



The Crossroads Messenger

The official newsletter of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church • Mount Washington, Kentucky

Advent 2024



Showcasing Our Many Ministries

Wende Aubrey
Engagement Coordinator

Fair Focuses On Time & Talent Opportunities

How many St. Francis Xavier Ministries can you name? I am sure that there several that immediately come to mind; the Women's Club, Children's Faith Formation, Ministers of the Word, and Eucharistic Ministers are a few of the most obvious answers. These are some of the most visible ministries, but would it surprise you to learn that there are nearly 70 different active ministries at SFX?

Sunday, December 8, is your opportunity to learn more about these ministries and the work they do at SFX and in the broader community. The SFX Ministry Fair is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Xavier Center, and will showcase the various ways in which you can become a more

involved member of our faith community. Got a "green thumb"? Check out the Garden Ministry. Enjoy sewing in your free time? The Prayer Blanket Ministry might be for you. Want your family to participate more actively at Mass, consider becoming Gift Bearers or Ministers of Hospitality. Outdoorsy? Indoorsy? Crafty? Handy? God has blessed us with talents that are meant to be shared. With 70 options to choose from, everyone can find their fit! Please join us on December 8, in the Xavier Center. Come after Mass, grab a donut and checkout all of the ways you and your family can share your talents and get involved!

Children's Faith Formation Starts Strong

Lauren Bratcher
Director, Religious Education

SFX kids are back in Wednesday night Children's Faith Formation! Each week, our K-8 students have been gathering in prayer and focusing on Jesus as they enjoy learning about the Catholic faith alongside their peers! Our Kindergartners are mastering their Sign of the Cross, while our upper elementary students are learning how to find scripture in their Children's Bibles! Our middle school students have made commitments to serve their Parish and community at the Chili Supper and Senior Thanksgiving dinner. Soon, our Confirmation class will make prayer blankets and deliver to Sanders Ridge. What an amazing group of young people we have in our Children's Faith Formation program! We are so grateful for the adults and high school helpers that leader our classes each week!



Thanksgiving & Appreciation



We are amid the “Gratitude Months” of November and December. With that in mind, I would like to congratulate a few of your fellow Parishioners for continuing their religious education in order to pass that *new* knowledge to our young people through the classroom and beyond.

On September 26, **nine** of our adult volunteers were honored with the Associate Level of Faith Formation by Archbishop Shelton and the archdiocesan Faith Formation Office. Those persons are Lisa Pence (High School Youth Minister), Lauren Battcher (Director of Religious Education and Formation), catechists Maria Bertrand, Phyllis Crain, Janet Franklin, Carole Gott, Dawn O'Connor, Mia Thomas and Mike Thomas. As was said by Pope Francis on September 29, 2013: “Who are catechists? They are people who keep the memory of God alive; they keep it alive in themselves and they are able to revive it in others.” I could not agree more in

that definition. It describes all these people to a “T”. I am so pleased with the sacrifices each made toward this achievement.

I am so grateful to you Parishioners for sharing the resource of our acoustically perfect church building with the greater Mount Washington community through Carrie Gary and her students at Bullitt East High School who, for the last ten years, have come to entertain us seasonally with song and music.

What a gift these young people are *as well as* their teachers Carrie and Lori Kerr! I encourage you to attend their next concert in our church on December 16, at 7 p.m.

Lastly, on a very personal note, I am *s-l-o-w-l-y* making some progress in “downsizing” as I move closer to retirement as a pastor (June 18, 2025 @ high noon!) Some mortgage company and I now co-own a patio home in the Glenmary area and I am cautious and deliberate in not filling it up. I have deeper appreciation for those of you who have done this work. As is a fact, “things” can weigh heavy and to divest myself of the “things” I have collected in 70 years is a huge challenge... especially books, vinyl and trinkets! Nonetheless, I push forward to become “lighter and lighter” although I don’t look the part 😊 ...

As with most people, we fill up the space we are given... In these last thirteen years you have supplied me with a beautiful, simple rectory for which I am eternally grateful. Now I/we refresh it for someone new... I know he will be pleased with the great stewardship and spirit of gratitude with which you live.



Fr. Dale



St. Francis Xavier

155 Stringer Lane
Mount Washington, KY 40047
502.538.4933 - or - 502.955.5366

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

www.sfxmw.com

Advent A Blessed Season

Advent is upon us! It’s a season that invites us to pause, reflect, and to prepare for the coming of Christ, not only in the Nativity, but also for his second coming in glory. This season holds both a sense of longing and of hope. It engages our hearts and minds, and it cultivates a spirit of expectation and readiness.

In our fast-paced world, it can be easy to overlook the significance of this season. Advent calls us to slow down, to step back from the busyness of holiday

preparations, and to reflect on our relationship with God. Each week during Advent, we light another Advent candle which reminds us of the increasing light in the darkness, symbolizing the hope that Christ brings to our lives and to the world.

The themes of giving, hope, peace, joy, and love are all woven throughout the season.

We are encouraged to examine

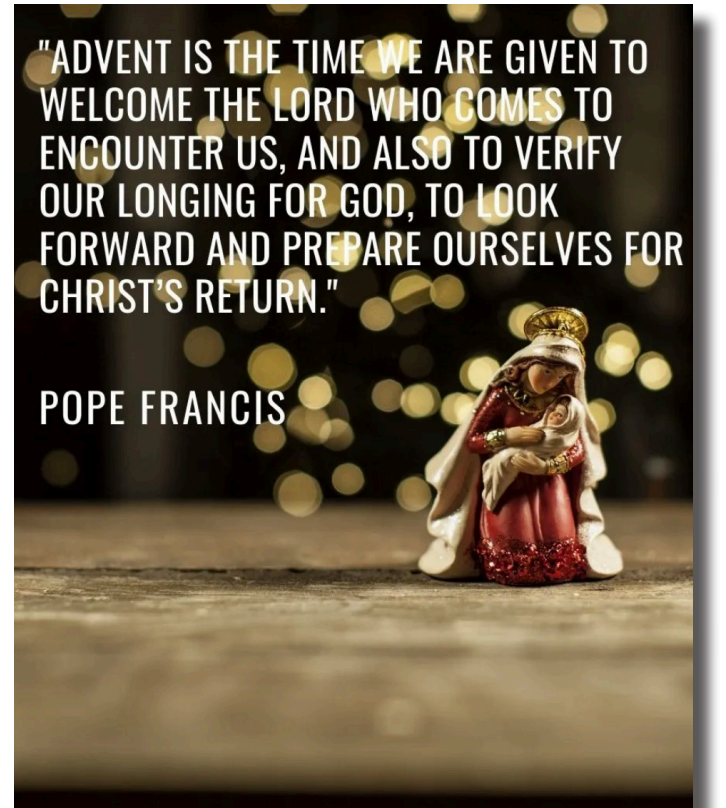
our lives, to embody these virtues and to make room for Christ.

In the Gospel readings of Advent, we encounter figures like John the Baptist who calls us to repentance and to prepare the way of the Lord. His message is a reminder that preparation is essential—not just in a physical sense, but in our spiritual lives. Repentance is an opportunity for renewal, and a chance to align our lives more closely with God’s will. As we journey through Advent, we embrace those practices which can deepen our spiritual lives. Those practices include prayer, reading scripture, or acts of service which reflect Christ’s love.



Earl Baker

Deacon's Desk



"ADVENT IS THE TIME WE ARE GIVEN TO WELCOME THE LORD WHO COMES TO ENCOUNTER US, AND ALSO TO VERIFY OUR LONGING FOR GOD, TO LOOK FORWARD AND PREPARE OURSELVES FOR CHRIST'S RETURN."

POPE FRANCIS

The Advent season is also an invitation to foster a sense of community. We can reach out to those around us who may feel isolated or alone during this season, and embody the hope, love and light that we have received from God.

Ultimately, Advent is about journeying towards Christ. As we move through this blessed season, may we remember that our waiting is not in vain. Each prayer, each act of kindness, each act of service, and each moment of reflection brings us closer to the true meaning of Christmas—the birth of our Savior, who comes to bring light, love, and salvation.

As we light the candles of our Advent wreath, may they serve as a reminder that we are called to be bearers of Christ’s light in the world, spreading hope and joy to those around us. Let us embrace this Blessed Advent season with open hearts and be ready to welcome the One who is to come.



The Crossroads Messenger
Advent 2024

Celebrating Advent In New & Meaningful Ways

Paula's Ponderings



Paula Silliman
Pastoral Associate

Advent invites us to prepare our hearts, minds, and lives for the arrival of Christ.

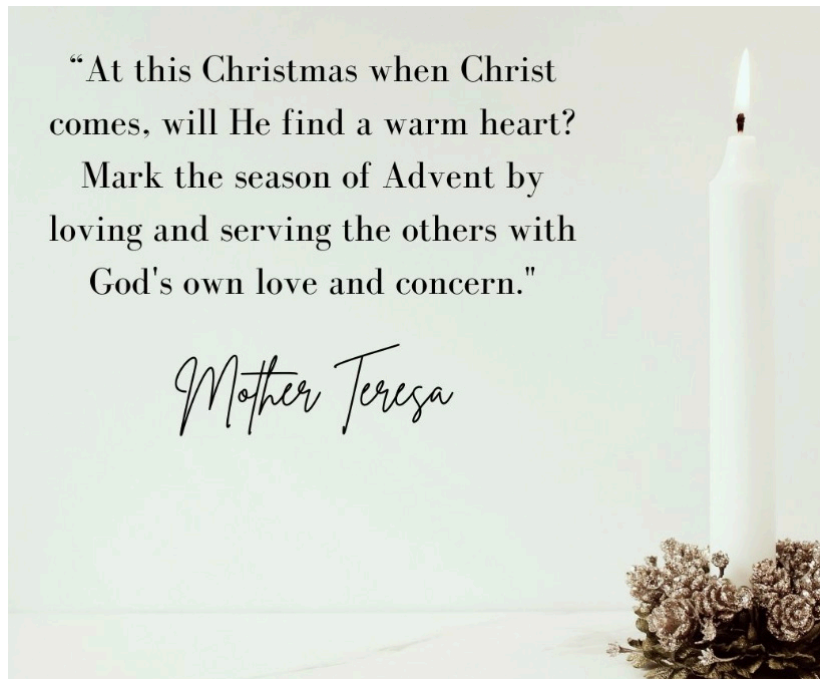
While traditional practices like lighting the Advent candles, attending Mass, and using an Advent calendar are valuable, it is also important to embrace new and creative ways to deepen our understanding of this sacred season. The unique activities listed are just a few examples of how to intentionally celebrate Advent with greater meaning. In doing so, we open ourselves more fully to the hope, peace, joy, and love that Christ brings, allowing us to experience a richer, more transformative Advent as we await His coming.

May this Advent be a season of profound preparation, reflection, and joy, bringing us closer to the Christ child whose love transforms our world.

1st Week of Advent: A Week of Silence and Reflection

The first week of Advent is a time to focus on the theme of hope. Rather than diving straight into holiday shopping or decorations, this week invites us to slow down and listen. The world often feels noisy and chaotic, but Advent calls us to create space for silence to better hear God's voice.

A Daily Silence Challenge- Challenge yourself and your family to embrace daily moments of silence. This could mean turning off music, putting down your phone, or creating a quiet time before bed. Consider a family "unplugged hour" each evening or a "silent breakfast" without distractions. Use this time for prayer,



"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart?"

Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."

Mother Teresa

reflection, or just listening to your thoughts in God's presence.

2nd Week of Advent: A Week of Service and Generosity

The second week focuses on the theme of peace and is an opportunity to turn outward, reflecting the peace Christ brings by sharing it with others. Instead of focusing on materialistic aspects of the season, Advent calls us to practice generosity and kindness, particularly to those in need.

Advent Acts of Kindness Calendar In place of a traditional Advent calendar with chocolates or treats, create an "Acts of Kindness" calendar. Each day, write down a small, actionable act of kindness or service on a piece of paper and place it in a jar or envelope. This could be things

like helping a neighbor with their groceries, donating clothes to a shelter, or writing a letter of encouragement to someone who is struggling. These daily acts can inspire a spirit of giving that resonates deeply with the Advent call to love and serve others.

3rd Week of Advent: A Week of Joy and Celebration

The third week of Advent is traditionally a time for joy. Gaudete Sunday, the third Sunday of Advent, is known for its joyful liturgical tone. It is a time to rejoice in the promise of Christ's coming and to reflect on the joy we find in Him.

Joyful Gratitude Jar To celebrate this week's theme of joy, create a "Joyful Gratitude Jar" in your home. Each family member can write down things they are grateful for or moments of joy they experienced during the week. These can be big or small: a beautiful sunset, a kind word from a friend, a prayer answered, or simply a moment of peace amidst the holiday rush. On Christmas Eve, gather around as a family and read the notes together, reflecting on the many ways God has brought joy into

your lives throughout the season.

4th Week of Advent: A Week of Love and Intimacy

The final week of Advent focuses on love, the ultimate theme of Christ's incarnation. Advent culminates in the joyful anticipation of Christmas, when God's love is made tangible in the birth of Jesus. This is a week to prepare not only our homes but our hearts to receive Christ more fully.

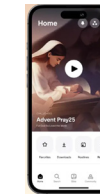
A Family Nativity Story Night Dedicate one night to sharing the Nativity story in a way that is creative and personal. Instead of simply reading the Gospel, create a "living Nativity" by reenacting the story as a family. Use costumes, props, and even animals (real or stuffed!) to bring the scene to life. If you have young children, encourage them to act out the roles of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and angels. If your family is older, consider inviting extended family or friends to join in. This interactive experience not only allows for creative expression but also helps everyone more deeply appreciate the mystery of God's love in the birth of Christ.

Advent Resources



uscbb.org

Links and Resources for Catholics of all ages



try.hallow.com

Download an Advent Prayer Guide



dynamiccatholic.com/advent

Links and printables for the family

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve 4 p.m. & 10 p.m.

Christmas Day 10 a.m.

December 31, 5 p.m.
Feast, Mary Mother of God

SIX Dance to the Music of The Wilson Brothers New Year's Eve

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CENTER
155 Stringer Lane
Mt. Washington, KY 40047

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2024
9 PM - 1 AM

\$25 Ticket includes Champagne Toast and Light Snacks
Beer, Wine & Seltzers available for purchase

21 & OVER EVENT
NO OUTSIDE ALCOHOL ALLOWED

Purchase Tickets through the QR code or in the SFX Office beginning Nov 18th.

trunk-or-treat

Wende Aubrey
Engagement Coordinator

If you did not get a chance to stop by the Trunk-or-Treat and Chili Supper this year, you missed a Spooktacular time! The High School Youth Group did a fantastic job overseeing the cars and trucks that decorated and handed out treats to the kids. From Hogwarts and Mario World, to Willy Wonka and Candyland, the creativity of our SFX Parishioners shined!

Before filling up on all the treats, everyone made a stop at the Chili

Supper in the Xavier Center. The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Children's Faith Formation students and parents served up delicious chili and hotdogs with all the fixings. A few new dishwashers were trained in the kitchen as the volunteers learned how to blend fellowship and service throughout the evening.

Many thanks to all those who helped make this event a huge success. May God continue to bless our Parish with families committed to growing in their faith through service.





Let's Hear It For The Spirit

Miles Spalding
Editor

The faith family of St. Francis Xavier came together on September 29th to hear the inspirational sounds of our choir at the “Hear It for the Spirit” concert.

This beautiful performance featured amazing music from our Youth, Teen and Adult choirs. With a diverse mix of spiritually uplifting songs, those in attendance were treated to an elevating experience that could only be described as inspiring and sublime.

Those who regularly attend Mass at St. Francis Xavier may take our amazing choir for granted, but Carrie Gary, Lori Kerr, and the cast of talented singers are truly a treasure to be savored both at Mass and anytime they produce a performance like Hear It for the Spirit. From the first song, “Lift up your Hearts” to the last song, “Freedom is Coming,” the audience was treated to breathtaking summits of musical performance.

Following the concert, the High School youth group led by Lisa Pence treated those in attendance to a cookout of hamburgers hotdogs, and fellowship. A big thank you to all who gave their time and talent to make this concert a joyful celebration and a fitting close the Summer.



Year-End Stewardship Call



As I reflect upon the year and how fast it has gone, I am reminded of how truly blessed I am to be a part of such a generous and loving faith community. Hospitality and compassion are felt by all who join us for worship, religious education, guidance, exercise and social events (just to name a few things...). It is because of your commitment to stewardship that we are able to further our Parish mission, serving our church family and members of our community. I would like to personally invite everyone to affirm their commitment to stewardship in one or all the many opportunities in the next couple of months.

Bring the **WHOLE** family and join us for the Ministry Fair on **December 8th**! We need volunteers for worship, social events, outreach, etc. With almost seventy ministries represented, you are guaranteed to

find an area of interest or a ministry that will showcase your talents!

Help those in need in the local community by donating items needed for the Christmas Food Baskets. A food list is in the bulletin and on the website. Our High School Youth Group and SFX Outreach Ministries will be so appreciative of your support as they work together on this annual service project. Please also consider making a donation to SFX Outreach Ministries

Jennifer Sweeney
Parish Business Manager

through The Giving Tree. The monies donated through The Giving Tree support those families needing assistance in our local community. Watch the bulletin and website for more details.

If your family has been blessed financially this year, please consider an increase in your monthly/weekly giving or a one-time additional contribution. If you own stock, consider making a gift of stock to the Parish rather than cash. No gift is too small! All are appreciated and needed to support our church mission.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of all Stewardship opportunities. Please feel free to reach out to me anytime to discuss, jennifer.sweeney@sfxmw.com or (502) 515-5589.

Donate with Purpose

Jennifer Sweeney
Parish Business Manager

We are very excited that SFX will participate in #iGiveCatholic for the second year!

We want to thank all who gave last year and invite you to join us in #iGiveCatholic on December 3rd, Giving Tuesday. This an opportunity to celebrate our Catholic connection while supporting the mission of St. Francis Xavier Church.

This year's project will once again focus on Children's Faith Formation and making improvements to the Religious Education Building. Last year we raised more than \$8,000 and our goal this year is \$20,000! I am hopeful that we can count on your continued support for #iGiveCatholic 2024. I am so very grateful for our caring and generous SFX faith family.

Please mark your calendar for December 3rd, Giving Tuesday! Early giving begins on November 18, and gifts up-to \$600 will be matched from Nov. 18-Dec. 2!

Gifts may be made directly to the Parish office or online. #iGiveCatholic donation envelopes have also been placed in the gathering space of church. Please feel free to call or email Jennifer Sweeney in the Parish office with questions. NO donation is too small! Visit our homepage on #iGiveCatholic and read our story!



Fun Times at **BUNGO**

Ann Shelton
Women's Club Chairperson

St. Francis Xavier hosted a fun filled Bunco party September 26th that brought together members of our congregation for an evening of fun, fellowship, and friendly competition. The winds of Hurricane Helene were not enough to prevent the brave and determined Bunco players!

The event was not only a great opportunity to connect with fellow churchgoers but also to introduce new faces to the warm, welcoming community that our church family offers. For the uninitiated, Bunco is a fast-paced dice game that relies on luck and encourages interaction among the participants.

The Xavier Center was decorated in lots of bright, colorful Fall decorations to set the festive mood. Those present were energized by a hearty buffet of sandwiches and scrumptious salads, appetizers and desserts. While the game itself is the main attraction, the true heart of the event was the fellowship that ensued as the friendly competition played out.

Fantastic Bunco prizes as well as door prizes awaited those whom fortune favored. Many thanks go to the husbands and Parishioners who setup and put away after the party. We are blessed! Our Bunco party, with its relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, served as a perfect platform for making new friends and creating lasting memories. We look forward to seeing you at our next Bunco!



Sunday

1 *Gods Promise*
Dumbr

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Jeremiah 33:14

Monday

2 *Rejoice!*

I rejoiced when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."

Psalms 122:1

Tuesday

3 *Compassion*

Open your heart this Advent. Let justice roll like a river. Feed the homeless, visit the sick. Listen to the little ones; be merciful to all.

Matthew 9:12-13

Wednesday

4 *The Lords Mountain*

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.

Isaiah 25:6

Thursday

5 *Trust in the Lord*

Trust in the LORD forever!
For the LORD is an eternal Rock.

Isaiah 26:4

Friday

6 *Listen and See!*

God opens the eyes of our heart to hear His Word, see His Truth, and obey His Will.

Isaiah 29:18

Saturday

7 *ABCs of Mercy*

Ask for God's Mercy.
Be merciful to others.
Completely trust in Jesus.

Matthew 5:7

8 *Repent!*

A voice of one cries out in the desert, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."

Luke 3:4

9 *Mary*

This lovely young lady from Nazareth was a mighty warrior for God!
"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done unto me according to thy word."

Luke 1:38

10 *Sing!*

O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

Psalms 96:1-2

11 *Emmanuel*

God sent us His only begotten Son, born of the Virgin Mary. The Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us.

Isaiah 7:14

12 *Magnificat*

Let us, with Mary, rejoice in the Lord in our spirits, and magnify Him in our hearts this Advent.

Luke 1:46-55

13 *Walk in the Light*

"It is not enough to do good things; we must do God's things."
-Mother Teresa

John 12:35

14 *Illumination*

The Lord will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will manifest the motives of our hearts.

1 Corinthians 4:5

15 *A Warrior*

The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love.

Zephaniah 3:17

16 *True Importance*

It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice!
Bless someone today!

Luke 22:26-27

17 *A Remnant*

I will leave as a remnant in your midst a people humble and lowly, who shall take refuge in the name of the LORD.

Zephaniah 3:12

18 *Be Prepared!*

Jesus wants us to eagerly await Him. Today, spend some time with Him, and pray for the grace to stand before the Son of Man.

Luke 21:34-36

19 *The King of Glory*

Lift up your heads, O gates; rise up, you ancient portals, that the king of glory may enter.

Psalms 24:7

20 *Joy*

Joy is the fuse of faith and a fruit of the Holy Spirit.
Today, ask God to fill you with His joy!

Habakkuk 3:18

21 *Serenity*

God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, **Courage** to change the things I can, and **Wisdom** to know the difference!

Isaiah 26:3

22 *He Shall Be Peace*

He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the LORD, in the majestic name of the LORD, his God.

Micah 5:4

23 *The One You Seek*

Suddenly there will come to the temple the LORD whom you seek, and the messenger of the covenant whom you desire.

Malachi 3:1

24 *Be Still*

Be still this Holy Night, and draw near the manger.
The King is coming!

Psalms 46:10

25 *Glory to God!*

For today in the city of David a Savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord.

Luke 2:11



2024 Advent Calendar

Daily Scripture and Reflection in Preparation for Christmas