

THE ST. FRANCIS BULLETIN

FROM THE RECTOR

Fr. Len Giacalone

Since all the reports from the annual parish meeting were already sent out to the parish, there seems to be no reason for me to rehash anything along those lines. There was a great deal of discussion about the current status of our Sunday services and when we might get back to normal. I don't know the answer to that. As the Scripture says, "Since I am a man under authority..." I have to be concerned about what the bishop wants with regard to the distribution of Holy Communion, that is, how it is to be done. At the present time that means under only one species. There was a question about moving the current 9:30 service to 10:00 am which the Vestry will discuss at its meeting on February 8. If you were not at the meeting and have an opinion with regard to the time, please email me at rector@stfrancisaustin.org and let me know. I have decided that it is inopportune to go back to two services at the present time. There simply aren't enough people coming right now.

We begin pre-Lent on Sunday, January 31 with Septuagesima Sunday, and Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 17. I will conduct two Holy Communion services that day, one at 12 noon and one at 7:00 pm. Each service will feature the distribution of ashes following the homily. It is not my intention this year to have a special Wednesday evening service. I might suggest, however, that if you are looking for an additional opportunity to worship during the week, try going to Evening Prayer on Thursday evening at 7:00 pm. You can do this either in person or on Zoom. If you don't know, this service features the singing of the hymns and canticles and is similar to when we used to have Morning Prayer on the first Sunday of each month. Anyway, that might be something you could consider doing.

Lent is an opportunity for both adding and subtracting in order to refine and retool your spiritual life. It is appropriate to add something that might enhance your own personal piety and devotion to the Lord. It is also an opportunity to subtract those things which get in the way of your personal relationship with the Lord. As I have mentioned to you before, many folks think that you are to deny yourself something during Lent. But the purpose of Lent is to figure out how to deny yourself and put Jesus in the place of honor. Giving up something for Lent is supposed to be a sign of real self denial. The big problem is figuring out where and how much the self needs to be denied and how to do that. Although I have recommended personal, private confession in years past, it has mostly fallen on deaf ears. But it is certainly a way to hone in on certain aspects of one's life that need to be addressed. I will make myself available to anyone who wishes to make a private confession and I will be available after the Good Friday service as I have been in the past. I am also including in this newsletter an article I wrote several years ago about private confession which you might find helpful. There will be more about Holy Week in the next newsletter.

Finally, one of the things that came up during the parish meeting was the debt on our property. We still owe approximately \$386,000. I know that sounds like a lot but we are way ahead of schedule in terms of paying it off. Please continue to pay off your pledges and if you know someone who is looking for a huge tax deduction, send them our way.

Fr. Len can be reached at Rector@stfrancisaustin.org

PRIVATE CONFESSION

Fr. Len Giacalone

As many of you know there are many traditions in the Anglican world surrounding the practice of auricular or private confession of sins to a priest. As one Anglican bishop once told me, "All may, some should, none must." While that is true, it hardly says very much about the nature of the sacrament or the reason it exists in the first place. Some Anglican parishes have confessions scheduled regularly while others do so on an as needed basis. I suppose that there are some that do not use the practice at all.

The practice of individual confession actually originated in the British Isles around the sixth century. Irish monks introduced the practice to simplify the much more involved penitential process that preceded it. Confession of sin and the penance that went with it was often public, personally embarrassing, and increasingly little used. It was not that sin had gone away. Only the penitents had.

Private confession gave penitents the opportunity to confess their sins as Scripture commands us (James 5:16) while avoiding the public humiliation (not an altogether bad thing in some circumstances). Even the Book of Common Prayer recommends it in certain situations. "And because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy Communion but with full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore, if there be any of you, who by this means (examination of conscience, confession to Almighty God with a firm purpose of amendment, reconciliation with neighbors) cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort and counsel, let him come to me, or to some other Minister

of God's Word, and open his grief; that he may receive such godly counsel and advice, as may tend to the quieting of his conscience, and the removing of all scruple and doubtfulness."

Since our public confession and absolution is sufficient for most, private confession has fallen into great disuse. I believe this is unfortunate. There is great value in coming to another to deal with sin in our lives. First of all, it requires that the examination of conscience be acute. It makes us zero in on what the problem really is and makes us acknowledge it. Once we acknowledge it, we can deal with it. Secondly, if the confessor is doing his job, there won't be any excuses allowed. There should be practical advice as well as compassion meted out during the encounter. Thirdly, it wounds our pride and allows us to practice the virtue of humility. Dallas Willard says, "If my pride is untouched when I pray for forgiveness, I have not prayed for forgiveness. I don't even understand it" (The Divine Conspiracy, p.264). Finally, it says in a way unlike any other, that I intend to lead my life differently in the future. It becomes a promise both to God and to the people of God.

Obviously, I won't and can't insist that anyone come to me for individual confession. But I do want you to know that I am available and would rejoice should you wish to do so. If you do not already know it, private confession is absolutely confidential. No priest may reveal anything heard in confession. Nor would he wish to. If you might wish to speak with me about this please know that I would welcome that, too.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

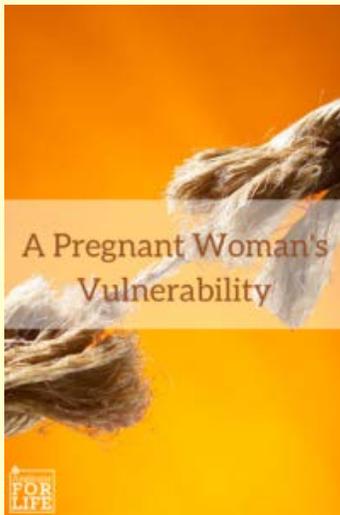
- 1 Dan Harrison
- 2 Bud Lockhart
- 4 Jim Britt, Dominic DeBord
- 5 Patricia Burnette
- 7 Kavya Parker. Willie Parker
- 9 Ed Stillman
- 12 Mike Ready
- 19 LeAnn Carr

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARY

- 15 Jim and Sue Orr

A PREGNANT WOMAN'S VULNERABILITY

The Rev. Dr. W. Ross Blackburn



Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here (Jeremiah 31:8).

In considering this magnificent passage, where the Lord speaks of the return of his people from exile, I want to make one simple observation—that the pregnant and those in labor were to return to the land along with the blind and the lame.

The association is interesting. Why does the Lord speak of the pregnant woman alongside the blind and the lame? What do they all have in common? There is a picture pushed in pro-abortion circles of independent and empowered women making informed choices concerning abortion, certainly without need of help, particularly from men. (Never mind that these empowered women include the 13-year-old they insist should be able to procure an abortion without the knowledge of her parents.)

The notion of the empowered woman is central to their position—that there is no one who can better understand a woman's needs than she and to suggest otherwise is to demean her. This notion, of course, overlooks one important matter. Pregnant women are vulnerable.

I remember the jumble of emotional highs and lows that characterized my wife during the early stages of her pregnancies. And the pervasive feeling of sickness and tiredness that, in her case, didn't lift until the end of the fourth month. I don't assume that all women are just like my wife, but I do know that such is common. If there was ever a time when my wife wasn't empowered to make wise decisions independently (sometimes planning a meal was a trial), it was in those months, a time when she leaned on me in a peculiar way.

God designed pregnancy for marriage and pregnant mothers for husbands. Women in pregnancy are vulnerable. This is not a comment on their competency or ability or anything like that. It is part of the character of pregnancy for many, if not most, women. And why should it not be that way? In a short nine months a mother will carry, nurture, and sustain, and finally bring forth a human baby in all his wonderful complexity. To call it hard work is to sound trite—the baby draws on all his mother's resources as he grows.

A mother is vulnerable, precisely because she gives of her strength. And for those with an unexpected or unwanted child, often without the support of the father or anyone else, the vulnerability is even greater, for she goes it alone in a way she was never meant to. Where is the power? Where are the choices? Fredrica Mathews-Green's graphic picture says it starkly: "No one wants an abortion as she wants an ice-cream cone or a Porsche. She wants an abortion as an animal, caught in a trap, wants to gnaw off its own leg."

The blind, the lame, and...the pregnant woman. In other words, the vulnerable.

In recognizing the vulnerability of a pregnant mother, we do well to recognize two things. First, we live in a world that gladly, even sometimes aggressively, takes advantage of that vulnerability. It is a great temptation to hear that "the problem" can be easily fixed, that abortion is morally respectable decision that strong women make because they—and they only—have the ability to make the best decisions concerning themselves.

What vulnerable women need are real choices—not easy outs that are never finally easy—that help her make her life work as it is, rather than as she may wish it was.

Secondly, acknowledging that pregnant mothers are vulnerable does not demean women. The vulnerability is no shame. God does his most magnificent work within the womb of a pregnant woman. No wonder she is in need. She gives her strength. Her vulnerability simply testifies to the magnificent work that she, and only she, can do.

<https://anglicansforlife.org/2020/12/28/a-pregnant-womans-vulnerability/>

WHAT DOES TROTTER HOUSE DO?

St. Francis has long supported Trotter House, a local pregnancy resource center with locations near the UT campus and in Cedar Park. Charlotte Ready, leader of the St. Francis Anglican for Life Chapter wanted the congregation to know what this organization does to help promote life. She asked Lori DeVillez, the director of Trotter House to write an article about the mission and activities of the organization.

Trotter House: Our mission is to build a culture of life through offering programs and services and assist in helping families thrive.

Trotter House, named after Liliias Trotter, (a missionary in the 1800's to women and children), was founded January 16, 2005 after 7 years of prayer over the Austin community, specifically the UT community. Our goal has always been to build a culture of life by assisting those in need and sharing the Good News of Jesus

How do we do this? Everyone is welcome at Trotter House. Our goal is to assess the initial needs and life situations and develop an individual plan to help our clients in every aspect from meeting the initial physical needs (Matthew 25). Physical needs may be as simple as diapers, formula, wipes and clothing, to finding a safe place to live, to helping complete education, to helping find gainful employment, etc. We always share that the true source for help, healing and hope is only found in receiving Jesus and serving Him (John 3:16).

Our **Life Skills program** helps our clients learn practical life skills from making appointments, to how to care for their baby, to how to parent their children, to how to set a budget and adhere to it, to learning English as a Second Language, to abortion recovery, etc.

Our **boutique** assists with the physical items they may need such as clothing for themselves, baby clothing, diapers, wipes, formula, pack and plays, car seats, bouncy seats, strollers, etc.

Our **Trotter Helps** program assists further with those in crisis by helping them come from homelessness to housing and gainful employment and healthy relationships.

Our staff are certified with Child Protective Service to be a referral organization with Child Protective Service for clients in great need and desiring to regain custody of their children.

We offer **pregnancy testing** and **sonograms** to confirm pregnancy and help refer to good OB/GYN care.

We can refer our clients to professional counseling on-site.

We **offer outreaches** to our clients once a month as they finish their Life Skills and Trotter Helps goals; they then qualify to attend the outreaches.

We offer **Thanksgiving Outreaches** and **Christmas Outreaches** to assist our families with a full Thanksgiving meal and Christmas for the entire family.

We lead in developing an area coalition called the **Austin Area Life Affirming Coalition** (AALAC) to network all life affirming organizations together to serve together and build a stronger culture of life in our community. To date, there are 50 non-profit organizations working together and meeting monthly through the AALAC organization that Trotter House has developed.

We **assist churches** in educating on the issue of life and their involvement in furthering the territory of life.

We **assist other pregnancy centers** around the nation, share our experience through national pregnancy center conferences and assist groups in areas around the nation in developing a pregnancy center in their area.

We recently opened a **new location** in Cedar Park and our plan is to open a location in Leander and Liberty Hill.

We are very excited to serve our community and offer a culture of life in every arena. All of our services are offered free of charge.

Please check out our website: www.trotterhouse.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY OPTIONS

- Pick up a printed copy on the table at the entrance to the church
- Have a copy mailed to your physical mail box (cost to the church is 50 cents)
- View newsletters on our website.

To change how you receive the newsletter, contact Amy Crandell in person or via e-mail.

AMAZON SMILE

St. Francis is now registered as a charity with Amazon. This means that a portion of your Amazon purchases can be donated to St. Francis. To set this up, click this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2564742> and St. Francis will be set as your charity. Then, each time you go to Amazon, enter Smile.Amazon.com in the address line. This is an easy way for the church to get some extra funds.

RANDALLS' GOOD NEIGHBOR PROGRAM

If you shop at Randalls and have a Remarkable Card, you can go to customer service and have them add the number 1304 to your account. Each quarter, Randalls rebates to St. Francis 1% of the total spent by their partners.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

At the annual meeting on Jan. 24, it was announced that Doug Cooper will be the Senior Warden for the next year. The other officers will be selected at the Vestry meeting on Feb. 8.

Also discussed was possibly starting the service at 10:00 a.m. If you have an opinion on that, please email Fr. Len at Rector@stfranciaustin.org so that the Vestry can have some information to work with to make their decision.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE PRAYER VIGIL

NOT canceled! From February 17th- March 28th we will unite with hundreds of cities across the world for a simultaneous 40-day prayer vigil. 40 Days for Life is a 40-day campaign of prayer & fasting, education, and a constant peaceful prayer vigil in front of abortion facilities. This international movement has resulted in

100+ abortion facilities closing, over 200 abortion workers having conversions and leaving their jobs, and over 17,000 women choosing life for children they were going to abort. Here in Central Texas at least 284 women have changed their minds and choose life! On February 7, please stop by the Coalition for Life table to find out how you can get involved with this powerful and life-saving movement. You can also find information online at CentralTexasCoalition.com or by calling the Coalition for Life office at (512) 296-2071.

LENTEN FOOD DRIVE

A St. Francis food drive benefitting the Food Pantry at St. Louis the King of France Catholic church will be conducted during Lent.

The St. Louis food pantry provides food assistance to the needy of our community and is the largest food pantry in Austin. Volunteers distribute food on Saturday mornings from 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. This is one of several social ministries this large parish can offer. The St. Louis food pantry is a partner with the Capitol Area Food Bank. On a typical Saturday, up to 80 families who live in the central Austin area receive food assistance.

Bea De la Rosa is the Director of Social Ministries and welcomes contributions, but she does have specific items the pantry will accept from a food drive like this:

Protein

- Canned chicken
- Canned tuna
- Canned Salmon
- Spam

Starch/Protein

- 1-2 lb. bag white rice
- 1-2 lb. bag pinto beans
- Oatmeal
- Mac & Cheese

Vegetables

- 14 oz. Canned Corn
- 14 oz. Canned Green Beans

There will be a table set up in the St. Francis entry hall for donations. The drive will begin on Feb. 21st and end on Palm Sunday, March 28. Consider purchasing some or all of the items on the list and bringing them to church during Lent.

ACTIVITIES AT ST. FRANCIS

While it may seem that things have ground to a halt at St. Francis that is far from the truth. While many people consider it prudent to participate in the activities remotely via Zoom, the website, or Facebook Live, others are participating in-person in some events. Here is what is still happening and consider what you might do to participate in the parish life during the pandemic.

Description	Date and Time	Notes	How many participate?
Weekly Holy Communion Service	Sundays, 9:30 a.m.	In-person and livestreamed on Facebook. Available after the service from the web.	35-45 in-person, 16 via Facebook Live and 8 from the website.
Choir Practice	Sundays, 10:45 a.m.	In-person only	4
Youth Sunday School classes	Sundays, 9:45 a.m.	In-person only	Two adults and up to 13 students
Nursery	Sundays, 9:15 a.m.	In-person only	Up to 5 children
Prayers for the Nation	1st Saturday, 9:00 a.m.	In-person and via Zoom	4 via Zoom, 3 in-person
Home Group	2nd & 4th Sundays, 7:00 p.m.	Via Zoom	4
Vestry meeting	2nd Monday, 6:00 p.m.	Via Zoom	9 members of the vestry
Home Group	Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m.	Via Zoom	Up to 13
Evening Prayer	Thursdays, 7 p.m.	In-person and via Zoom	6 in-person, 2 via Zoom
Home Group	2nd & 4th Friday, 7:30 p.m.	Via Zoom	9 -10
Mothers' Prayer Group	3rd Friday, noon	In-person only	3
Mobile Loaves and Fishes	4th Friday, 4:30 p.m.	In-person only	Up to 6
Altar Guild	Weekly or more	In-person only	12 regular and substitutes
Anglicans for Life	Virtual only	Activities continue, no meetings	Everyone can participate in the activities
St. Clare's Guild	Via email	As needed	12
Intercessory Prayer Group	Via email	Members pray at home	16
Prayer Shawl Ministry	At home	Knit or crochet at home	3

Suspended Activities: the 11:00 service, Acolytes (other than Arthur Woodgate). Jr. Altar Guild, Games Night, Coffee Hour, Lectors, Nursing Home Visits, St. Polycarp's Guild, Ushers, and Women of the Church meetings.

FEBRUARY SUNDAY READINGS

2/7 Sexagesima ([link](#))

- 2 Kings 4:18-21, 32-37
- Psalm 142
- 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
- Mark 1:29-39

2/14 Quinquagesima ([link](#))

- 1 Kings 19:9-18
- Psalm 27
- 2 Peter 1:16-21
- Mark 9:2-9

2/17 Ash Wednesday ([link](#))

- Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
- Psalm 103:8-14
- 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
- Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

2/21 1 Lent ([link](#))

- Genesis 9:8-17
- Psalm 25:3-9
- 1 Peter 3:18-22
- Mark 1:9-13

2/28 2 Lent ([link](#))

- Genesis 22:1-14
- Psalm 16
- Romans 8:31-39
- Mark 8:31-38

3/7 3 Lent ([link](#))

- Exodus 20:1-17
- Psalm 19:7-14
- Romans 7:13-25
- John 2:13-22

Notes on the readings:

- St. Francis follows the [1979 BCP Lectionary](#) for the lessons. We are in Year B.
- The text read at the service is from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.
- Each of the listed Sunday readings is linked to the corresponding page on [LectionaryPage.net](#).
- The Sunday collects and text of the psalms are generally from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

Notes on the calendar:

- For now, the 9:30 service will be live streamed on Facebook and recorded and posted to the web site. The 11:00 service will not be held at this time.
- To join any of the meetings or services held via Zoom, email info@stfrancisaustrin.org.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sundays

9:30 a.m. Holy Communion in-person, live streamed and recorded. Nursery is provided from 9:15-11:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m. Sunday School for youth

10:45 a.m. Choir Practice

Tuesdays

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Home Group. Meeting online via Zoom.

Thursdays

7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer in-person in the Nave and via Zoom

2nd and 4th Sunday

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Home Group. Meeting via Zoom.

2nd and 4th Friday

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Home Group. Meeting via Zoom.

February 6, 1st Saturday

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Prayers for the Nation in-person in the fellowship hall and via Zoom

February 8, 2nd Monday

6:00 p.m. Vestry meeting via Zoom

February 15, 3rd Monday

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Readers of First Things group online meeting. Contact Karl Stephan at kdstephan@txstate.edu to join the online meeting via Zoom or come in person to the fellowship hall.

February 17, Ash Wednesday

Noon. Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion, in-person only

7:00 p.m. Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion, in-person only

February 20, 3rd Friday

NOON to 1:00 p.m. Mother's Prayer Group in-person only in the fellowship hall

February 27, 4th Friday

4:30 p.m. Mobile Loaves & Fishes Make Ready Team in-person at St. Louis Catholic Church, Social Ministries Building

5:30 p.m. Food Truck Run, in-person, starts at St. Louis Catholic Church



ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

ST. FRANCIS ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTIN

A parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth

Diocese Office: 2900 Alameda St.

Fort Worth, TX 76108

<http://www.fwepiscopal.org/>

Bishop: The Rt. Rev'd Ryan Reed

Rector: The Rev. Canon Len Giacolone

Music Director: Betty Lin Gallardo

Parish Administrator: Mark Rambin

Treasurer: Grady Collins

Vestry Officers

Senior Warden **Junior Warden**

Doug Cooper

TBD

Secretary

TBD

Vestry Members

Jim Britt, Donna Hunt, David Kristo-Reinking

Doug Cooper, Jim Crandell, Michael Ready

Christina Hatley, Bill Palmer

Fr. Len Giacolone

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ST. FRANCIS' MISSION STATEMENT

- We are a community of believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ whose mission it is to spread that Gospel in what we preach and in the way we live.
- We are called to know the Word of God, to act on it in our lives and to share it with our brothers and sisters in the world.
- We are determined to uphold the ancient faith of our ancestors in the Anglican tradition, to offer traditional Christian values based on the Holy Word of God and to be faithful witnesses to the person of Jesus in the Austin Community.
- St. Francis parish is dedicated to the presence of Christ in the lives of the poor, the needy, the sick, to each other and to all those to whom Jesus comes to minister in his life on earth.
- As a community of believers, we intend to entrust our growth in love, in faith and in resources to the generosity of God.