

The measure of love is to love without measure.

St. Francis de Sales Parish

BE FAITH-FILLED. BE OF SERVICE. BE DEVOUT.



SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Please call the parish office at 330-644-2225 to make arrangements for

**Baptisms | Anointing of the Sick
Funerals | Weddings**

Arrangements for weddings are to be made at least six months prior to the wedding date.

EDUCATION

St. Francis de Sales Parish School
330-644-0638 | stfparishschool.org

PSR, Youth Ministry & Faith Formation
Call the parish office at 330-644-2225 to enroll or find out more.

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00 p.m.
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m.
Monday-Saturday: 8:15 a.m.
Thursday: 6:30 p.m.

Confessions

Thursday: 5:30-6:15 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00-9:45 a.m.
or call the office to make an appointment.

Adoration

Monday: 7:00-8:00 a.m., 6:00-10:00 p.m.,
Tuesday-Friday: 7:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.
(breaking for Masses)

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 21, 2025**

*Masses For
The Week*



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21,
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

- 7:30 a.m. Irma Dubetz (Family)
9:00 a.m. Pro Populo
11:00 a.m. Dan Kelly (Kelly Family)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

- 8:15 a.m. Rosemarie Schrader (Family)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, ST. JOHN KANTY

- 8:15 a.m. Louise Miller (Linda Sams)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

- 8:15 a.m. Jeannene Alt (Daughter)
4:00 p.m. Florence Cascioli (Bob & Debbie Craft)
6:00 p.m. Deceased of the Scherer Family
(Cathy Scherer)

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25,
THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

- 12:00 a.m. Priest's Intention
9:00 a.m. Priest's Intention
11:00 a.m. Pro Populo

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, ST. STEPHEN

- 8:15 a.m. Irene Wilkinson (Family)
Edward Hellwig – Month's Mind

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, ST. JOHN

- 8:15 a.m. Jim Eckman (Eckman Family)
5:00 p.m. Pro Populo

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, THE HOLY FAMILY OF
JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH**

- 7:30 a.m. Barb Duckworth (John Duckworth)
9:00 a.m. Carol Swam (Sister, Linda)
11:00 a.m. Sue Kurtz & Elizabeth Jackie Wargo
(Dan & Sue Wargo)

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday:** 1 Sam 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56
Tuesday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66
Wednesday: 2 Sam 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Lk 1:67-79
Thursday: Is 52:7-10; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18
Friday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22
Saturday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a and 2-8
Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17;
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

REST IN PEACE

Please remember in prayer the soul of **Sandra Bulgrin**, sister of parishioner Sharon Misanko. *May she rest in the peace of Christ, and may He comfort her family and friends.*

**LET THE LORD ENTER...OPEN THE DOOR
OF YOUR HEART!**

What a beautiful Psalm to contemplate and live out as we approach Christmas! As we enter into the Christmas season, we remember a simple truth: when the Son of God came into the world, there was "no room for them in the inn." The door of the world, symbolized by the heavy wooden door of that Bethlehem lodging, was closed to its own creator.



Two thousand years later, we might ask ourselves: Has anything changed? Christ is no longer confined to a manger, but He still stands at a door, waiting. The difference is that the door He knocks on now is the door of your heart.

We often hear the gentle invitation, but we keep the door partially locked. Perhaps it's locked by the clutter of worry, the bolt of busyness, the chain of old resentments, or the comfortable lock of self-sufficiency. We invite Him in, but only slightly, allowing Him into the 'parlor' of our lives while keeping the 'mud rooms' guarded.

But the late Pope St. John Paul II gave us a more radical instruction: "Do not be afraid. **Open wide the doors for Christ!**"

To "throw open" the door is a gesture of radical surrender. It means sweeping away the clutter, casting aside the fear, and inviting the infinite light of Bethlehem into the darkest, dustiest, and most guarded corners of your soul.

This Christmas, make that choice. Do not just crack the door; throw it open. When you welcome the Lord into your life without reservation, He doesn't bring judgment; He brings the peace that surpasses all understanding, the joy that cannot be extinguished, and the love that was born in a stable just for you. Let us leave this place tonight, not as innkeepers who turned Him away, but as souls who have finally made room, praise God!

I would like to leave you with a song Harry D. Clarke wrote in 1924 called "Throw Open the Door of Your Heart." Let's strive to live this song this Christmas season and always!

Throw open the door of your heart today, the Savior stands waiting outside; He'll cleanse you from sin, bring you peace within...

Throw open the door of your heart today, and bid the dear Savior come in; His presence will drive all the gloom away...

Throw open the door of your heart today, before the dear Savior departs; Eternity waits you, your doom is sure...

Throw open the door of your heart. Open the door, open the door, throw open the door of your heart; why not accept Him? Oh, do not reject Him! Throw open the door of your heart.

Merry Christmas!
Fr. Jeremy

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

- Youth Group service opportunity at Peter Maurin Center, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. meet at St. Francis de Sales
- Choir Practice, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

- No School
- No PSR & Ignite

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23

- No School
- Choir Practice, 7:00 p.m. (Church)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

- No School
- Parish Office Closed
- Masses at 4:00 p.m. (Children's Choir) and 6:00 p.m.
- AA/Al-Anon, 7:30-9:00 p.m. (Refectory)
- Midnight Mass, 12:00 a.m., choir prelude at 11:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

- Merry Christmas!
- Masses at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26

- No School
- Parish Office Closed

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27

- Men's Group, 7:00 a.m. (Holy Family Room)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

- Prayers for Healing, after 11:00 Mass, meet by St. Anthony statue

PARISH STAFF	ROLE AND EMAIL
Fr. Jeremy Merzweiler	Pastor frmerzweiler@stfparish.com
Fr. David Verbsky	Parochial Vicar frverbsky@stfparish.com
Dc. Raymond Herrick	Deacon deaconherrick@stfparish.com
Dc. Richard Butz	Retired Deacon deaconbutz@gmail.com
Kathryn Dougherty	Principal mrskdougherty@stfparishschool.org
Kara Lloyd	School Secretary mrsllloyd@stfparishschool.org
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Shirley Clark	Liturgical Life Coordinator sclark@stfparish.com
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Colleen Wilson	Communications Coordinator cwilson@stfparish.com
Susan Undercoffer	Administrative Assistant sundercoffer@stfparish.com
Katy Markovich	VIRTUS Coordinator kmarkovich@stfparish.com
St. Vincent de Paul Society	A helping hand in times of need 330-958-5270

COLLECTION INFORMATION

December 13 & 14

Sunday	Offertory	13,220.00
Assessment		195.00
Capital		110.00
School		310.00
Special Collections		2,632.00
TOTAL		\$16,467.00

Thank you for your generosity!



III Justin Bryant & Colleen Wilson
II David Kim & Savannah Nichols

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE PARISH STAFF

Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.

The Parish Staff wishes you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and a grace-filled New Year! The Parish Office will be closed December 24 through December 26 and December 31 through January 2.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

"Every call from the Lord is, above all, a call to His joy."

- Pope Leo XIV

Every week, families or individuals bring the vocation crucifix into their home to pray for vocations.

The Stavarz Family received the Vocation Crucifix this weekend. If you are open to praying for vocations, please contact the Parish Office at 330-644-2225 or cwilson@stfparish.com. There are dozens of weeks to be filled on the schedule.



ADORERS NEEDED

Adorers are needed for the following times: Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., and Fridays, 5:00-6:00 p.m. Please call Joanne at 330-338-4810, if you are able to help with these times.



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

WELCOME TO ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.



Would you like to join our parish family?
To register, contact the Parish Office at
330-644-2225, see a priest after Mass,
or use the QR code below.



Get parish updates by email or text by signing
up for Flocknote. Text STFDS to 84576, use
the QR code, or sign up online at
stfrancisdesalesparish1.flocknote.com



ADVENT

CONFESSIONS

- Thursdays, 5:30-6:15 p.m.
- Saturdays, 9:00-9:45 a.m.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

- Mondays, 7:00-8:00 a.m., 6:00-10:00 p.m.
- Tuesday-Friday, 7:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.
(breaking for Mass)

SUNDAY NIGHT PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

Every Sunday during Advent – November 30,
December 7, 14, and 21 – join us for night prayer from
8:00-8:30 p.m. in the church

MASS SCHEDULE

Feast of the Nativity of the Lord, Christmas

Wednesday, December 24

Vigil – 4:00 p.m. (Children's Choir); 6:00 p.m.

Midnight (Choir Prelude at 11:30 p.m.)

Thursday, December 25 – 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph

Saturday, December 27, Vigil – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 28

7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., & 11:00 a.m.

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Wednesday, December 31, Vigil – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 1 – 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord

Saturday, January 3, Vigil – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 4 – 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., & 11:00 a.m.

GIFTS FOR EMBRACE CLINIC & CARE CENTER

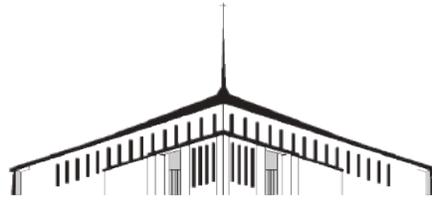
The collection of baby items for the Embrace Clinic and Care Center in Barberton begins this weekend, December 20 and 21 and continues to the weekend of December 27 and 28. There will be a crib in the Narthex to place items. This is a beautiful way to honor and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ while helping those in crisis pregnancies like the family of the unborn baby you may have been praying for all year with the Spiritual Adoption program that we encourage each year. The center expressed the need for children's clothing up to size 4 (i.e., underwear, socks, winter clothes, coats and boots); Baby formula Enfamil Neuropro Care Gentlease, purple can or Enfamil Gentlease Infant Formula, yellow can. If you wish to donate money, about \$50.00 will buy a car seat, \$100.00 will buy a crib, and \$150.00 will buy a crib and mattress. You can mail monetary donations to: Embrace Clinic and Care Center, 180 1st Street, NW, Barberton, OH 44203. Thank you very much from the Respect Life Ministry.

BLOOD DRIVE

Give a gift that can save lives. On December 29, the Red Cross will host a Blood Drive in the Memorare Center. Those who come to donate blood will receive an exclusive Red Cross long-sleeved T-shirt, while supplies last. See RedCrossBlood.org/Gifts for details. Preregister online to donate at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEW YEAR'S EVE

Tickets are on sale for the South Akron Knights of Columbus Black and Gold New Year's Eve Party on Wednesday, December 31, 2025 from 7:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m. The cost is \$35.00 per person or \$60.00 per couple. Tickets include a catered dinner, drinks, and dancing. Contact Jeanne and Elmer for tickets at 330-322-4993 or 330-388-1980.



***We welcome our newest parishioners...
We're so happy you're here!***

***Braun, Abigail and Swayzie Miller
Brown, Carson and Mercedes
Carrino, Felicia
Clark, Philip, Heather, Evan, Nolan, Ella and Molly
Conrad, Charity
Dear, Lily
Liebhart, Christopher and Sarah
Marino, Kathleen
McCulligan, Natalie
Miller, Braun, Abigail, and Swayzie
Motz, Emily, Jacob, Evelyn, Samuel and Hannah
Quinn, Dan, Shannon, Mary, John and Josephine
Robinson, Elijah, Morganne and Quentin
Sanzone, Adrienne***

***And the newly Baptized...
welcome to our faith community!***

*Andi Josephine Beagle
Clara Frances Brately
Claire Anne Christopher
Ella Rose Clark
Molly Grace Clark
Sloan Aodhan Crawford
Baylor John Glinn
Lincoln Eli Gregory
Joseph Michael Hercules
Alaina Kelly McAleese*

*Charlotte Marie McNeill
Killian Giorgio McNeill
Nelly Inez McPeters
Swayzie Jo Miller
Ruby Josephine Oliverio
James Colin Pamer
Brielle Goldie Perona
Oliver Michael Petit
Quentin Cameron Robinson
Lainey Jane Saunier*

If you are interested in joining the parish or having your child baptized, please call the Parish Office at 330-644-2225. Our staff will be happy to help you!

The above are families who registered and individuals who were baptized in September-December 2025.

HEALING PRAYER

Next Sunday, December 28, after the 11:00 a.m. Mass, the St. Francis Healing Ministry will be available to pray with you for healing following Mass. Do you have an upcoming surgery or test? Do you suffer from some chronic illness, or something new? Jesus, Our Healer, is here for you. Come to the back left of the church, by the St. Anthony statue following 11:00 a.m. Mass for prayers.

ANGELS' INTEGRAL ROLE IN OUR LIVES

We can tend to think of angels as primarily active in heaven. It may surprise you to learn how active they are in our world and that there are concrete ways we can grow in our spiritual lives through the assistance of the angels. Come and join the St. Francis Women's Study Group as we read and study *His Angels at Our Side: Understanding Their Power in Our Souls and the World*, by Fr. John Horgan. We meet on Tuesdays, 9:00-11:00 a.m., beginning January 6, 2026, in the Memorare Center. For more information, contact Lori at gutbrods@att.net. For help ordering a book, contact Michelle at mypower36@yahoo.com.

YOUTH GROUP

All 9th-12th graders are welcome to join us on Sunday evenings in the Memorare Center from 7:00-8:30 p.m.! Email Abby (agresser@stfparish.com) with questions about any of these events. Regular updates and registration for field trips/retreats are sent out via email. Contact Abby in order to join the email list.

December 21 – Service Project at Peter Maurin Center, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. meet at St. Francis de Sales.

December 28 – No Youth Group (Christmas Break)

December 30 – Youth Group Christmas Party, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

January 4 – No Youth Group (Christmas Break)

January 10 – CLE 21:6 Conference, all day at John Carroll University

January 11 – No Youth Group (CLE 21:6 Weekend)

January 18 – Semester Kickoff, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

January 25 – Priests vs. Seminarians Basketball Game at Holy Name High School

Save the date for the Steubenville Youth Conference: July 17-19, 2026.



RETREAT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER UPDATE

Thank you for your overwhelming support of our retreat scholarship fundraiser! To date, you have helped us raise \$8,650.67, which is above and beyond our goal of \$5,050.00. God bless your generosity! This money will be used to send our middle school and high school students to retreats, camps, and conferences that awaken and deepen their faith. We will be able to offer need-based scholarships to families, cover the cost of attendance for chaperones who give so generously of their time, and cover the cost of things such as group transportation, so that we do not have to pass those costs along to families. Some

of the experiences we are offering to our students include both a Confirmation Retreat and Summer Camp at Damascus, the Steubenville Youth Conference at Franciscan University, CLE 21:6 & CLE Middle Conferences hosted by the Diocese of Cleveland, and more. To our teens and their families: please let us know if you are in need of financial assistance in order to attend any of these events. God is waiting for you to say "yes" so that He can do something beautiful in your life!



ANGEL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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HOW TO DONATE:

1. Visit the Catholic Community- Angel Scholarship Fund website.
2. Donate up to \$750 (filing single) or \$1500 (filing joint) for a state tax credit.
3. **IMPORTANT:** Indicate **St. Francis de Sales** as the recipient of your donation to ensure we receive your funds!

NEW FOR 2026-2027

Donate \$500-750 (single) or \$1000-1500 (joint) and receive an entry token for a cash drawing reward! The more donations equal the higher reward!

Single donation = 1 entry token
Joint donation = 2 entry tokens

Drawing will likely be early summer 2026.

COMING SOON!

Coming for Tax Year 2027, a new **federal tax credit** allowing taxpayers to get a credit for donations made to Scholarship Granting Organizations (Angel Scholarship). The credit will take effect on January 1, 2027. Individuals can claim a maximum credit of \$1,700 (\$3,400 for married couples)!

To donate, scan the QR Code or visit

<https://www.catholiccommunity.org/support/catholic-education/angel-scholarship-fund>



Help our children grow in faith!
Donate to the Angel Scholarship Fund!

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