

# St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church

12001 69th St. East, Parrish, Fl. 34219

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

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OFFICE HOURS

M,T,Wed. Th, F 7:00am-3:00pm

## GOOD TIDINGS of COMFORT & JOY



**SCHEDULE OF MASSES**  
**Daily Mass: WED. THU, FRI -8:30 am**  
**Tuesday 5:30PM**

**Saturday Vigil: 4:00 PM**  
**Sunday: 8:00 AM & 9:45 AM**  
**Pastor: Fr. Joseph Gates**

### **PARISH STAFF**

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Liturgy Coordinator: Lydia Herrera  
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Maintenance: Roger Rodriguez  
Data Entry: Tom Moline

# DECEMBER 24, 2023

## Weekly Mass Intentions



WELCOME  
WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE

### SATURDAY

4:00 pm

Req. By;

### SUNDAY

8:00am

Req. By

9:45 am

Req. By:

2nd. Int.

Req. By

CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL Dec. 24, 2023

4:00pm

Req. By:

6:00pm

Req. By;

MONDAY CHRISTMAS DAY December 25

12:00 AM

Req. BY;

2nd Int:

10:00 AM

Req. By;

2nd Int,

Req. BY:

### TUESDAY

5:30am

Req. By:

### WEDNESDAY

8:30am

Req. By:

### THURSDAY

8:30am

Req. By;

2nd Int.

Req. BY

### FRIDAY

4:00 pm

Req. By:

### SATURDAY

4:00pm

Req. By:

### SUNDAY

8:00am

Req. By:

9:45am

Req. By:

2nd Int.

Req. By;

### DECEMBER 23, 2023

+MARY & FRANCIS MOBERG

Eddie & Peg Brady

### DECEMBER 24

+ MEN NGUYEN

Bella

+RACHEL RODRIGUES

Lydia

+JOHN WISNIEWSKI

Wife, Lisa

### CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL Dec. 24, 2023

+LENORE BURNS

Family

+ SHEILA JOHNSON

James & Pamela Greene

### MONDAY CHRISTMAS DAY December 25

+PAUL BALCER

Wife & Family

+ JEAN SPITKOVSKY

+BARBARA VIZZARI

Loving Family

+ KEN DARGA

Gail, Mike, & Leann

### DECEMBER 26

+GUS ELLIOT b-DAY

Joe & Ginny

### DECEMBER 27

+THERESA DUMAIS

Grandson James

### DECEMBER 28

LUCY D' SAUZA b-DAY

Joe & Ginny

+KEVIN GONZALES

Mom

### DECEMBER 29

+WILLIAM E. HOOD 111

Judith Hood

### DECEMBER 30

PALMIRA FARIA

Alice Burns

### DECEMBER 31

+KATHERINE DAWSON

Friends of Family

+EUGENE JACKSON

Daughter Nerina

+EAMON McGEOUGH

Frank & Susan Ward

**\*DO NOT WAIT TILL THE LAST MINUTE\***

If in Hospice at home—please call as soon as possible preferably during the day!

Emergency Number **813-629-3963** for priest in case Of Death.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READING

First Reading 11:2Sm7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16

Psalms 89:2-5,27,29

Second Reading Rom 16:25-27

Gospel Reading Lk 1:26-38

### SACRAMENTS:

#### Contact the Office

**Baptism:** For registered & active parishioners:  
**Baptism instruction is required for Parents.**

#### **Reconciliation:**

Saturdays 2:00-3:00 PM  
In the main Church  
or by Appointment

**Weddings:** Must be arranged with the pastor at least **6 months before the date** desired.

**Funerals:** Please contact the Office for a meeting for Dates, Readings, and music. There are certain policies in place at St. Frances Cabrini for the respectful burial of your loved ones.



### Thrift Store Hours

9:00 AM—2:00 PM

Monday-Friday

Closed: Wednesday & Weekends

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

#### MONDAY THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

16: Is 52:7-10 Ps 98:1-6 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18

#### TUESDAY ST. STEPHEN

696: Acts 6:8-10,7:54-59 Ps 31:3cd-4,6,8ab,16bc-17 Mt 10:17-22

#### WEDNESDAY ST. JOHN

697: 1Jn1:1-4 Ps 97:1-2,5-6,11-12 Jn 20:1a,2-8

#### THURSDAY THE HOLY INNOCENTS

698: 1Jn1:5—2:2 Ps124:2-5,7b-8 Mt 2:13-18

#### FRIDAY ST. THOMAS BECKET

202:1Jn 2:3-11 Ps 96:1-3,5b-6 Lk 2:22-35



### Supporting our Diocese

Thank you to all who have helped us reach our CFA Goal. Most especially to our Parishioners and Thrift Store Volunteers!



### Parish Focused Giving

Helping to relieve our Parish of St. Frances Cabrini Debt!  
Debt Free by 2023

Goal: \$174,559.61  
Raised So Far: \$42,695.00

## Christmas Mass Schedule

The Christmas Masses DO NOT SATISFY the **4th Sunday of Advent** Obligation. Catholics are still required to observe the Sunday obligation.

Dec. 23 4:00pm Vigil (w/overflow)

Dec. 24. 8:00am & 9:45am

### Christmas Eve & Day Masses

Dec. 24: 4:00pm, 6:00pm,  
12:00am (Midnight Mass)

Dec. 25: 10:00am

Overflow is available for all Masses in the Cabrini Hall.





DECEMBER 24, 2023



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# Benefit

# Car & Truck Show

Show Car Registration Fee \$15, Best Car Prizes




January 13th 2024 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Proceeds to Benefit The Tunnel to Towers Foundation and the St. Frances Cabrini Church Faith Formation Program

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# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



FORMING DISCIPLES SINCE 2008



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# DECEMBER 24, 2023

## The Manger and the Cross Point to the Same Truth by Constance T. Hull

Two nights ago, my husband asked me to help him put something in the garage. It was there—out of earshot of our daughter—that he told me that he is coughing up blood again. His new medication is not working as we had hoped it would and he needs to go back on prednisone until we can figure out what to do about his chronic illness moving forward. We both know another flare up means more unseen irreparable damage to his lungs. There we stood on a dark, cold Advent night, the Cross we carry as a family grows heavy once more.

The Cross casts its long shadow over the manger where the Christ-child lays. The same is true for each one of us, even in the midst of the joys and festivities of the season. This reality is more tangible for all of us at different periods in our lives. We come face-to-face with the Cross when we are called to shoulder the burdens of chronic or terminal illness, the loss of a loved one, unemployment, loneliness, poverty, infertility, or any other affliction. It is in those times when we see that Christmas wouldn't matter without the Paschal Mystery.

It would be impossible to accept the painful reality that my husband—over the course of a few years or decades—will slowly drown in his own blood, if it were not for the joy of the Incarnation and the love shown to us on the Cross on Good Friday. Christmas only makes sense in the light of Calvary and Easter morning. The manger and the Cross point to the same truth. That Christ came to die for us, so that we could have eternal life and to free us from the bonds of sin and death.

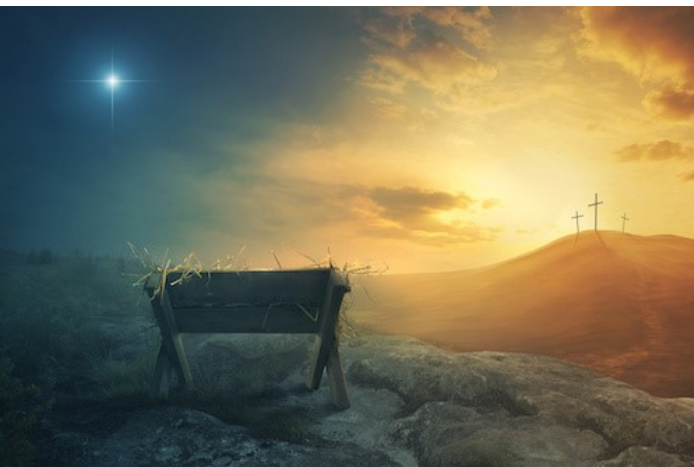
It was not so much that His birth cast a shadow on His life, and thus led to His death; it was rather that the Cross was there from the beginning, and it cast its shadow backward to His birth. Ordinary mortals go from known to the unknown submitting themselves to forces beyond their control; hence we can speak of their “tragedies.” But He went from the known to the known, from the reason for His coming, namely, to be “Jesus” or “Savior,” to the fulfillment of His coming, namely, the death on the Cross. – *Venerable Fulton J. Sheen, Life of Christ, 30.*

The invitation the Christ-child extends to us each Christmas, is to walk the same path to Calvary. In the mysterious gift of the Incarnation, we come to see what love will cost us. It will cost us everything. This is the road to joy and the ultimate way to happiness: to die-to-self.

Christ entered into the world in poverty on a cold, dark night in a cave. He invites us into that poverty of spirit in our daily lives as we learn to be emptied of our own wants and desires so that we can give everything over to God. Each time my husband tells me that he is coughing up blood, I am reminded of the heavy Cross we have been given. God shows me that my plans and my ways are not His own. It's the same reminder that I'm given each time I want another child, but I once more have to accept that it is not God's will. It's the reminder I am given every time I must battle to offer up every ounce of my suffering for priests. Our lives are not our own. This life is about surrendering in love to the Cross.

To go to the Christ-Child in the manger in the dead of night, to walk that lonely road to the cave, is to be willing to surrender our entire being to Him. We cannot enter into the mystery, awe, wonder, and joy of Christmas without giving ourselves fully to God. The joy we experience in this life and the next is dependent upon how much we are willing to give over to God. He pours His infinite love into us, but we are the ones who must choose to accept it and what is required in that Divine Love. The cost is high in our Fallen state because love is the Cross.

Standing on that cold December night with my husband in the middle of Advent, reminded me that the pilgrimage to the manger, requires a willingness on my part to surrender everything to God on the Cross. Advent is a time of waiting and preparation, but we can only be prepared for the joy of the Incarnation in the measure that we give ourselves over to Christ. We must say “yes” to our own Crosses. We must remember that Christmas is not separate from Good Friday. They are unified in purpose and in the person of Jesus Christ.



Let us take these final days of Advent to surrender our lives more fully to Christ. May He fill us with the comfort, strength, and peace we need to make our pilgrim way to the manger at Christmas no matter the Crosses we are asked to carry in this life. He is always with us, especially on dark nights when the weight of the Cross threatens to knock us to the ground. He is walking with us in these final Advent days and He will be waiting for each one of us in the manger at Christmas.

## Why Did I Choose Catholicism Instead of Another Religion? By Peter Kreeft

There are many religions in the world. Why did I choose to be a Catholic? Here are the steps in my reasoning.

**Religion or No Religion?** - My first choice was between religion and no religion. *Religion* means a “yoke” or a “binding-back relationship.” Religion is a relationship with God. (*God* here is taken in the broadest sense as at least some higher power, something greater than us.) So, an atheist is one who believes that there is no God at all, and therefore there ought to be no religion at all.

The arguments against atheism are well known. The two that are mentioned in the Bible are,

**The evidence in nature:** Who made it? Did the “Big Bang” just happen for no reason or cause? And why is it so intelligently designed?

**The absoluteness of conscience:** Why is it always morally wrong to disobey your conscience deliberately? Where did it get that absolute authority if it didn’t come from God but only from chance, genetics, evolution, society, or your parents, none of which are infallible?)

The two basic reasons I’m not an atheist are not my mother and father, but my conscience and my universe.

**One or Many?** - My next choice was between one God and many gods. Polytheism is not a live option today. It’s almost totally dead. I’ve never met a polytheist. In fact, in one sense, polytheism never existed, because behind all the many gods of polytheism we almost always find one supreme God. Something or Somebody must be Number One. There can’t be two absolutely absolute absolutes.

**Theism or Pantheism?** - My next choice was between the God of the Bible, who personally created the universe, and the god of pantheism (the god of Upanishadic Hinduism, or the cosmic “Buddha mind,” or the Tao, or “the Force” of “Star Wars”), which is not a superhuman person with a moral will but just a nameless mind or force or ideal.

One reason for preferring biblical theism to pantheism is that the pantheist’s god is everything, and therefore is evil as well as good. I cannot love or worship or guide my life by a god who has a “dark side,” who is half evil or indifferent to good and evil.

Another reason for theism over pantheism is that only the God of the Bible (of Judaism and Christianity and Islam) unites what have always been the two deepest instincts in the human heart — namely, the religious instinct and the moral instinct. We are morally responsible to this God.

**Do I Accept Christ’s Divinity or Not?** - My next choice, once this God is accepted, is whether to accept or reject Jesus’ claim to be divine, to be the Son of this God. That is the essence of Christian theology, as distinct from Jewish or Islamic.

I cannot get around the “Lord, liar, or lunatic” argument. If Jesus is not divine, then He was the maddest madman or the most blasphemous egomaniac who ever lived; not the best of men but the worst. “I’m divine; worship me; trust me with your soul’s eternal salvation. I am perfect. It was I who designed your universe and your soul.” Has anyone in history ever told a bigger lie than that?

If that’s who He really was (either liar or lunatic), then who invented the Jesus of the Gospels, who is the polar opposite of both a liar and a lunatic: honest, altruistic, passionate, wise, practical, creative, saintly, and fascinating? That last adjective is the most telling one because it is impossible to imitate successfully. Once you get to know them, lunatics are never really fascinating, and neither, once they become familiar, are lying egomaniacs.

Even if Jesus is totally fictional, He is the most fascinating and compelling literary figure in human history. Who invented Him? If He is fictional, who invented that new genre of realistic fantasy twenty centuries before Tolkien? A bunch of peasant Galilean fishermen?

### Is the Church the One Jesus Founded?

The next choice was about the claim of the Catholic Church to be the Church Christ founded and authorized. This was harder for me, since I was brought up as a Protestant. But the historical record of the Catholic Church’s continuity in doctrine, in apostolic succession, and in her belief in the Eucharistic Real Presence for two thousand years is data too massive to ignore or explain away.

If I was going to be a Christian, I had to be where Christ Himself wanted me to be, in the thing He Himself created for me as my spiritual home and as the instrument of His teaching authority. And the Bible itself tells us that that thing is not just the Bible but the Church.

So, the links in the chain are: (1) religion, not atheism; (2) monotheism, not polytheism; (3) theism, not pantheism; (4) Christianity, and therefore Trinitarianism, not Unitarianism; and (5) Catholicism, not Protestantism. Or, (1) Higher Power, (2) One, (3) Creator, (4) Christ, (5) Church.

The three most important links in this chain are the last ones: that the material universe is God’s creation, Christ is God’s incarnation, and the Church is Christ’s body.

All that is not yet quite a *proof* but is the map of a journey, which can also be the map of a proof, i.e., a justification of the journey, an obeying of the first pope’s command to “be prepared to make a defense [of] the hope that is in you” (1 Pet. 3:15). The details of that justification are in many good books of apologetics. (Catholicexchange.com)





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