a sign of God's unconditional love, and joyfully,
we open our doors and hearts to all who are seeking a spiritual home.

We are truly inclusive. A different way to be Catholic!

Mass is held on Sunday at 11:00 am

Message from Father Bob:

Imagine if!! Walking my dog, ToySan, in the morning gives me time to reflect and ponder. ToySan tends to translate "a walk to do business" into a "venture" where every third step or so demands a thorough sniff of whatever. West Highland Terriers (Westies) are full of *attitude*! Add his age, 13, and the old geezer feels everything evolves around him. (Well, maybe.)

So, where was I, oh yes, imagining what might be.

And why not since this is Advent and we are imagining and preparing for the birth of Jesus. Well imagine what we might be doing were we *really* expecting Jesus to miraculously come upon us! Boy would we be preparing, right?! Our whole family would be excited and united in readiness to welcome Our Savior. And that extends to our parish we attend. And then, I imagine, we would be greeting everyone in our communities with a wondrous sense of excitement and kindness that would seem to flow all over. Imagine what our Country would be like with that collective sense of, well, call it Love and Expectation for a new happiness beyond anything we know. At the end of the walk, reality sets back in and I look at what devastation this pandemic has created: mental health situations, lost jobs, homes, businesses - - - and even hope. And sickness and death unlike anything we have seen before in our lifetimes. And then I look at the inability of our government to come to the aid of so many. We have the FEMA Agency that provides aid and assistance in natural disasters. Where is the aid and assistance for this Pandemic disaster, I wonder? What happened to the old spirit of "All for One and One For All"; all helping to promote the Greater Good?

So I continue to imagine; to imagine what would Jesus do if he came in person today? I just imagine.

Father Bob





PRAYER TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, did prepare a worthy dwelling place for your Son, we beseech you that, as by the foreseen death of this, Your Son, You did preserve Her from all stain, so too You would permit us, purified through Her intercession, to come unto You. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Immaculate Conception---Advent---Christmas

The first 24 days of December fall during Advent and are represented by the color purple. This is a time of preparation as we prepare for the coming of the Christ child. It is a season of waiting and longing. The remaining days of December mark the beginning of the Christmas season represented by white or gold— a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

The Gospel reading for December 6th is from St. Mark; December 13th is from St. John; and December 20th and 27th are from St. Luke

December 6 th Second Sunday of Advent	The Gospel is about John the Baptist appearing in the desert proclaiming a repentance for the forgiveness of sins
December 13 th Third Sunday of Advent	The crowds question St. John the Baptist asking him who he is and why he baptizes
December 20 th Fourth Sunday of Advent	This Gospel recounts the story of the Angel Gabriel being sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth to a virgin named Mary
December 27 th Holy Family	This Gospel recounts the prophecy of Simeon



Mass has been suspended for the time being at Regency Oaks St. Francis Extension and at St. Roch due to the surge of Coronavirus!

Mass will continue to be livestreamed at 11:00 on Sundays at St. Francis, Dunedin

You can view live via Facebook: <https://www.Facebook.com/ReverendRobertSwick> OR

Go to our website <https://saintfrancisdunedin.org/> OR

You can access it on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/USBsDB9CB3fwHoS35VbFGKAw/>

The website and YouTube will be available on Sunday afternoons.

Those attending Mass are reminded:

Masks are requested but not mandatory + Social distance is required

Sign of Peace-Wave or put hand in prayer position and say “Ohio” (Japanese for Hello)

No collection + Donations may be left when leaving Mass

Receive the Holy Eucharist from Father Bob for use in your home during live streamed Mass!



Pyx containing the Consecrated hosts

Those who have been participating in Mass via live streaming miss out on the true Source and Summit: the Holy Eucharist. These radical times of pandemic living demand radical adjustments to our way of worship. Since you can't come to the Holy Eucharist, Jesus Christ, in the form of the Consecrated Host is prepared to come to you in one of three ways:

1. Father Bob will personally deliver the Holy Eucharist to those living in the Dunedin area. Personal care protocols will be adhered to.
2. You may come to the church right after Mass (12:00-12:15pm) to receive a Pyx containing Consecrated Hosts.
3. For those living at a distance, Consecrated Hosts will be secured in Pyxis and mailed to you! Contact Father Bob to provide your address.

Consecrated Hosts will be provided for each Baptized family member to virtually participate during Mass. Participate FULLY in Mass while live streaming!
NOTE: Fr. Bob will provide proper catechesis to assure full worship, handling and placement of The Body of Christ is maintained at all times.

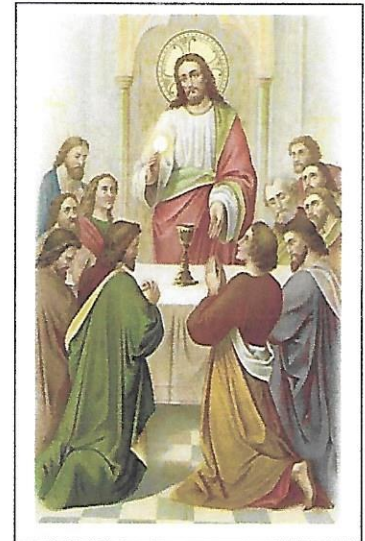


Can't attend Mass?

Even if we cannot be in attendance at Mass, we can still celebrate a Spiritual Communion and watch mass online. "We the people" are the church!

Prayer for Spiritual Communion during COVID 19 Crisis

My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there and united myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen



PRAYER
Requests

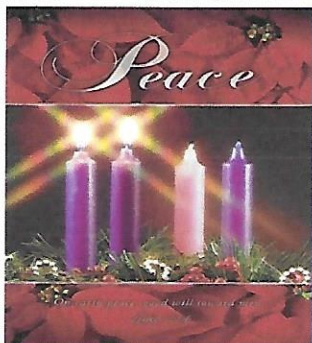
Please send your prayer intentions to: crenneckar@gmail.com by December 23, 2020 to be published in the December Bulletin. Let us all share prayers for one another.

Lord please hear my prayer

**Fran and Bill, Maryellen and Manny, Caroline, Yvonne and Jose all from St. Francis
Ellen and Henry, Johanna and Walter, Annette and Bob from Regency Oaks St. Francis Extension
Elsie, Mary, Lula and Peter from St. Roch
Cindy Harris for her continued recovery!**

For our country as we strive for unity

Advent began Sunday, November 29—Celebrating Advent in December



The light of the Advent candles break through the darkness, reminding us of the Light of Christ, that we anticipate during this holy Advent season. The light of the candles invite us to quiet ourselves during this busy time and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. We are called to welcome the light of Christ into our lives. The four candles, three purple and one pink, mark the Sundays of Advent before Christmas. The purple candles are reminders that this should be a time of prayer and sacrifice to prepare us for the second coming of Christ. The pink candle is lit on the third Sunday to rejoice Christ's coming is near. The lighting of this candle shows that the light has won out over darkness...three candles lit vs. the one that is unlit.

Various meanings have been assigned to the four candles. One is that each candle represents 4000 years, the Biblical time between Adam and Eve and the coming of Christ. In another interpretation, the first candle represent the patriarchs, the second the prophets, the third reminds us of John the Baptist, and the fourth of Mary, the mother of Jesus. A fifth white candle in the center represents Christ. It is lit on Christmas Day as a remembrance of Christ coming into the world.

November 29, 2020

1st Candle-(purple) The Prophecy Candle or Candle of Hope

December 6, 2020

2nd Candle-(purple) The Bethlehem Candle or the Candle of Preparation

December 13, 2020

3rd Candle-(pink) The Shepherd Candle or the Candle of Joy

December 20, 2020

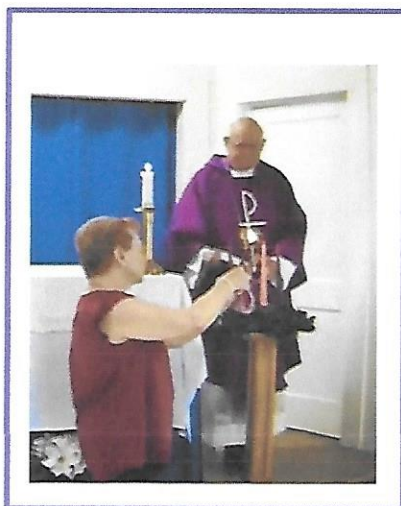
4th Candle-(purple) The Angel Candle or the Candle of Love

December 25, 2020

5th Candle-(white) "Christ Candle"

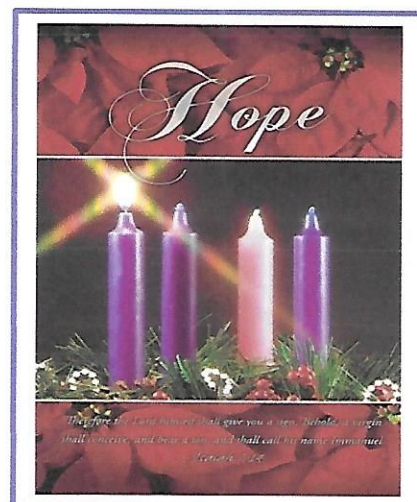
The Advent wreath signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul and the everlasting life we find in Christ!

Mass on November 29th—First Sunday of Advent



Candle of Hope

Marilyn Burton, Lay Leader, lights the first Advent Candle, the Candle of Hope, while Father Bob watches.



Saint Francis of Assisi and the First Nativity Scene

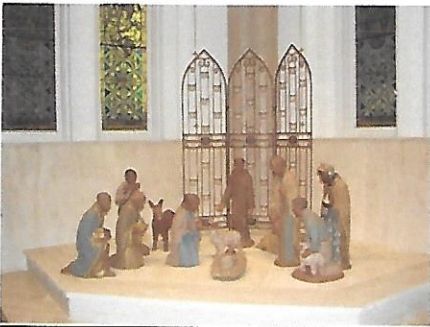


St. Francis of Assisi had a special devotion to the Child Jesus and is credited with creating the **first nativity scene on Christmas Eve of the year 1223**. It is believed that St. Francis was inspired by the idea after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and visiting the humble stable in a Bethlehem cave. This deepened his devotion to the Child Jesus, who was born into poverty, humility, and simplicity. Francis founded his new religious Order to imitate these very virtues. The only historical account we have of Francis nativity scene comes from "*The Life of St. Francis of Assisi*" by St. Bonaventure, a Franciscan monk who was born five years before Francis death.

According to St. Bonaventure, St. Francis received permission from Pope Honorius III to set up a manger with hay and two live animals—an ox and an ass—in a cave in the Italian village of Greccio. He invited the villagers to come gaze upon the scene while he preached about “the babe of Bethlehem.” Francis was so overcome by emotion that he couldn’t say “Jesus.” St. Francis’ recreation was so popular that soon every church in Italy created its own nativity scene. The devotion spread throughout the world. The Nativity is a historic Catholic tradition and a tool for meditation on the humility, simplicity, and poverty of Christ that he took on, from the moment of his Incarnation. Today, Nativity scenes are in churches and homes of all denominations

Nativities from Around the World

The Hospital Sisters of Saint Francis sponsor a Nativity Festival every year at the Chiara Center at the Saint Francis Church in Springfield, Illinois. The 14th Festival this year was presented via Zoom. Nativities collected from all over the world are loaned to the Sisters for the Festival and there are more than 100 on display. The Nativities represent many cultures and are made from a variety of fabrics and materials, each unique in their design and interpretation. Pictured below are a few samples of the Nativities. Unfortunately the countries and stories are not available for each picture to be printed here.



Full size Nativity inside Sanctuary
Saint Francis Church, Springfield, IL





Saint Francis of Assisi Old Catholic Church is celebrating Advent with “random acts of kindness!”



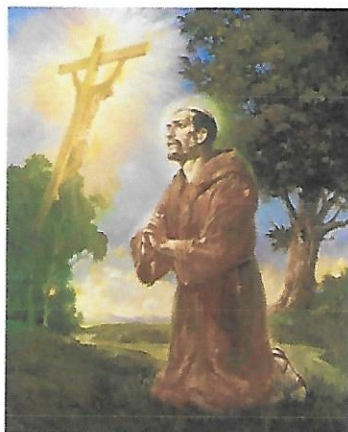
"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40, 45, NIV)

Parishioners are invited to perform “random acts of kindness” during this Advent Season...no act is too small, nor unimportant! Provide an item for Toys for Tots, send a card to a patient at a nursing home or a veteran at a VA Hospital for Christmas, give to a food bank, pay it forward at a drive-thru.

Give a smile, a compliment, an encouraging word to a stranger.

We know the parishioners of the “little Church that can” perform “random acts of kindness” on a daily basis. We would love to compile a summary of those acts performed during Advent that we will print in the January Bulletin. You can send your “act of kindness” to Cheryl Renneckar at: creneckar@gmail.com anytime during December to be published in January. We will list your name or you can stipulate that you want to be anonymous but list your random act...that is your choice. So far, here are “random acts of kindness” already taking place:

- \$100.00 to TOCCUSA for the Bishop’s Relief Appeal
- \$415.00 in food to Dunedin Cares
- \$472.00 in food and cleaning supplies from Bon Appetit (Peter Kreuziger) to Dunedin Cares
- \$200.00 to Veterans Funeral Care for Operation Toy Soldier
- Thirty (30) bicycles donated by Peter Kreuziger/Bon Appetit to Operation Toy Soldier at Veterans Funeral Care and to Toys for Tots, both in Clearwater.
- Candy Christensen-Barker adopted 4 children, age 2, 4, 6, and 12 through the Mattie Williams Family Neighborhood Center in Safety Harbor. She gets to buy toys!
- More to follow!



Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console
To be understood, as to understand
To be loved, as to love
For it is in giving that we receive
And it is in pardoning that we are pardoned
And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life
Amen

Community Outreach and Involvement



Clearwater Police Department Honors Father Bob

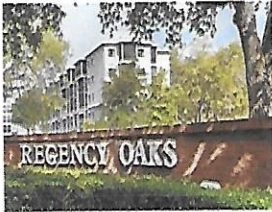
The Clearwater Police Department honored those who volunteer for the department. On November 28, 2020

Father Bob was recognized for 15 years of service.

L-R: Clearwater Chief of Police, Dan Slaughter ,
Fr. Bob, and Sgt. Sean Hailey

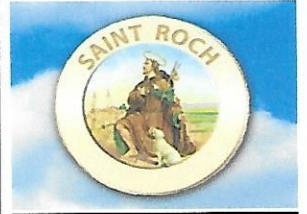
Father Bob “serves” the community in so many ways!

Saint Francis Extension at Regency Oaks and St. Roch Old Catholic Church at Rocky Creek Village



Mass Suspended!

Due to the increase in the cases of coronavirus in Florida,
Mass has been temporarily suspended at:
Saint Francis Extension at Regency Oaks and
The Chapel at St. Roch Old Catholic Church
Please keep the members of Regency Oaks and St. Roch
in your prayers!



Community Membership

The Interfaith Ministry Group

Father Bob participates in this group which meets on the third Wednesday of the month at a local restaurant in Dunedin. Standing invitations are held by ministers of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, First Presbyterian Church, Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church, First United Methodist Church, St. Mark Lutheran Church and, our very own, St. Francis of Assisi Old Catholic Church.

Our parish is also a member of local faith and community organizations:



**St. Francis Old
Catholic Church
Dunedin, FL**



**Dunedin Council
of Organizations**



**Downtown Dunedin
Merchants Association**

**Saint Francis of Assisi Old Catholic Church is a member of
Province of the United States
TOCCUSA**

Appreciation

The Parish of Saint Francis of Assisi Old Catholic Church expresses our gratitude and appreciation to Joi Lenoce for her service and dedication as Parish Lay Leader.

Our prayers are with you and your family!
We welcome Marilyn Burton who has graciously assumed the responsibility and position as our new Lay Leader!

Saint Francis Church Council

Rev. Father Robert Swick-Clergy
fr_bob@priest.com

Marilyn Burton-Parish Lay Leader
Mfburton1@yahoo.com

Candy Christensen-Barker-Treasurer
Gator80girl@yahoo.com

Johanna Guzik-Regency Oaks
Johannag.9@gmail.com

Marc Norton-Acolyte
m.norton@tampabayveteransalliance.org

Peter Kreuziger
pkreuziger@bonappetitgroup.com



Trea\$urer Report for December From Candy Christensen-Barker, Treasurer

Since my November report, we received a couple of large donations from church members that will help us make needed contributions to local charities for Christmas. We so appreciate the generosity of our parishioners!

As a reminder, we offer several ways you can donate in a safe and secure way.

* Send a personal check, payable to St. Francis of Assisi to the address below.

* If you bank online, create a recurring account for St. Francis of Assisi to have a check mailed on a certain day.

* Visit the St. Francis of Assisi website at saintfrancisdunedin.org and make a one-time donation for the month or a set-up a monthly recurring donation using PayPal or a credit card.

*Treasurer, Candy Christensen can walk you through setting up an account. Please contact her at 727-638-4393 or gator80girl@yahoo.com

We are so very grateful for every single donation and pray that support for our little church continues into the New Year. In the meantime, please celebrate safely and have a blessed and joyful Christmas season!

Blessings,
Candy Christensen-Barker, Treasurer, St. Francis of Assisi

Stay in Touch with your Parish

Receive Homilies and Intercessory Prayers:

Homilies and Intercessory Prayers are emailed, after Sunday Mass, to a confidential list of those requesting.

If you or a friend would like to receive this information, please contact: rbsemperfi@gmail.com

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