

# St. Francis of Assisi Mission



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## Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 15, 2026

**Fourth Sunday of Lent (A)**

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a / Ephesians 5:8-14 /  
John 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38



## Good News!

March 15, 2026

**Fourth Sunday of Lent (A)**

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a / Ephesians 5:8-14 / John 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

MIGUEL DULICK

Today's gospel, the healing of the man born blind, is a terrific story that includes many details. Notice that Jesus, who has his own agenda, "so that the works of God might be made visible through him," does not even wait for the man to ask to be healed. But the man is a willing subject, allowing mud and saliva to be smeared on his eyes, agreeing to go to Siloam and wash. And, he's a quick learner. At first, all he knows is "the man called Jesus" healed him. Soon, however, he's calling Jesus "a prophet." Then, as a "division" ("schism" in the original) opens among the authorities and even in his own family, he defends Jesus' divine calling when the Pharisees mock Jesus as a "sinner." Finally, expelled from the synagogue, the man finds Jesus waiting for him with the ultimate revelation: he sees before him the Son of Man, "and he worshiped him."

Now, maybe we weren't born blind, but I venture to say a lot of us are short-sighted. Do I "see the works of God"? Starting from "the man called Jesus," do I keep going forward in faith, defending Jesus when he is mocked by people, to a deeper, fuller reality than even my own family may not understand? All the way to adoration, worship, a total handing over of my whole self to the Son of Man? Or, as Thomas would later say, when his own eyes were opened, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). ●

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### Mass Schedule

**Sunday: 9:15 AM**  
**St. John of the Cross**

**Saturday: 6:00 PM**

**Sunday: 7:30 AM, 11:00 AM ~ English**  
6:00 PM ~ Spanish

**Daily Mass:**

Mon., Tues., & Fri. ~ 8:00 AM  
Thurs. (Sp.) ~ 6:00 PM ~

**Adoration ~**

**Thurs. (Sp.) - 6:30PM**

**1st Saturday Mass: 8:00 AM**

### Reconciliation

**Thursday: 5:30 PM**

**Saturday: 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM**

**Sunday: 5:30PM**

Please contact Fr. Patrick by phone or email if you need to make an appointment for Confession or **Anointing of the Sick.**

### Parish Office Hours

**St. John of the Cross**

**Mon., Tues., Wed., and Thurs.**

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

**CLOSED FOR LUNCH**

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**OFFICE IS CLOSED**

**Fri., Sat., & Sun.**

# Worship & Prayer

## MASS INTENTIONS

<b>Sun.-March 15 9:15 AM</b>	† Juan Robles (Heavenly birthday) by Pam Robles Cardona † Irene Snelling, † Laura Taplin, and † Wayne Tate by Elizabeth Hackfeld People of the Parish
<b>Sun.-March 22 9:15 AM</b>	† Irene Snelling, † Laura Taplin, and † Wayne Tate by Elizabeth Hackfeld † Stephen Menard by Robert & Nancy Vial People of the Parish

## PRAYER LIST

May He bless all who are in need of His strength, especially:

**Ana Culpepper, Henry Garrett, Kenton Heider, Paula Heider, Gerald Lindsey, Melba Malik, Cheryl Marshall, Adrian Nunez, Daniel Nunez, Phillip Torres, Paige Trevino, Adolfo Trevino, and Bo Weaver**



Praying for expecting mothers and their babies:  
**Theresa Laurienti and Ricki Rodriguez Choat**



Please contact the parish office for any additions or deletions.

## Praying for our Military

**We remember these service personnel in each 'Mass for the Families of the Parish'**



**Air Force:** Vincent Gordon, Preston Holliday, Christopher Lauer II, Alayah Moore, Deborah Thomas, Audrey Winstead

**Army:** Father Jim Craig, Magdeleena Delaney, Celine De Los Santos, Allen McDonald, Jacob Madrid, Eduardo Enrique Perales, Robert Ponce, Fernando Ramos III, Anthony Rios, Tyree Winstead

**Coast Guard:** Corey Bunton and Joshua Salinas

**Marines:** Aurora Alarcon, Hunter Frees, and Andre Rodriguez

**Navy:** Cory Elyasevich, Diane Martinez, and Noah Vasquez

Please pray for our **ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY!**

Please call the parish office or use the online form to submit names & branch of service.

## Stewardship of Treasure

<b>PREVIOUS WEEK</b>	03/01/2026	<b>CURRENT WEEK</b>	03/08/2026
<b>Collection</b>	\$1039.00	<b>Collection</b>	\$1208.00
<b>Our Living Church Bldg Fund</b>	\$143.00		

**2025 Tax statements Church Donation Records** ~ If you would like a statement of your church donations during 2025 for tax filing, please call the Parish Office. To save paper and postage, statements will only be provided upon request.

## Parish Organizations



**Attention all graduating seniors:** The **St. John of the Cross Joint** and the **Knights of Coumbus Scholarships** are now available in the church foyer, the parish office and the high school counselor's office.  
**Please note that they have different deadlines.**

**ALTAR & ROSARY SOCIETY** NEXT MEETING: MAY 4, 2026 @ 2PM

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS # 8335** NEXT MEETING: APRIL 6, 2026



**BBQ 1/2 Chicken plate fundraiser - Sunday, April 26, 11:00AM—1:00PM**  
Plates are \$12 and come with pinto beans and potato salad.



**DRIVE THRU with delivery to vehicle ONLY. Tickets are on sale now! Get yours from a Knight today!**

## Religious Education

<p><b>FHC Masses:</b> Sunday, May 3 at 9AM and 2PM. <b>2nd Reconciliation:</b> Saturday, March 21 @ 9AM (Parents must attend practice but are not required to receive the sacrament of reconciliation.) <b>Confirmation Mass:</b> Wednesday, May 13, 6:00PM, at SJoC</p>	
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## Works of Mercy

**Loom Kitting** ~ Parishioners are invited to meet in the SJoC parish hall on Mondays at 9AM to knit hats for patients at Driscoll Children's Hospital Oncology Department. Contact the parish office or Bertha Forbes for more information.

The next bread and pastries distributions will be at 9AM at **SJoC** on **Wednesday, March 25**, and at **St. Francis** on **Saturday, April 11**.

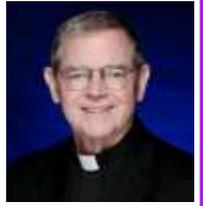


Coastal Bend Food Bank distributions at 9AM at **St. John of the Cross** on **Thursday, April 2**, and at **St. Francis of Assisi** on **Saturday, March 28**.



# A Note From Our Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,



*"I shall get up and go to my father, and I shall say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ... So, he got up and went back to his father.'" LK 15:18, 20*

This is from Luke's Gospel and the Parable of the Lost - Prodigal Son. So often we focus on the mercy and kindness of the Father toward the younger lost prodigal son and toward the older resentful son. The story speaks of God's infinite mercy to the two erring sons. But the verses I selected are the son's thought to "get up and go back" to the father, and the son's action by which "he got up and went back" to the Father. There is the thought that is followed by action. Without the son's action of actually getting up and going back to the Father, the parable would be empty and totally lacking in merit. It is the son's first action "to get up and do it" that causes the father's response of "being filled with compassion and running out to the son to embrace him and kiss him." On Ash Wednesday and on the First Sunday of Lent, I asked everyone to make a Lenten Promise of Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. Those Lenten Promises are in the large glass container in front and right below the altar. These were your thoughts and prayers as you started the Season of Lent set before the Altar as your offerings and decisions to "get up" and to change your spiritual life. How have you been doing? Still in the thoughtful good intention phase, or have you progressed to the action phase of making it happen?

On this "Laetare Sunday" – the Rose Pink Fourth Sunday of Lent – we have reached the halfway point of Lent, and it is time to reflect and redouble down on our Lenten Promises. The Holy Water has returned to the Holy Water Fonts at the entrances of the Church to soften the hardness of our hearts and to be open to God's Grace to move our thoughts into actual actions in these Lenten weeks of Preparation for the Paschal Mysteries of Holy Week and Easter.

This past week I had a parish wide mailing to all of the registered member families of our parish asking for your pledge to the "Our Living Church Capital Campaign." I want to thank all of the parishioners who have already been giving so generously by pledge, envelopes, and on-line donations. There are 86 families who have already made a pledge to the campaign, and 41 families have been making regular contributions without a formal pledge. In the letter I simply asked those who have pledged and those who regularly give to reaffirm your decision to the campaign for this year 2026. The letter is primarily to the 484 families who have not made a formal pledge. This campaign is for major critical and absolutely necessary repairs to our church and our parish buildings – the church's exterior stucco, the church's stained-glass windows repair, the new roof for the parish hall, and the parking lot repairs. For these repairs to be done there must be real commitment from all of the parish families. Bishop Mario Avilés has given us the Letter of Permission to Build, and the Master Plan Committee will be actively seeking the updated bids and beginning the process of contract approvals through the Diocesan Construction Office. The two necessary items that need to be in place for our Bishop to sign contracts are: 1) a deposit balance of \$332,500.00 (one-half of the \$665,000.00 cost of the projects) to be in our Diocesan D&L Savings Account; 2) a verifiable Capital Campaign pledge commitment of the parishioners to raise the balance of funds needed to pay for these projects over the next four to five years. The first threshold cash balance needed in our D&L Savings Account is \$185,000.00 for the signing of contracts for the work on the stucco and the stained-glass windows.

Our parish knows the need and the extreme urgency for these repairs and many parishioners have thought about how they might respond to our "Living Church Capital Campaign." This is the time for us, like the Prodigal Son, to move from thought into action. Before I can confidently go before the Diocesan Finance Council and the Diocesan D&L Loan Board at the end of March, I will need your concrete pledge of support for these projects to become a reality. Please respond to this especially important appeal from me as your pastor. "Get up and go"!

Please remember that during my eight years as your Pastor, I have each year made and fulfilled my pledge to the Building Fund Appeals and to the Capital Campaigns. I have already made my own pledge to this current Capital Campaign, and I ask you to make your pledge! This is for the love and support of our parish for the future!

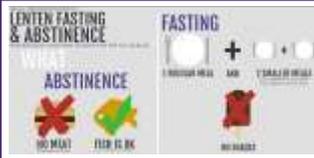
*"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one." Mt 5:37*

Asking for money and financial support of our parish community is often the hardest and most mis-understood reality of being a Pastor. If you have any questions, comments, or needed clarifications, please feel free to contact me directly on my personal cell phone 361-739-6853 or my direct email [PastorOrangeGroveTX@gmail.com](mailto:PastorOrangeGroveTX@gmail.com). Thank You.

Love and Prayers,

Fr. Patrick

# Lent



## Lenten Fasting and Abstinence

### Fasting on Good Friday

Though Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are not holy days of obligation, fasting is required.

Those ages 18-59 should limit themselves to no more than one meal that day.

### Abstinence on Fridays during Lent

Those ages 14+ are required to abstain from eating meat every Friday during Lent.



Parish organizations will lead the **Stations of the Cross** at SJoC at **6PM on Fridays** during Lent.

**March 13**—Knights of Columbus

**March 20**—Altar Society

**March 27**—Casa de Lucy

### **Good Friday, April 3 — Stations of the Cross on**

English —3:00PM

Spanish—5:00PM

**40 CANS FOR LENT FOOD DRIVE** ~ Almsgiving is one of the pillars of Lent. Please support our “40 Cans for Lent” food drive to stock our St. John of the Cross Food Pantry.

Items most needed are canned meat (tuna, chicken, Vienna sausages, SPAM), canned chili, canned vegetables and fruit, pasta, rice, boxed cereal, and snack bars.

All nonperishable items may be left in the church foyer or brought to the parish office through Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026.

*Jesus said, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink..." (Matthew 25:35-40)*



## Reconciliation

Prepare for Easter Sunday! Don't wait until the end of Lent!

**Confessions** are offered every Thursday and Sunday at 5:30PM and Saturday at 5:00PM.

**Our Lenten Penance Service** is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, from 6PM—8PM. Four visiting priests will be available for confession.

An extra opportunity for confession will be offered on Holy Thursday from 8:30PM—9:30PM.

Matthew cautions us, “Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.” (Matthew 24:42)



### Holy Thursday—April 2

#### Holy Thursday Rehearsal for altar servers @ 5:30PM

#### **Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7PM**

- Washing of the Feet
- Rededication of Eucharistic Ministers
- Eucharistic Procession
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

#### Adoration Shifts on Holy Thursday

**8PM-9PM: Altar Society**

**9PM—10PM: Soc. Guadalupanas**

**10PM—11PM: Altar Servers & Youth**

**11:00PM—12:00AM: KCs**



#### **Good Friday Service (bilingual) @ 7:00PM**

#### **Easter Vigil Mass - Saturday, April 4—@ 8:00PM**

Altar Server practice for Easter Vigil @ 10:00AM



#### **Easter Sunday Mass, April 5 Regular Mass times**

## Diocesan News

### **Texas Education Freedom Accounts** application *DEADLINE IS NEXT TUESDAY, MARCH 17*

The application portal for Texas Education Freedom Accounts (TEFA) closes at 11:59 PM on Tuesday, March 17 — just one week away.

Eligible families may receive \$10,474 per student to cover educational expenses such as Catholic school tuition, supplies, uniforms, tutoring, and more. Students with qualifying special needs may receive up to \$30,000 with approved documentation. All families are encouraged to apply before the deadline.

Choose Catholic school — where your child will become who God calls them to be. For more information, visit [www.ESACC.org](http://www.ESACC.org).

To support families through this process, Catholic schools across the Diocese are hosting EFA Application Nights, designed to help parents with the application and required documentation.

**Young Catholic adults** are welcome to join the parish of **St. John the Baptist for Family Holy Hour and Social on Sunday, March 22**, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. Confession is offered during Adoration. All are welcome to stay for fellowship and potluck in the parish hall after Adoration. Contact Angie Windnagle at St. John the Baptist for more information: [awindnagle@sjbctx.org](mailto:awindnagle@sjbctx.org).

**The Office of Young Adult Ministry** will host the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Virtual SEEK Conference on Saturday, March 28 at the TAMUCC Newman Center! It will take place from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. and will include dinner, 2 conferences and small group discussions, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and more. This conference is open to all young adults, college-age and young professionals. More details to follow.

**The Andrew Dinner**, an evening of discussion and dialogue about the life of a priest and the priestly vocation, will be at St. Pius X Catholic Church on Thursday, April 16, at 6:00 p.m. Young men interested in attending are asked to speak with their pastor.

## Upcoming Parish Events

### PRIZES

Stanley cooler & cup



**St. John of the Cross Catholic Church  
200 S. Metz, Orange Grove, TX**

## **ANNUAL GUADALUPANA SOCIETY BINGO FUNDRAISER**

Sunday, March 15, 2026 Parish Hall

Doors open at 11:45am for Concession Stand.

BINGO starts at 12:45pm

Participate in our Sweets Auction & 50/50 Raffle

6 On Bingo Book: \$35.00 for 20 games

Plus FREE door prize ticket with book purchase

"Cash and Credit Cards accepted"

### PRIZES

Kids' fun and games basket  
Kitchenware basket

### PRIZES

\$200 Visa gift card

\$50 Visa gift cards

\$50 Dillard's gift card



## **SJoC Altar Society's Silent Auction & Vendors' Arts/Crafts Fair**

SATURDAY, MARCH 21  
9:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.



There will be unique gifts and crafts.  
If you have items to donate to the Silent Auction or are interested in selling your crafts, candles, jewelry, snacks, pastries, snow cones, roasted corn, etc. Please contact the Parish Office. (\$10.00/booth)

# Dear Padre,

*I am left-handed. Why doesn't the church allow the sign of the cross to be made left-handed?*

A Catholic who is unable to make the sign of the cross with the right hand is certainly permitted to do so with the left. There is no rule against it. When Pope Saint John Paul II injured his right arm, he used his left hand to impart his blessing.

The sign of the cross is a sacramental, one of the symbols that identifies you as a Roman Catholic. Just like all such symbolic gestures, there is an expected uniformity. To use a secular example, at a University of Texas football game, fans of the Longhorns give the "hook-'em horns" sign. You wouldn't give the "thumbs-up" sign instead. It would be confusing.

It's true that at one time, the left hand was associated with evil. Jesus sends the goats to sit at his left and the sheep to his right. (See Matthew 25:33.) And, throughout the Scriptures, we read that Jesus sits at the right hand of God. (See Mark 16:19.) The word "sinister" is from the Latin *sinister*, meaning "left."

Left-handedness is no longer associated with evil. If you wish to make the sign of the cross with your left hand, you may. But do consider why you are doing it. Most left-handed people have no trouble using their right hand for many simple tasks. If your purpose is a bit rebellious, maybe realize that signifying unity with your brothers and sisters in Christ is more important. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org



ALFONSO / CATHOLIC

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

### Monday

**MARCH 16**

*Lenten Weekday*

Is 65:17–21

Jn 4:43–54

### Tuesday

**MARCH 17**

*Lenten Weekday*

Ez 47:1–9, 12

Jn 5:1–16

### Wednesday

**MARCH 18**

*Lenten Weekday*

Is 49:8–15

Jn 5:17–30

### Thursday

**MARCH 19**

*St. Joseph, Spouse*

*of the Blessed*

*Virgin Mary*

2 Sm 7:4–5a,

12–14a, 16

Rom 4:13, 16–18,

22

Mt 1:16, 18–21,

24a or Lk 2:41–

51a

### Friday

**MARCH 20**

*Lenten Weekday*

Wis 2:1a, 12–22

Jn 7:1–2, 10,

25–30

### Saturday

**MARCH 21**

*Lenten Weekday*

Jer 11:18–20

Jn 7:40–53

### Sunday

**MARCH 22**

*Fifth Sunday*

*of Lent*

Ez 37:12–14

Rom 8:8–11

Jn 11:1–45 or

11:3–7, 17, 20–27,

33b–45



MARCO IACOBELLI EPF / SHUTTERSTOCK

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

*Dear brothers and sisters, let us trustfully bring our ailments before Jesus, and also those of our loved ones; let us bring the pain of those who feel lost and without a way out. Let us cry out for them too, and we will be certain that the Lord will hear us.*

GENERAL AUDIENCE, ROME, JUNE 11, 2025