

*“Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of your womb.”*



St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church • 285 Church Street • Hartford, Connecticut
December 22, 2024 • Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Visitation by James Tissot (1836-1902); Brooklyn Museum

**St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church and
The Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry**

285 Church Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06103
tel 860-756-4034 • info@spsact.org • www.spsact.org



*Open Hearts
Open Minds
Open Doors*

We are a welcoming and dynamic community of Christian disciples. Rooted in the Franciscan experience of the Roman Catholic tradition, we proactively endeavor to extend hospitality both at the Eucharistic Table and as we minister reciprocally and in solidarity among the alienated and the poor, nurturing the mind, body, and spirit in the Greater Hartford Community. All are welcome!



Celebration of the Eucharist

Masks are optional at all Masses

Saturday Evening Mass of Anticipation

4:00 PM Public

Sunday Masses

8:00 AM Public

10:00 AM Public & Livestream

11:45 AM Public

5:00 PM Public

Weekday Masses

7:30 AM Public

12:05 PM Public & Livestream

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:15 to 11:45 AM

Saturday 3:15 to 3:45 PM

Christmas Mass Schedule

Tuesday, December 24

4:00 pm Mass

with cantor and Liturgical Dancers

*Note new time for the evening Mass!!

5:45 pm Mass

with Church Street Singers and Treble Clef Choir

10:00 pm Prelude Music

with our Combined Choirs

10:30 pm Mass

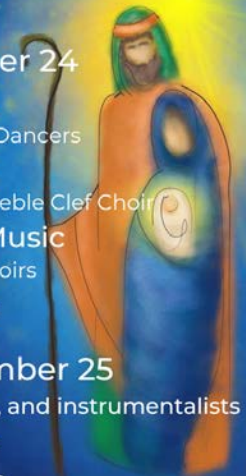
Wednesday, December 25

all Masses with vocal ensemble, organ, and instrumentalists

8:00 am Mass

10:00 am Mass

11:45 am Mass



All are welcome!

Daily Mass Readings

- Monday, Dec 23:** Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66
- Tuesday, Dec 24:** Is 9:1-6, Ps 96: 1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14 or Lk 2:15-20 or
- Wednesday, Dec 25:** Is 9:1-6, Ps 96: 1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14 or Jn 1:1-18
- Thursday, Dec 26:** Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22
- Friday, Dec 27:** 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a and 2-8
- Sunday, Dec 29:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 or Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10; Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24; Lk 2:41-52

Go to <http://www.usccb.org/> for readings online.



Parish Office Holiday Hours

- December 23 & 24:** 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- December 25 & 26:** Office Closed
- December 27 & 28:** 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- December 29:** 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
- December 30 & 31:** 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- January 1, 2025:** Office Closed
- January 2, 2025:** Standard office hours resume.

The Pastor's Corner

December 22, 2024

Dear Parishioners and Friends,



I arrived home on Thursday, December 12th after a whirlwind tour of several cities in Europe, including Strasbourg and Colmar, France; Cologne, Germany; and Brussels, Ghent and Bruges, Belgium. I brought with me some wonderful memories and photos of the places I'd seen as well as a doozy of a head cold!

One particular memory is that of Strasbourg's immense and impressive cathedral: Notre-Dame de Strasbourg, built between 1015 and 1439. Its 466-foot tower can be seen from many parts of the "Grande Île," and is a helpful guide-post in case you get lost, which is easy to do in this ancient medieval city!

Most of the churches I saw during my travels already had their nativity scenes in place, including Strasbourg Cathedral. However, its nativity scene was one of five different scenes depicting the various moments of the Gospel Infancy narratives, including the Annunciation, Visitation, Birth of Jesus, Visit of the Magi, and the Presentation in the Temple. This is a photo of the Visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth:



Here we see two women, pregnant with their offspring, greeting each other with joy and motherly anticipation. Both Mary and Elizabeth were undergoing surprise and confusion over the mysterious ways of God: Elizabeth for the many years she and her husband Zechariah had prayed for offspring; Mary for the fact that she had conceived a child through the power of the Holy Spirit who would be the Son of the Most High. The Gospel of Luke records their trust-

ing and faith-filled responses: "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people" (Elizabeth); "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word," (Mary).

For both women, their trust in God would find fulfillment in the birth of their sons, John and Jesus. An older woman's apparent barrenness would result in a child who would be the last prophet to herald the coming of the Messiah, the son of her younger cousin, Mary.

On a more human level, the meeting of a family member, especially one that takes place over a considerable distance, it always a joyful occasion. Such was the case for me when I got together with one of my cousins, Jim, who lives in Cologne with his wife and two adult children and their growing families. I also think of the reunion I enjoyed with some of my cousins back in September who had come to Hartford, along with my brothers and sisters, for the celebration of my 70th birthday and 40th anniversary of ordination.

I think back, also, to the many times when we were growing up, and visits with our cousins at Christmas or during the summer months when we would travel to each other's home cities. I am sure that many of you will be doing the same thing this year as you travel to visit relatives, or they come to visit you to celebrate the Christmas holidays.

I am reminded, as well, that many families around the world will be spending Christmas in much different circumstances as wars continues to separate families, or force them to flee their homelands just to find safety. Let us pray for all those who will spend yet another Christmas apart from their families and loved ones for whatever reason. May they not lose hope that some day they will be reunited and delivered from fear and anxiety of what tomorrow might bring.

May all of us, in the coming days of Christmas, experience a sense of togetherness in the joy of the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace; that the world may know true peace and family unity.

Christmas Blessings to you and those whom you love!

Fr. Tim Shreenan, OFM
Fr. Tim Shreenan, O.F.M.
Pastor

The Drumming Circle

Join us Monday, January 6, 2025 from 6:30 to 7:30 PM in the Franciscan Center for our Drumming Circle. No experience or drum necessary. Please contact Pat Curtis at pcurtis@spsact.org for more information or if you need to borrow a drum.



Offertory

12/02/2024 - 12/08/2024

Total Offering: \$24,372.23

Online Giving: \$8,895.23

Weekly Collection: \$15,477.00

Thank You for Feeding the Birds

The members of the Secular Franciscan Order would like to thank you for participating in our project of feeding the birds for Christmas. It is a simple action, but even in the little things we honor God for His wondrous creation. Francis of Assisi knew the glory of creation and praised God for it.



Ongoing Adult Faith Formation Programs

For full program descriptions, Zoom links, and more information on other programs, please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-AFF>.

Group Spiritual Reflection Zoom Meetings: Tuesday, December 31, 2024 from 12:30 to 1:30 PM. All are welcome! Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Tues-Spirit-Grp> to register and receive the Zoom Link.

In Quiet Prayer: Wednesday, January 8, 2025, from 7:30 to 8:00 AM. Join us on Zoom. Zoom link in Monday email.

People of Hope: Wednesday, January 8, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Join us: <https://tinyurl.com/SPSACT-POH-Fall24>

Divine Reading: Wednesday, January 15, 2025, from 7:00 to 8:00 PM in-person, in the Franciscan Center. Join us when you can!

Mass for the Solemnity of Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God
Tuesday, December 31
5:00 pm Mass
with reception following to see the fireworks!

Did you know? The Franciscan Center has the perfect (& warm) view of the *Hartford First Night Fireworks* at 6:00 pm.

Bring snacks and goodies (finger foods) to share!

No Freeze Shelter Meal Sundays

Once again this year we are providing Sunday dinner for 50 clients and staff of the Hartford no freeze emergency shelter. The shelter opened December 1st and will be available to provide overnight shelter for homeless individuals through March 31, 2024. Our meal teams are in place and will be cooking family style dinners each Sunday night, but we are still looking for donations of ingredients or a prepared dish. Tonight's meal is all set, but we are in need of the following for the Sunday, December 29th meal. Can you help?

- 3 trays of smashed potatoes (mashed new potatoes with the skins on)
- 5 - 6 large jars of natural or unsweetened apple sauce
- Greens salads - lettuce tomatoes cukes to serve 50
- Desserts for 50 - brownies, cookies etc.

Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-No-Freeze> for more information and to sign up.

Open Hearts Ministry

Monthly Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2025 after the 5:00 PM Mass in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry. All Are Welcome. Please join us.

Friends and Family Ministry: Our next meeting will take place on Sunday, January 19, 2025 at 3:30 PM in the Franciscan Center. Our group provides support and guidance to parents, friends and allies of our LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters. Please contact either Tim Curran (timothy.curran@trincoll.edu) or Rich Broggini (richardbroggini@gmail.com) for more information.



Prayer Squares for Peace

In his December 1st Pastor's Column in the bulletin, Father Tim wrote:

"It seems that, for the past several years, Advent has begun under a strange set of circumstances. In 2020 we were still dealing with uncertainties of the pandemic . . . Last year Advent began under the cloud of war in the Middle East. This year, we begin Advent with the country preparing for a new Presidential administration. Each of these circumstances have instilled a certain amount of uncertainty in all of us."



Prayer Shawl Ministers often have one response to times of "uncertainty": knit or crochet!

At the height of the Covid pandemic, over

3,000 Prayer Squares were created by our ministers and offered to first-responders, those in hospitals, nursing homes, soup kitchens, etc. with a reassuring prayer for God's accompaniment and support from our faith community.

Small knitted or crocheted colorful squares made with love, sent out with prayer, had quite an impact on both the makers and the receivers.

Now, at the beginning of 2025, the Prayer Shawl Ministry will once again step forward. **At the January and February Community Sundays, ministers will be available to teach how to knit or crochet simple squares.** The ministry feels it is the right time to invite parishioners to take and/or to make *Prayers Squares for Peace* and distribute them throughout Lent.



Religious Education . . . Registration is always on our website!



The religious education programs at St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church are designed to allow parents to choose not only the best schedule for their young children but also the best learning format for those children. We firmly believe that the parents (and families) are the original and primary educators of their children, and we are honored to support you in nurturing your child's faith. Our classes begin at age three.

For this reason, religious education for children through sixth grade can occur at St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church within a traditional format, a hands-on (Montessori) format (Catechesis of the Good Shepherd) or a family format (Whole Community Catechesis).

Our middle and high schoolers are very involved in social justice and community service. They host parish wide service projects (i.e. Advent Wreath Workshop and Easter Cookie Delivery), build connections with the homebound of our parish, and volunteer regularly helping set up and working in the hydroponic gardens with LEVO International. Service continues as students enter high school including regular service with House of Bread, No-Freeze Shelter, Franciscan Center Sandwich Ministry and other opportunities with our community partners, and an open invitation to participate in the life of our parish by joining any of our ministries such as the singing in the choir, lectoring, Altar Serving, etc.

All programs take place within the traditional school year (September through May). Check out the website www.spsact.org/faitH-formation/youth-faitH-formation for more information or contact Deborah Pelletier at dpelletier@spsact.org.

St. Patrick - St. Anthony Staff

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Fr. A. Francis Soucy, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar & Senior Associate Friar,
afsofm@gmail.com



CHRISTMAS 2024

My friends, I am pleased to share with you this first Christmas pastoral letter as your Archbishop. Many of you are regular Mass goers. Some of you come occasionally, once a month or so. Some come once or twice a year on the major holidays of Christmas or Easter. For others, this may be the first time you have been in a church for years or maybe even for the first time. To all of you, I say, "Welcome and merry Christmas."

Whatever your relationship with the Church may be, I invite you to consider how the moment of the Incarnation – God becoming man in Jesus Christ – has graced all of creation with the saving power of God. Throughout the course of the Church's history, great saints and poets have authored heartfelt praise to the mystery of the Incarnation in which they tried to capture what it meant that God, the Supreme Creator of all that is, became one like us. Writing in the 4th c., St. Gregory Nazianzen came close to offering a perfect blend of the poetic and the theological when he wrote:

"The very Son of God, older than the ages, the invisible, the incomprehensible, the incorporeal, the beginning of beginning, the light of light, the fountain of life and immortality, the image of the archetype, the immovable seal, the perfect likeness, the definition and word of the Father: he it is who comes... ..to take to himself all that is human, except for sin... ..He who makes rich is made poor; he takes on the poverty of my flesh, that I may gain the riches of his divinity. He who is full is made empty; he is emptied for a brief space of his glory, that I may share in his fullness."

But, while St. Gregory's words may transport us into the Mystery of the Divine Majesty of God made manifest, the greeting of the angels to the shepherds that we hear proclaimed in the Gospel of Luke lead us deeply into Christ's humanity:

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a Savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

In this Christmas celebration, we recall the mystery of Christ, true God and true man, and offer thanksgiving that "God so loved the world, that he gave us his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but have eternal life," and remember that every time we celebrate the Mass we encounter the same Christ present among us in the Church gathered, in the Word proclaimed, and in the Sacrament of the Eucharist - and what a Christmas gift that is!

** Christopher J. Coyne*

Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne
Archbishop of Hartford

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, December 21, 2024

4:00 PM Ronald Gina, 13th Anniversary

Sunday, December 22, 2024

8:00 AM Jack & Donna Michaud, 9th Anniversary

10:00 AM Tony Intino

11:45 AM Donato & Maria Monaco

5:00 PM Anthony Labriola

Monday, December 23, 2024

7:30 AM Tommy Labriola

12:05 PM Madeline Capodanno

Tuesday, December 24, 2024- Christmas Eve (All Masses)

Prayer intentions for our Parishioners

Wednesday, December 25, 2024 - Christmas Day (All Masses)

Prayer intentions for our Parishioners

Thursday, December 26, 2024

9:00 AM Daniel Laffin, Sr.

Friday, December 27, 2024

7:30 AM Mary J. McDermott

12:05 PM Jennie Bramante

Saturday, December 28, 2024

4:00 PM Rebecca Ziegler

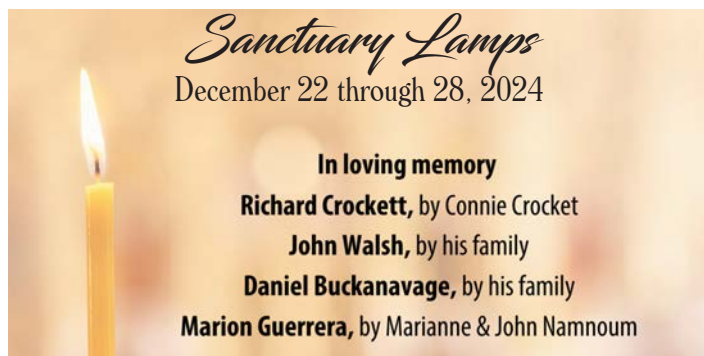
Sunday, December 29, 2024

8:00 AM Maureen Dowd

10:00 AM Marzolino & Maria Pace

11:45 AM Carolyn Palomba

5:00 PM Prayer intentions for Arthur & Annette Corey on their 61st Wedding Anniversary



Please Pray for the Sick

Paula Molitar, Joseph Shertick, Greg Reed, Kathryn Eagers, Tommie Henry, Syl Ciraulo, Mary Ertel, Mary Joyce Castafero, Bobby Lombardo, John Gannon, Rosemarie Perkoski, Anna Ramirez, Susan Degennaro, and Deborah Godin.

We are here to serve you...

We are here to serve you. The programs and ministries listed below are just a sampling of our many offerings. Please go to www.spsact.org or call the Parish Office at 860-756-4034 for more information.

Baptism: Baptism of infants and young children may be celebrated during Sunday Mass and Group Baptisms on the 1st Saturday of each month outside of the season of Lent.

Patricia Curtis, Pastoral Associate; 860-756-4034, EXT. 113.

Matrimony: The Sacrament of Marriage at St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church are celebrated Friday and Saturdays. The Bride or Groom should contact *Carolyn Abramo, Wedding Manager; 860-756-4034, EXT. 111* or <https://spsact.org/wedding-request-form/> to begin preparation for Marriage, normally one year in advance and before any other arrangements are made for a reception.

Pastoral Care Outreach Ministry: We offer holistic care in collaboration with the parish staff (friars, ministry coordinators, and parish nurses). Members of this team are responsible for visiting parishioners at home or in long term and short term care facilities. *Fr. John Leonard, O.F.M.; 860-756-4034, EXT. 129.*

Prayer Network: The St. Patrick–St. Anthony Prayer Network consists of approximately fifty parishioners who commit themselves to praying daily for those in need. <https://spsact.org/prayer-network-prayer-request/> or Parish Office; 860-756-4034.

Open Hearts LGBTQ+ Ministry: This ministry consists of two Groups: **Open Hearts** holds monthly fellowship meetings, and **Friends and Family (LGBTQ+) Support Ministry**, which supports members and allies of the LGBTQ+ community.

For information on Open Hearts:

<https://spsact.org/contact-open-hearts-ministry/>

For information on Friends and Family contact:

<https://spsact.org/contact-form-for-friends-family-ministry/>

Volunteering and Outreach Ministry Information:

St. Patrick-St. Anthony invites individuals to give freely of their time and expertise in order to make a difference. Our volunteers participate in liturgical ministries as well as other forms of service to the church, the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry and the community at large. *Allison Holst-Grubbe, Director of Community Engagement; aholstgrubbe@spsact.org; 860-756-4034, EXT. 110.*

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