Servicio de Penitencia de Adviento (Confesiones) 2025

lunes 15 de diciembre

6:30pm hasta terminar

en la iglesia

Annual Advent Penance Service

As we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ at Christmas, the Church invites us to enter this season with a spirit of renewal, hope, and readiness. One of the most meaningful ways to do this is by participating in our Advent Penance Service.

Reconciliation is not simply about acknowledging our shortcomings—it is an encounter with God's mercy. Advent reminds us that Christ comes to bring light into our darkness, peace into our unrest, and healing into the places where we need it most. By coming together for a communal celebration of God's forgiveness, we open ourselves to the grace that helps us begin anew.

The Advent Penance Service gives each of us a quiet, prayerful opportunity to reflect, to let go of what weighs us down, and to receive the sacrament of Confession in a supportive parish setting. It is a beautiful way to clear room in our hearts so that we may welcome the Lord with joy when Christmas arrives.

I encourage you to join us. Let this be a moment of grace for you and your family—a chance to step away from the busyness of the season and experience the peace that only Christ can bring.

Monday, December 15th 6:30 pm

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church
2000 E. Elizabethtown Road Lumberton, NC 28358

ST FRANCIS DE SALES CATHOLIC PARISH OF LUMBERTON

Address (Dirección)
2000 East Elizabethtown Rd
(PO Box 2249)
Lumberton, NC 28358

Sunday Masses
(in english)
Saturdays 5:00pm
and Sundays 10:30am

Misas los domingos
(en español)
7:20am
y 12:30pm

Office Hours

Tuesday through Friday

Horarios de Oficina
martes a viernes

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

closed
(cerrado)
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm

Website (sitio web): https://www.sfds-nc.org/
Office (oficina): 910-739-4723
Email (correo electrónico): office@sfds-nc.org
Fax: 910-739-5443

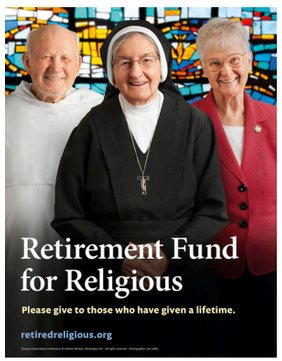
In Need of Prayer/En necesidad de oración: David & Rhonda Martin, Sandra Rodríguez, Dr. Jerry Devine, Renete Cortez, Lupita Flores Castellano, Fabien, Janet Hester, Joseph & Shelby Young, Cathy Cartrette, Doris Schneider, Doris Warwick, Carolyn Wilkerson, Michelle & James White, Joan Van Huesen, David Rich, Noelia Powell, Joel Rivera, Kathy Geibert, Mary Lee Wadrose, Juanita Mishoe, Ruth Keen, Sr Marta Castrejon Flores, Annette Dent, Neal Frazier, Victor Dorais, Andrea Emilia Bernabey, The Dana Family, Rosario Reantaso, baby Elizabeth, Allie Rogers, Lou Rastelli, the Bowen & Fisher Family, Michael Charkey, Marion Sherman, Patricia Norton & Jimmy and Marie Davis

Sick and Homebound
Enfermos y confinados en casa:
Lydia Yarborough, Howard Canady, Josette Terry, Gladys Ortiz, Peggy Malinsky, Lorraine Sinclair, Tom Jacoby, Jan Henderson, Mikey Gaugh and Ken Cross

Nursing Homes
Residencias de Ancianos: Mary Hammonds and Therese Morel at Wesley Pines (Lumberton), Elisabeth Oxendine at Carrolton Nursing Home (Fayetteville)

Recently Deceased
Recientemente fallecidos:
Nellie O'Neal Sampson Canady (11/7/2025)
Guadalupe Musgrove (11/18/2025)

*Please notify the office if there is someone you would like us to add to our prayer list. *
Por favor notifique a la oficina si hay alguien que le gustaría que agreguemos a nuestra lista de oración.



Today's Second Collection is to support the Retirement Fund for Religious
They gave their lives in service—now they need your help. For decades, women and men religious have cared for others, teaching, praying, and serving those in need. Many now face retirement without sufficient savings. Your support ensures they receive the care and dignity they deserve. Let us now offer them the dignity they have so selflessly granted to others. Your generosity today is not just a donation—it's a way of thanking them for their lifelong service. Please give to the Retirement Fund for Religious.

La segunda colecta de hoy es para apoyar el Fondo de Jubilación para Religiosos
Dieron su vida al servicio de los demás; ahora necesitan tu ayuda. Durante décadas, religiosas y religiosos han cuidado de los demás, enseñando, rezando y sirviendo a quienes lo necesitaban. Muchos se enfrentan ahora a la jubilación sin suficientes ahorros. Tu apoyo garantiza que reciban la atención y la dignidad que merecen. Permítenos ofrecerles ahora la dignidad que tan desinteresadamente han brindado a los demás. Tu generosidad de hoy no es solo una donación, sino una forma de agradecerles su servicio de toda la vida. Por favor, dona al Fondo de Jubilación para Religiosos.

Second Sunday of Advent (December 7, 2025)

This week's reflection

We have just heard Isaiah announce to us that God will raise up a Messiah from the remnants of Jesse's clan. The Spirit of God will give him all the gifts he needs to accomplish his mission. Justice and faithfulness will characterize his way of living. His concern will be for what is in peoples' hearts, not for what they say or do. He will stand as a signal for all to see and follow.
John the Baptist enters history to prepare the way for the Messiah. We hear his familiar cry: "Reform your lives! The kingdom of God is at hand." John's baptism was to be a sign of **life-long** willingness to reform - to change whatever is needed in order to be open to the many ways the Lord will come.
John's anger at the Pharisees who approached him to be baptized gives us reason to look into our own hearts. What evidence do we give each day that we are trying to repent - to change? We can't afford to tell ourselves: I've been a faithful member of a faith community. I've spent years in ministry. That's sign enough. Is it? The important question is: Am I open to changing any aspect of my life that may still get in the way of Jesus' living in me more fully?
St. Paul offers us a place to look - the way we live in community. He tells us: "Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God." We know how Christ has welcomed us with all our imperfections, and he has called us his brothers and sisters. Paul tells us that, when we are open to welcoming one another in that way, the God of steadfastness and encouragement will help us to live in harmony with one another, so that together we may glorify God our Father with one voice.
The Baptist reminds us that "every tree that is not fruitful will be cut down and thrown into the fire." The fruitfulness of our lives depends on our continuing willingness to change attitudes and behaviors that do not reflect fully the love of God.
As we continue our Advent preparation, may each of us be open to the grace of continual repentance so that the Lord can come and live in us more fully.
God be praised!

www.oblates.org

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP OUR CAMPUS SAFE.

NECESITAMOS TU AYUDA PARA MANTENER NUESTRO CAMPUS SEGURO.

In response to the Diocese's request to increase security on all church campuses, Chris Germaine is starting a Safety & Security Ministry. If you are interested in participating, please fill out the application (located near the church entrances) & turn it in to Chris or the office.

En respuesta a la solicitud de la Diócesis de aumentar la seguridad en todos los recintos de la iglesia, Chris Germaine está creando un Ministerio de Seguridad. Si le interesa participar, complete la aplicación (que encontrará cerca de las entradas de la iglesia) y entréguela a Chris o a la oficina.

Segundo Domingo de Adviento (7 de diciembre de 2025)

Reflexión de esta semana

Acabamos de escuchar a Isaías anunciar que Dios levantará un Mesías de entre los remanentes del clan de Jesé. El Espíritu de Dios le otorgará todos los dones necesarios para cumplir su misión. La justicia y la fidelidad caracterizarán su forma de vida. Su preocupación será por lo que hay en el corazón de las personas, no por lo que dicen o hacen. Será una señal para que todos la vean y la sigan.
Juan el Bautista entra en la historia para preparar el camino para el Mesías. Escuchamos su grito familiar: "¡Reformen sus vidas! El reino de Dios está cerca". El bautismo de Juan debía ser una señal de su disposición permanente a la reforma, a cambiar lo que fuera necesario para estar abiertos a las muchas maneras en que el Señor vendrá.
La ira de Juan hacia los fariseos que se acercaron a él para ser bautizados nos da motivos para examinar nuestro propio corazón. ¿Qué evidencia damos cada día de que estamos tratando de arrepentirnos, de cambiar? No podemos permitirnos decirnos: He sido un miembro fiel de una comunidad de fe. He dedicado años al ministerio. Esa es señal suficiente. ¿Lo es? La pregunta importante es: ¿Estoy dispuesto a cambiar cualquier aspecto de mi vida que aún pueda obstaculizar que Jesús viva más plenamente en mí?
San Pablo nos ofrece un punto de vista: nuestra forma de vivir en comunidad. Nos dice: «Acérquense unos a otros, como Cristo los acogió para gloria de Dios». Sabemos cómo Cristo nos acogió con todas nuestras imperfecciones y nos llamó sus hermanos. Pablo nos dice que, cuando estamos dispuestos a acogernos de esa manera, el Dios de la constancia y el aliento nos ayudará a vivir en armonía unos con otros, para que juntos glorifiquemos a Dios nuestro Padre con una sola voz.
El Bautista nos recuerda que «todo árbol que no dé fruto será cortado y arrojado al fuego». La fecundidad de nuestras vidas depende de nuestra continua disposición a cambiar actitudes y comportamientos que no reflejan plenamente el amor de Dios. Al continuar nuestra preparación para el Adviento, que cada uno de nosotros esté abierto a la gracia del arrepentimiento continuo para que el Señor pueda venir y vivir en nosotros más plenamente.
¡Alabado sea Dios!

www.oblates.org

Yes, it's Christmas flower donation time! The funds collected will not only cover the cost of the flowers and greenery that will enhance our church sanctuary at Christmas, but will also help with floral costs throughout the liturgical year. Envelopes are near the church entrances. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and generosity!

¡Sí, es tiempo de donar flores navideñas! Los fondos recaudados no solo cubrirán el costo de las flores y la vegetación que embellecerán el santuario de nuestra iglesia en Navidad, sino que también ayudarán con los costos florales durante todo el año litúrgico. Los sobres estan cerca de las entradas de la iglesia. ¡Gracias de antemano por su cooperación y generosidad!

Thank you!!
Our Social Ministry was able to deliver 129 lbs. of food to the Lumberton Christian Care Center on behalf of our parish.

¡Gracias!
Nuestro Ministerio Social logró entregar 129 libras de alimentos al Centro de Atención Cristiana de Lumberton en nombre de nuestra parroquia.

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Readings and Masses for the Week ~ Year A
Lecturas y Misas de la Semana ~ Año A

Saturday (Dec 6th) Mass 5:00 pm For The People

Sunday (Dec 7th) Misa 7:20 am (All Souls Intentions)
Mass 10:30 am
(+Victoria O. Fernandez and +Reynaldo Bragais)
Misa 12:30 pm (All Souls Intentions)
Is 11:1-10 Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 Rom 15:4-9 Mt 3:1-12

Monday (Dec 8th) The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary
Advent Weekday [2] **Holy Day of Obligation**
Mass at 12:00pm and 7:00pm
Gn 3:9-15, 20 Ps 98:1-4 Eph 1:3-6, 11-2 Lk 1:26-38

Tuesday (Dec 9th)
Advent Weekday [2] Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
Is 40: 1-11 Ps 96: 1-3, 10ac, 11-13 Mt 18: 12-14

Wednesday (Dec 10th) Mass 12:00 noon (+Martha Jolly)
Advent Weekday [2] Our Lady of Loreto
Is 40: 25-31 Ps 103: 1-4, 8, 10 Mt 11: 28-30

Thursday (Dec 11th) Mass 12:00 noon (+Franco Cruz Montiel)
Advent Weekday [2] Saint Damasus I, Pope
Is 41: 13-20 PS 145: 1, 9-13b Mt 11: 11-15

Friday (Dec 12th) Mass 12:00 pm (+Lidia Capote)
Advent Weekday [2] OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
Zec 2: 14-17 (Ps) Jdt 13:18bc, 192 Lk 1:26-38

Saturday (Dec 13th)
Advent Weekday [2] Saint Lucy, Virgin, Martyr
IsSir 48: 1-4, 9-11 Ps 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19 Mt 17: 9a, 10-13

Parish Financial Record

Registro Financiero Parroquial

Mass of Thanksgiving

November 27, 2025

Collection $620.00

Last Year $670.00

1st Sunday of Advent

1st Collection $4,094.00

2nd Collection 892.25
(For Church maintenance & repairs)

Total: $4,986.25

Last Year $4,843.25

We thank you all for your contributions! Please remember to send your offertory envelope weekly or monthly, or give online.

¡Les agradecemos a todos por sus contribuciones! Por favor, recuerde enviar su sobre de ofertorio semanal o mensualmente, o dar en línea.

https://www.parishgiving.org/index?e=EB7D1D74B9E1D3AFD5A6E0FD209BC0BECD23ED5C1C016A00

Our Weekly Second Collection

On the weeks that we do not have a designated special collection, the second collection will help fund the upkeep of our church building and the surrounding grounds.

Nuestra segunda colecta semanal

En las semanas en que no tenemos una colecta especial, esta segunda colecta ayudará a financiar el mantenimiento de la iglesia y sus alrededores.

STROKE SCAN PLUS

EVERY 40 SECONDS, SOMEONE IN THE U.S. IS HAVING A STROKE!

Stroke Scan Plus and **St. Francis de Sales Catholic Parish** will be hosting lifesaving, wellness ultrasound screenings on **Thursday, December 18th**. It is important to perform preventive maintenance for ourselves yearly. Do you have **high blood pressure** or **high cholesterol**, **diabetes**, or a family history of **heart disease**, **stroke**, **abdominal aneurysm**, or **internal cancers**? If so, do not miss this opportunity for early detection of a possibly serious disease. These screenings are typically NOT performed at your annual check-up, and insurance companies may not pay for them unless you are symptomatic. **Stroke Scan Plus** will be offering them to you for **$179** for all 7 combined ultrasound screenings (Stroke, AAA, Thyroid, Liver, Kidneys, & Gallbladder). Blood testing will incur an additional cost. Insurance is NOT necessary, and appointments are limited. Stroke Scan will be available at the church for you to register on on **Saturday, December 6th - Sunday, December 7th**, or please call 832-437-7355 to schedule an appointment today for you or a loved one. The screenings will take place in/at the **St. Francis de Sales Catholic Parish**. Prevention is your key to quality health! www.strokescan.com.

STROKE SCAN PLUS

CADA 40 SEGUNDOS, ALGUIEN EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS PRESENTA UN ATAQUE CEREBRAL!

El **jueves, 18 de diciembre**, Stroke Scan Plus y **St. Francis de Sales Catholic Parish** realizará exámenes preventivos vasculares con ultrasonido en el **St. Francis de Sales Catholic Parish**. Se examinarán dos áreas del cuerpo (Paquete Vascular): **las arterias carótidas del cuello** en busca de placas de grasa, lo cual es la causa #1 de ataques cerebrales; **la aorta abdominal baja** en busca de aneurismas. Estos exámenes cuestan regularmente, en los hospitales, entre $500 a $1,200 cada uno. Stroke Scan ofrecerá dichos exámenes por solo **$179** (costo total). Como cortesía, junto con el Paquete Vascular, también se examinarán la **tiroides, hígado, vesícula y riñones**, sin ningún costo adicional. Los análisis de sangre tendrán un costo adicional. Si usted quiere beneficiarse de estos exámenes, Stroke Scan estará aquí, en la iglesia, el día **sábado, 6 de diciembre - domingo, 7 de diciembre**, para que usted se registre. También puede llamar a solicitar una cita al teléfono: **832-437-7355**. www.strokescan.com.

STROKE SCAN PLUS

Exámenes Preventivos de Ultrasonido

St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church

jueves, 18 de diciembre

Llamar al 832-437-7355 para hacer su cita.

¿Tiene Usted Algunos de Estos Factores de Alto Riesgo para Enfermedades Cardiovasculares?
Tensión Arterial Alta ◆ Colesterol Alto ◆ Historial Familiar de Ataque Cerebral, Ataque del Corazón, Aneurisma Aórtico o Cáncer ◆ Diabetes ◆ Fibrilación Auricular ◆ Obesidad

¡El primer síntoma del derrame cerebral ES un derrame! La detección temprana ayuda salvar vidas. Maneje estos riesgos controlables: fumar, dieta mala, falta de ejercicio, peso excesivo, y consumo excesivo de alcohol.

Riesgo de Derrames Cerebrales
Ultrasonido de las arterias carótidas buscando placas o bloqueos.

Aneurisma Aórtico Abdominal
Ultrasonido de la aorta abdominal buscando aneurisma.

Examen de las Tiroides†
Ultrasonido en donde se buscan lesiones físicas como nódulos o quistes.

Examen del Hígado
Ultrasonido en donde se buscan lesiones físicas como masas o tumores.

Examen de los Riñones (2)†
Ultrasonido en donde se buscan lesiones físicas como quistes, masas y cálculos renales.

Examen de la Vesícula†
Ultrasonido en donde se buscan lesiones físicas como pólipos, cálculos y lodo.

Paquete de 7 Exámenes de Ultrasonido Por $179

Citas: 832-437-7355; †No se permiten sustituciones o descuentos

Exámenes Adicionales Disponibles*
(costo adicional)

- A1c (Diabetes) $25
- Lípidos/Colesterol $25
- VTD (Vitamina D) $45
- PSA (Próstata) $45
- TSH (Tiroides) $45
- CRP (Inflamación Cardiovascular) $45
- COR (Cortisol/Glándulas suprarrenales) $45
- GGT (Enzimas Hepáticas) $45
- CRE (Creatinina Sérica) $45
- TTE (Testosterona) $45
- Densidad Ósea (T-Score) $25

Mas exámenes disponibles. Apunte su cámara al código QR. Presione el banner que aparece.

Preparación:

- Usar ropa de dos piezas cómodas.
- No comer nada o tomar cafeína **4** horas antes del análisis.
- Si es diabético, haga una comida ligera.
- No mascar chicle antes de los exámenes.
- Ayunar 8 horas antes de la prueba de colesterol.
- **Si toma algún medicamento, continúe tomándolo.**

¡Salvando Vidas Desde 2001!

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

**** Estos exámenes no están incluidos en Paquete de Ultrasonidos (tienen costo adicional) y no están disponibles en todos los estados.***

Los resultados son leídos por un radiólogo certificado de la Junta Médica y estarán disponibles en línea (o descarga en PDF) en 1 semana aproximadamente, envío por servicio de correo tendrá un costo adicional. Si los resultados amenazan su vida, se acelerará la entrega. A menos que usted ya presente síntomas, por lo general, su médico no ordenará las versiones diagnósticas de estos exámenes y las compañías de seguros no pagan por ellos. Límite de 350 libras en las camas de los exámenes. Stroke Scan Plus www.strokescan.com (SPA 011025)

STROKE SCAN PLUS

Vascular & Organ Wellness Ultrasound Screenings

St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church

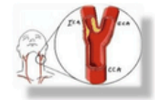
Thursday, December 18th

Please call 832-437-7355 for your appointment.

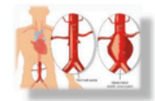
Do You Have Any of These Risk Factors?

High Blood Pressure ◆ High Cholesterol ◆ Family History of Stroke, Heart Attack, Aortic Aneurysms or Cancer ◆ Diabetes ◆ Atrial Fibrillation ◆ Obesity

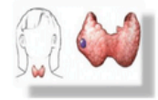
The first symptom of a stroke IS a stroke! Early detection helps to save lives. Manage these controllable risk factors: smoking, unhealthhy diet, physical inactivity, excessive weight, and alcohol consumption.



Stroke Risk Screening
Ultrasound of the carotid artery looking for plaque or blocked arteries.



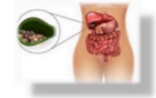
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
Ultrasound of the abdominal aorta looking for an aneurysm.



Thyroid Screening†
Ultrasound looking for physical lesions such as nodules or cysts.

Liver Screening
Ultrasound looking for physical lesions such as masses or tumors.

Kidneys (2) Screening†
Ultrasound looking for physical lesions such as cysts, masses and stones.



Gallbladder Screening†
Ultrasound looking for physical lesions such as polyps, stones, and sludge.

Total Discounted Package: All 7 Ultrasounds for $179

Appointments: 832-437-7355; † No substitutions or discounts allowed

Additional Testing Available*
(not included in package cost)

- A1c (Diabetes) $25
- Lipids/Cholesterol $25
- VTD (Vitamin D) $45
- PSA (Prostate) $45
- TSH (Thyroid) $45
- CRP (Cardiac/Inflammation) $45
- COR (Cortisol/Adrenal Glands) $45
- GGT (Liver Enzyme) $45
- CRE (Kidney Creatinine Serum) $45
- TTE (Testosterone) $45
- Bone Density (T-Score) $25

For blood package pricing, open phone camera, hover over QR code and tap the link.

Screening Preparations

- Wear a two-piece comfortable outfit, no dresses.
- No food or caffeine **4** hours prior to screening.
- If you are diabetic, make sure to eat a light snack.
- No chewing gum before the exams.
- 8 hours fast if having the cholesterol test.
- **If you are taking medication, continue to take it.**

Saving Lives Since 2001!

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

****Bloodwork may not be available in all regions.***

Results read by a board-certified radiologist and available for your review online (with PDF download) typically, within 1 week. You will receive an email/text when ready. Mailed, hard-copy results incur an extra cost. Life threatening results expedited. Unless you are symptomatic, typically, your doctor will not order diagnostic versions of these screenings and insurance companies may not pay for them. Please note that there is a 350 lb. weight limit on the medical screening tables. Stroke Scan Plus www.strokescan.com (ENG 011025)

SFDS Calendar

December 2025

Sunday (domingo)	Monday (lunes)	Tuesday (martes)	Wednesday (miercoles)	Thursday (jueves)	Friday (viernes)	Saturday (sábado)
green - church ***verde - iglesia*** ***blue - graymoor hall*** ***azul - salon graymoor*** ***red - social hall*** ***rojo - salon social*** ***purple - School House*** ***morado - Casa de Escuela***	01st 7:00 pm Reunión Coros	02nd 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Grupo de Parejas	03rd 12:00 pm Mass, Rosary 7:00 pm Ensayo de Coro V. N.	04th 12:00 pm Mass	05th 12:00 pm Mass, Adoration (Exposición Santísimo) 7:00 pm Benediction, **Novena VdG (OLoG)**	06th 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm Confession 5:00 pm Mass **7:00 pm** **Novena VdG (OLoG)**
07th 7:00 am - 7:20 am Rosario 7:20 am - 8:30 am Misa 8:45 am - 10:00 am Faith Formation 10:00 am - 10:30 am Rosary 10:30 am - 11:30 am Mass 12:00 pm - 12:20 pm Rosario 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm Misa **2:00 pm - 5:00 pm Ensayo de Coro** **5:00 pm OCTA**	08th Holy Day of Obligation Immaculate Conception of the BVM 12:00 pm Mass, **7:00 pm Misa,** **Novena VdG (OLoG)**	09th **7:00 pm** **Novena VdG (OLoG)**	10th 12:00 pm Mass, Rosary **7:00 pm** **Novena VdG (OLoG)**	11th 12:00 pm Mass 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Choir Practice **7:00 pm** **Novena VdG (OLoG),** **Grupo de Oración**	12th Our Lady of Guadalupe 12:00 pm Mass 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm G's Choir Practice **7:00 pm** **Novena VdG (OLoG)**	13th **6:00 am - 1:00 pm** **Fiesta VdG (OLoG Feast)** 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm Confession 5:00 pm Mass 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Ensayo de Coro **6:30 pm - 9:00 pm** Crecimiento G.C.
14th 04th Sunday of Advent 7:00 am - 7:20 am Rosario 7:20 am - 8:30 am Misa 8:45 am - 10:00 am Faith Formation 10:00 am - 10:30 am Rosary 10:30 am - 11:30 am Mass 12:00 pm - 12:20 pm Rosario 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm Misa **5:00 pm OCTA**	15th **5:30 pm Priest dinner** **6:30 pm** **Advent Penance** **Service**	16th **7:00 pm Posada**	17th 12:00 pm Mass, Rosary 6:30 pm Parish Council **7:00 pm Posada**	18th **8:00 am - 6:00 pm** **Medical Exams** 12:00 pm Mass	19th 12:00 pm Mass 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm G's Choir Practice **7:00 pm Posada**	20th 9:00 am - 10:00 am Altar Server Training (Monaguillos) 10:30 am - 12:30 pm Youth Group **NO CONFESSION** 5:00 pm Mass **7:00 pm Posada**

Updated (actualizado) Thurs 04 Dec 2025

https://square.link/u/Z7swMEcY

Please join us for the novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe this week. Please see calendar for times.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration will take place on Saturday, December 13th at 6:00 am with the Novena followed by singing, Mass, Procession, a Play, Traditional Dances, Fellowship & the Raffle. Please help us by bringing salsa, pasta, rice, tortillas, water, sodas, sweet bread, coffee or hot chocolate, and we need volunteers to help set up the party tents the day before. Please sign up with Constantina, Rogelio, Rafael, Rosaura, or Reynalda after Mass or with the office.

We also need roses to decorate the Our Lady of Guadalupe Frame (please bring the roses the day before). Please sign up with Rafael and Eladio after Mass or with the office.

Les invitamos a unirse a nosotros para la novena a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe esta semana. Consulten el calendario para ver los horarios.

La celebración de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe tendrá lugar el sábado 13 de diciembre a las 6:00 am con la Novena, seguida de las Mañanitas, Misa, Procesión, la obra, danzas tradicionales, convivencia y la rifa. Les pedimos su colaboración trayendo salsa, sopa fría, arroz, tortillas, aguas, sodas, pan dulce, café o atole. También necesitamos voluntarios para ayudar a montar las carpas el día anterior. Por favor, inscríbanse con Constantina, Rogelio, Rafael, Rosaura o Reynalda después de la Misa o con la oficina.

También necesitamos rosas para decorar el cuadro de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (por favor, tráiganlas el día anterior). Por favor, inscríbanse con Rafael y Eladio después de la Misa o con la oficina.

Happy Birthday Blessings
Bendiciones de feliz cumpleaños
07 - 13 December

Thomas Gaughan, Patrick Corey Fields, Jayden Gallardo, Bob Borbet, Edwin Limonteco A. Meredith Beeler, Melanie Valdez, Eliseo Congo-Santos, Macaria Ortiz-Rojas, Janet Chavez, Maria Reyes-Lucas, Carlos Chavez-Ortiz, and Sandra Maldonado-Ortiz

Saint Francis De Sales Reflections

December 2025

Saint Stephen Feast Day Dec 26

Saint Stephen c. AD 5 – c. 34) is traditionally venerated as the first martyr of Christianity. According to the Acts of the Apostles, he was a deacon in the early church at Jerusalem who angered members of various synagogues by his teachings. Accused of blasphemy at his trial, he made a speech denouncing the Jewish authorities who were sitting in judgment on him and was then stoned to death. Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee and Roman citizen who would later become an apostle, was also a witness in Stephen's execution.

A superficial reading of the stoning of Stephen in Acts appears to encourage overt antisemitism. The placement of the brutal martyrdom of Stephen on the day after the Christmas celebration casts ice water on our celebrations of the holiday spirit. Further reflection may result in a different analysis of the event.

The only source for information about Stephen is the New Testament book of the Acts of the Apostles. Stephen is mentioned in Acts 6 as one of the Greek-speaking Hellenistic Jews selected to administer the daily charitable distribution of food to the Greek-speaking widows.

The Catholic, and other Christian churches regard Stephen as a saint. Artistic representations often show Stephen with a crown symbolizing martyrdom, three stones, martyr's palm frond, censer, and often holding a miniature church building. Stephen is often shown as a young, beardless man with a tonsure, wearing a deacon's vestments.

Stephen is first mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as one of the Seven Deacons, who were appointed by the Apostles to distribute food and charitable aid to poorer members of the community in the early church. According to Orthodox belief, he was the eldest and is therefore called "archdeacon". As another deacon, Nicholas of Antioch, is specifically stated to have been a convert to Judaism (its Hellenistic version) before converting to Christianity it may be assumed that Stephen was born Jewish, but nothing more is known about his previous life. The reason for the appointment of the deacons is stated to have been dissatisfaction among Hellenistic Jews that their widows were being slighted in preference to Hebrew ones in the daily distribution of food. Since the name Stephanos is Greek, it has been assumed that he was one of these Hellenistic Jews. Stephen is stated to have been full of the Holy Spirit and to have performed miracles among the people.

It seems to have been among synagogues of Hellenistic Jews that he performed his teachings and "signs and wonders". Members of these synagogues had challenged Stephen's teachings, but Stephen had bested them in debate. Furious at this humiliation, they suborned false testimony that Stephen had preached blasphemy against Moses and God. They dragged him to appear before the Sanhedrin, the supreme legal court of Jewish elders, accusing him of preaching against the Second Temple and the Torah.

In a long speech to the Sanhedrin comprising almost the whole of Acts 7, Stephen presents his view of the history of the Israelites. God, he says, appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia, thus establishing at the beginning of the speech one of its major themes, that God does not dwell only in one particular building (meaning the Temple). Stephen recounts the stories of the patriarchs in some depth and goes into even more detail in the case of Moses. God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and inspired Moses to lead his people out of Egypt. Nevertheless, the Israelites turned to other gods. This establishes the second main theme of Stephen's speech, Israel's disobedience to God. Stephen faced two accusations: that he had declared that Jesus would destroy the Temple in Jerusalem and that he had changed the customs of Moses. Pope Benedict XVI stated in 2012 that Stephen used the Jewish scriptures to demonstrate that Jesus did not subvert the laws of Moses were not subverted by Jesus but were instead fulfilled. Stephen denounces his listeners as "stiff-necked" people who, just as their ancestors had done, resist the Holy Spirit. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers. Ye have received the law by the disposition of the angels and have not kept it."

The crowd, thus infuriated, could contain their anger no longer. However, Stephen looked up and said that the recently resurrected Jesus was standing by the side of God. The people from the crowd, who threw the first stones, laid their coats down so as to be able to do this, at the feet of a young man named Saul (later St Paul). Stephen prayed that the Lord would receive his spirit, his killers be forgiven, sank to his knees, and "fell asleep".

St. Luke, who wrote of the speech between 80-90 AD, relates the early years of Christianity following the teachings of St Paul who also was instrumental in separating the followers of Christ from Judaism to become its own independent community of believers. Paul in his epistles compared the early Christians (not to exclude our own selves) to the Israelites who had received the Law but had not kept it. By reading the speech with this in mind we can see that instead of condoning the denigration of or the persecution of the Jewish people, Paul through Stephen, shows us that we too have received the Law, or in our case the teaching of Jesus, and have not kept it.

In similar fashion, the death of Stephen is portrayed as an imitation of Christ in that the death is accepted (but not sought) as part of the price of following Jesus and to forgive those who are doing us this injury and destruction. The early church expressed this as the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. Something to think about amidst all the hype of the holiday season.

In any case, Merry Christmas to everyone.

Jerry Devine
Chair Liturgy Emeritus
December 2025

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