

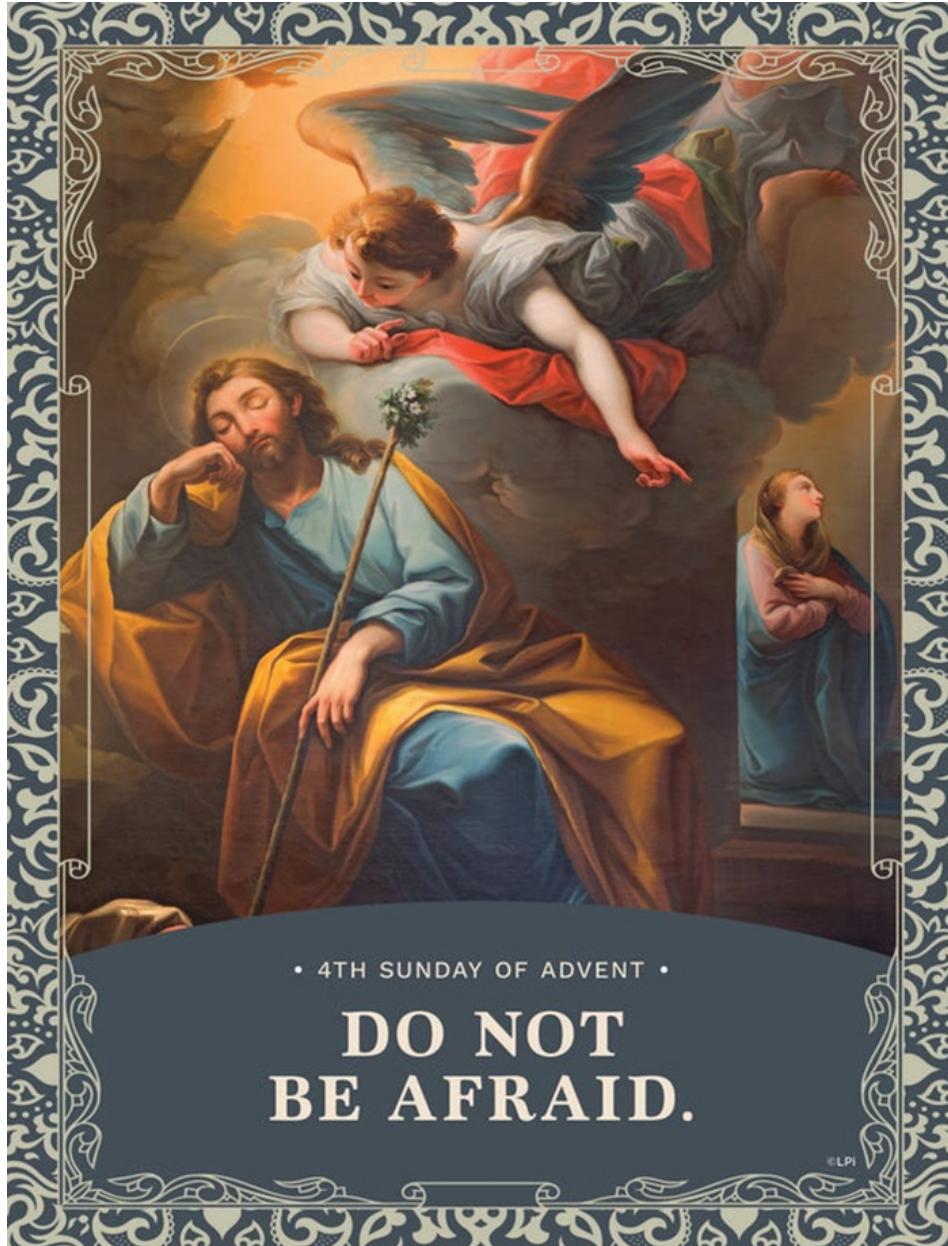
# ST. TERESA OF ÁVILA

CATHOLIC PARISH + EST 1889

December 21, 2025

"Truth suffers, but never dies." - St Teresa of Avila

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• 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT •

DO NOT  
BE AFRAID.

Pastor

Reverend Frank John Latzko

Address

1037 W. Armitage Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois 60614

773-528-6650

Weekend Mass Schedule

**Saturday** 6 PM French Mass

**Sunday** 10 AM, 12 PM, 6 PM

Daily Mass Schedule

**Wednesday** - 8:00AM

Baptism, Reconciliation, Anointing

Please call the office to arrange or email  
[cgioia@stteraparish.org](mailto:cgioia@stteraparish.org)

Eucharistic Adoration

**Tuesdays** - 6 PM to 7:30 PM

Office Hours

**Weekdays**: 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

[www.teresa.church](http://www.teresa.church)

# Welcome

“St. Teresa of Avila Parish is an engaged community rooted in the beauty of the Eucharist and our Catholic faith. We want to make a difference in the lives of the people, especially those who are searching to discover how much God loves them and is calling them to join in the Mission of Christ to live His Gospel. We do so by welcoming people of all backgrounds and cultures in our parish, respecting their desires and questions, crossing borders and learning from those we encounter. You are welcomed to join in the Mission of building bridges and sharing the Good News of Christ.”

## Community Ministries

If you want to serve the St. Teresa’s community in our liturgies or our planning, there are many opportunities for you!

### RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults)

[teresa.church/rcia](http://teresa.church/rcia)

If you are interested in joining the Catholic Church, or helping those through that process as a companion.

### Lectors

[teresa.church/lectors](http://teresa.church/lectors)

Email [eric.fredericks+lm@gmail.com](mailto:eric.fredericks+lm@gmail.com) for more information.

### Eucharistic Ministers

[teresa.church/eucharistic-ministers](http://teresa.church/eucharistic-ministers)

Email [eric.fredericks+lm@gmail.com](mailto:eric.fredericks+lm@gmail.com) for more information.

### Pastoral Council

[teresa.church/pastoral-council](http://teresa.church/pastoral-council)

Represent the parish and help advise the pastor in our mission and vision for our community.

### Finance Council

[teresa.church/finance-council](http://teresa.church/finance-council)

Reviews financial documents and position of the parish and advise pastor and business manager on financial decisions.

Are you interested in making St. Teresa’s your spiritual home? Or just want to learn more about our community? Fill out the below form and drop it in the collection basket or join online at [teresa.church/join](http://teresa.church/join).

**Name**

**Email**

**Phone**

**Address**

**Ministries of Interest**

# Welcome

In fulfilling our mission to be “Faith & Spirit. Alive.” we invite you to get involved with your family here at St. Teresa of Avila parish.

## Outreach Ministries

We have a variety of opportunities you can join to get involved and help serve our community, the Lincoln park area, and the city of Chicago.

### Welcome the Stranger

Join with parishioners from St. Teresa of Avila, St. Josaphat and others in the Lincoln Park Community to support a refugee family's journey in Chicago. Please fill out this link and we will add you to our updates and emails! <https://bit.ly/welcomethestrangerLP>. Additionally, if you would like to work directly with a refugee family, you can sign up at any time for a 3 hour Engaging with

Refugees:Cross-Cultural Training <https://exodusworldservice.org/register/>.

### Night Ministry

Support our partnership with The Night Ministry by providing sack suppers to the homeless. Participation is easy and safe! For more information and to sign up, please contact Susan Matejka at [smatejka@hpschicago.com](mailto:smatejka@hpschicago.com).

### Loaves and Fishes Dinner

[teresa.church/loaves-and-fishes](https://teresa.church/loaves-and-fishes)

Weekly soup kitchen feeding and sitting with people in need of a meal.



## Spiritual Ministries

There are many ministries at St. Teresa's that celebrate our faith via small christian communities, serving in our liturgies, and learning more.

### Women's Spirituality

[teresa.church/womens-spirituality](https://teresa.church/womens-spirituality)

Meets the Last Tuesday of the month to provide a supportive space for prayer and reflection.

### Men's Spirituality

[teresa.church/mens-spirituality](https://teresa.church/mens-spirituality)

Meets virtually every Tuesdays at 7am to come together and discuss what it means to be a disciple. Email [cdeanhockey@gmail.com](mailto:cdeanhockey@gmail.com) to get the link and join.

### La Posada Border Ministry

[teresa.church/border-ministry](https://teresa.church/border-ministry)

Travel to the border to help and understand those seeking asylum.

### Food Pantry

[teresa.church/food-pantry](https://teresa.church/food-pantry)

Our parish food pantry is a welcoming, dependable source of nutritious food, respect and social contact to the needy of our community.

## Bible Studies/Discussion Groups

Throughout the year there are bible studies you can join or maybe a book study with Fr. Frank. Schedules change throughout the year, so stay tuned!

### Religious Education

[teresa.church/religious-education](https://teresa.church/religious-education)

Whether it's our Montessori based Catechesis of the Good Shephard for children, EDGE Middle School ministry, QUEST High School Ministry, or SPRED Ministry for those with special needs, St. Teresa's has a wide array for programs to meet the needs of our children.

### Communauté Catholique Francophone de Chicago

[teresa.church/french-community](https://teresa.church/french-community)

St. Teresa's is home to a wonderful and vibrant French community.

## This Sunday's Readings:

**First Reading:** Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel. (Isa 7:14)

**Psalm:** Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory. (Ps 24)

**Second Reading:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 1:7)

**Gospel:** "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt 1:20-21)

## Feasts and Saints:

12/23- St. John of Kenty, Priest

12/25- The Nativity of the Lord, Christmas

12/26- St. Stephen, The First Martyr

12/27- St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

## Gospel Meditation: Fourth Sunday of Advent

A priest friend recently told me a remarkable story. One of his cousins reported having a vivid dream in which an angel told him the family needed to exhume their grandmother's body from a cemetery in New York and return it to her birthplace in Romania. She had been dead nearly 10 years. As you might expect, the family thought it was, well, crazy. But astonishingly they exhumed her body. It was incorrupt, showing no signs of decomposition. That experience sparked healing, faith, and reconciliation throughout the family.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Joseph also receives a dream. He's confused, afraid. But in the quiet of sleep, God speaks: "Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home" (Matthew 1:20). When he wakes, Joseph acts. He doesn't overanalyze or dismiss the message. He trusts, and acts.

God still speaks — not necessarily through literal dreams but through those deeper intuitions of the heart. St. Ignatius of Loyola taught that God's voice draws us into peace, courage, and love. But we have to listen to it. Advent is a time for stillness. As we prepare for Christ's coming, we're invited to enter that quiet space where God's voice can be heard.

When and how do you become most receptive to God? Is it in silence? In prayer? In nature? At Mass? This week, go there. Be still. Listen. And like Joseph, have the courage to act on what God shows you.

— Father John Muir

## Financials: October 2025

	FY25	FY24
Basket/Mail In:	13,975	10,782
Give Central:	37,811	39,591
Total:	THIS YEAR	PREVIOUS YEAR
	\$51,786	\$50,373
.		\$1,413



From Fr. Frank:

I was walking down a street in Assisi, taking in the beauty of Christmas slowly coming alive, watching the people decorate their shops and dwellings, and this the first week of December! Christmas isn't just to make one feel good and rush the season, but a "preparation" having deep religious significance. Yes, I was actually experiencing ADVENT!!!! How ironic to have an experience of this beautiful season of anticipation in a foreign country. In America, we've pretty much ignore Advent completely, except at Sunday Mass. We want Christmas and we want it now, in November!

As I was walking, I heard a tiny "ding" sound but kept walking forward until a woman came up behind me and said, "ring," pointing down on the pavement to a silver ring... my ring!! It slipped from my finger and truly felt nothing. She smiled as I thanked her and she took my hand. It was clear in those few seconds she didn't speak English but I asked her as best as I could, "Where are you from? I am American."

Her face brimmed with joy as she said, "Kiev." Stunned, I repeated the name and just said, "Ukraine?" She nodded and the smile disappeared. All I could do was make the sign of the Cross and put my hands together in prayer. The last thing she kept saying was, "please... please," but it wasn't quite the word "please". She was trying to communicate something to me but I just walked away slowly, waving my hand. After a lot of prayer, it came to me that she was saying "priest," and I had no collar or clergy shirt on.

This is one advent I'll never forget. Let Christ come into your life with a heart not focused on Christmas decorations but on waiting for Him to come to you. It's quite simple. Christ came to me in that woman from Kiev who heard that little "ding" sound.

Sacrament of Reconciliation | Advent Confession:

**Tuesday December 23, 2025**

**6:00-7:30pm**

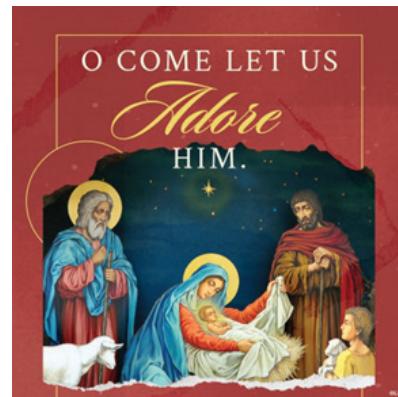
**Christmas Mass Schedule:**

**Christmas Eve- 3:00pm and 7:00pm**

**French Mass 5:00pm**

**Christmas Day - 10:00am**

**New Year's Day- 10:00am**



# Parish Life

## St. Teresa's 10th Annual Turkey Trot: A HUGE SUCCESS

We are a bit late but extremely happy to report that our Thanksgiving morning 10th annual Turkey Trot was a great success.

On a cool but dry morning, we have a great turnout.....

1: Stroller with a hearty infant who smiled all the way

2: Young bike riders who were speedy. Perhaps they were in training for Tour de France!

3: Canines..... They were in top condition especially Canine Ben who is a refugee from Mexico

25: Humans who walk & talked, jogged, ran, and/or trotted!!!

PLENTY: Of hot freshly brewed coffee from our friends at the neighborhood STARBUCKS COFFEE SHOP on corner of Armitage Ave and Sheffield. Just what we needed to keep us warm and awake!

There was no racing, no timing, and no entry fee!

Just a lot of socializing plus a runner's breakfast before and after our trot.

Followed a wonderful Thanksgiving Mass celebrated by Fr. Frank

In the spirit of the day, there were plenty of food donations for St.Teresa's Food Pantry and Loaves & Fishes!

Many thanks to those of you for sharing and bringing donations.

You are a fine example of God's love for others who are most in need.

Many thanks to Michael \_\_\_\_\_ for waking up early to take these outstanding photos.

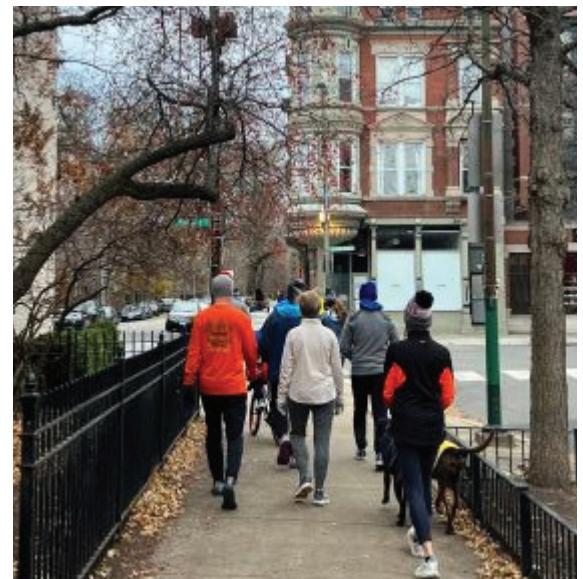
Please join us for our 11th Annual Non-competitive Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning 2026.

Sincerely,

Coach Mark Buciak, QCC

773-307-0033

## St. Teresa's 10th Annual Turkey Trot Photos:



## Little Sisters of the Poor Visit:

On Saturday December 13th , a frigid below zero morning many of our CGS students, their families as well as parishioners and staff loaded up our “Sleighs” with gifts and treats and headed to the Little Sisters of the Poor.

We were warmly welcomed inside and had a wonderful visit with many of the residents and sisters.

Our students spent time talking with the residents as well as delivering presents and serving them delicious treats!

A great morning was had by all.

THANK YOU Sr. Bernadette for coordinating with us.

Wish we everyone at Little Sisters of the Poor a Blessed and Merry Christmas!



# Parish Life

## Join Us For Hospitality:

### After the 10am and 6pm Mass

This is a wonderful way to catch up and visit with fellow parishioners as well as meeting new ones and getting to know each other! If you would be interested in hosting a Sunday after the 10am Mass here is the link to sign up-

<https://signup.com/go/uwfqUZN>

## FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

THE ST. TERESA FOOD PANTRY CONTINUES TO BE GRATEFUL FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY FOOD CHOICES PROVIDED WEEKLY BY THE GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY. HOWEVER, WE CONTINUE TO BE IN NEED OF HEARTY SOUPS AND WRAPPED TOILET PAPER. THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!



## Welcome Committee:

The Parish Council is excited to announce the formation of a new Welcoming Committee here at St Teresa of Avila. We are looking for 2-3 people to help lead this initiative, and help us build a team of welcome volunteers for each mass. The task is simple, we need amazing volunteers that will greet all parishioners before mass with a friendly smile, a nice "hello", and possibly help them find a seat! You may think we already do this, but it's not consistent. Imagine walking into someone's house and not being welcomed when you walk in the door, a place of business, or a restaurant. First impressions can be lasting impressions.

Please consider joining this committee because it'll be fun and rewarding! If interested, please reach out to [Jessica Marx @ chicago2381@hotmail.com](mailto:Jessica.Marx@chicago2381@hotmail.com).

## Loaves and Fishes:

The Loaves & Fishes ministry has been inviting guests indoors to enjoy their meal on Friday evenings.

We need volunteers to greet our guests, serve them, and clean tables. Volunteers are needed on Friday evenings from 3:30 to 6:00. If you cannot arrive by 3:30, just let us know when you sign up. You can sign up here - <https://signup.com/go/rBJiFSK>.

## Calling All Those Who Enjoy Cooking!

Calling All Those Who Enjoy Cooking! Hearing the call to serve those less fortunate? Always wanted to (learn to) cook for a crowd? Our Loaves and Fishes Ministry is seeking cooks (and helpers) to prepare a warm dinner for the elderly and homeless in our area, served each Friday afternoon. For a 3-6 hour commitment, you'll meet a wonderful group of people to work with, share kitchen tips and feel good about helping those in need. For more info, please contact Charisse Gioia

[cgioia@stteresaparish.org](mailto:cgioia@stteresaparish.org)

Thank you



**HELLO ST TERESA COMMUNITY**

OUR WEEKLY FRIDAY LOAVES AND FISHES MEAL OFFERING HAS GROWN AND IS NOW AVERAGING OVER 100 GUESTS PER WEEK. THIS INCLUDES SENIOR CITIZENS, GUESTS WHO LIVE IN TRANSITIONAL HOUSING OR ARE HOMELESS AND IMMIGRANTS. ALL IN NEED OF A NUTRITIOUS MEAL. THANKS TO ALL OF THE AMAZING VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP TO PREPARE AND THEN SERVE THE MEAL. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING WITH OUR LOAVES AND FISHES MEAL SERVICE REACH OUT TO STEVE SIDOR 1000.881.3945, [SID001@aol.com](mailto:sid001@aol.com).

AS THE COOLER WEATHER BEGINS TO SETTLE IN, OUR LOAVES AND FISHES GUESTS ARE BEGINNING TO ASK ABOUT WINTER COATS. WE ALL KNOW HOW CRITICAL IT IS TO HAVE A WARM CLOTHING FOR CHICAGO'S COLD WINTER SEASON. WE WILL USE SOME OF THE FUNDS GENEROUSLY DONATED TO L&F TO PURCHASE WARM GLOVES AND SOCKS FOR OUR GUESTS. HOWEVER, THE MOST URGENT NEED NOW IS FOR NEW OR GENTLY USED WARM WINTER COATS. MEDIUM, LARGE AND EXTRA LARGE COATS ARE THE GREATEST NEED. WE WILL BE COLLECTING COATS OVER THE COMING WEEKS FOR OUR GUESTS SO PLEASE HAVE A LOOK IN YOUR CLOSETS AND SEE IF THERE ARE ANY COATS THAT YOU CAN SPARE FOR OUR GUESTS.

IN JOHN 21 18:10, JESUS ASKS PETER 3 TIMES IF HE LOVES HIM. PETER RESPONDS THAT YES HE LOVES HIM, AND EACH TIME JESUS TOLD HIM TO "FEED MY SHEEP". SUPPORTING THOSE IN NEED WITH A NUTRITIOUS MEAL AND WARM WINTER CLOTHING IS WHAT OUR LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY IS ALL ABOUT. THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

## Mass Intentions

10AM - Jeffrey Rivera (D) ; Patrick Ohiku (D)

12 PM - Rosemary Green (D)

6 PM - Parishioners of St. Teresa of Avila Living and Deceased

Christmas Eve 3:00pm William Richards (D); James Michael Buciak (D); Ronald and Myra Brejcha (D); John and Mildred Buciak (D)

## Let Us Pray For: The Sick, The Deceased and Peace in Our World:

We pray for those who suffers from illness of mind or body.



We pray for those who have passed away.

We pray for peace in our city and around the world.

We pray for the intentions on our prayer cards.

We pray for survivors and perpetrators of sexual abuse.

## Mass Schedule

Sunday 12/28 10am- Fr. Udovic

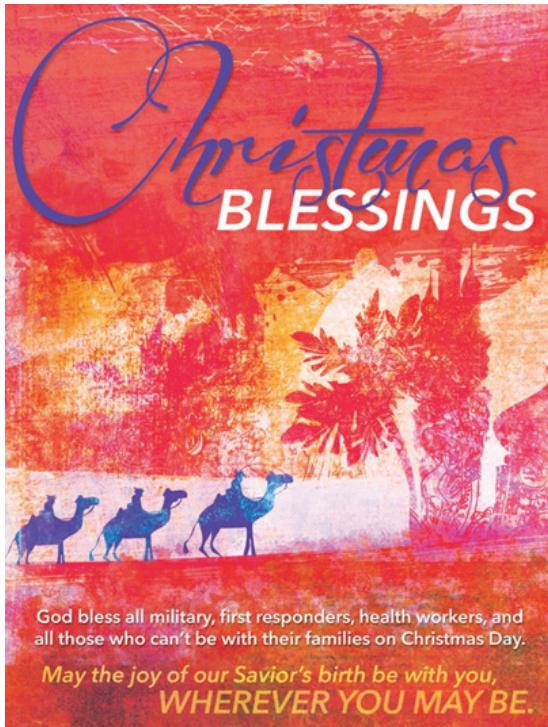
Sunday 12/28 12pm- Fr. Frank

Sunday 12/28 6pm- Fr. Frank

## Prayer for Advent – Miracles

Dear God,

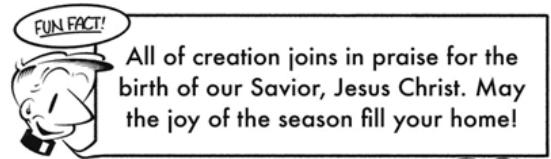
You are in the miracle business. I still believe that You can move mountains and separate seas. Break into every unknown and astound us with Your goodness and grace. Amen.



"What do bear families sing during Christmas?"



"Have yourself a **Beary** Little Christmas."



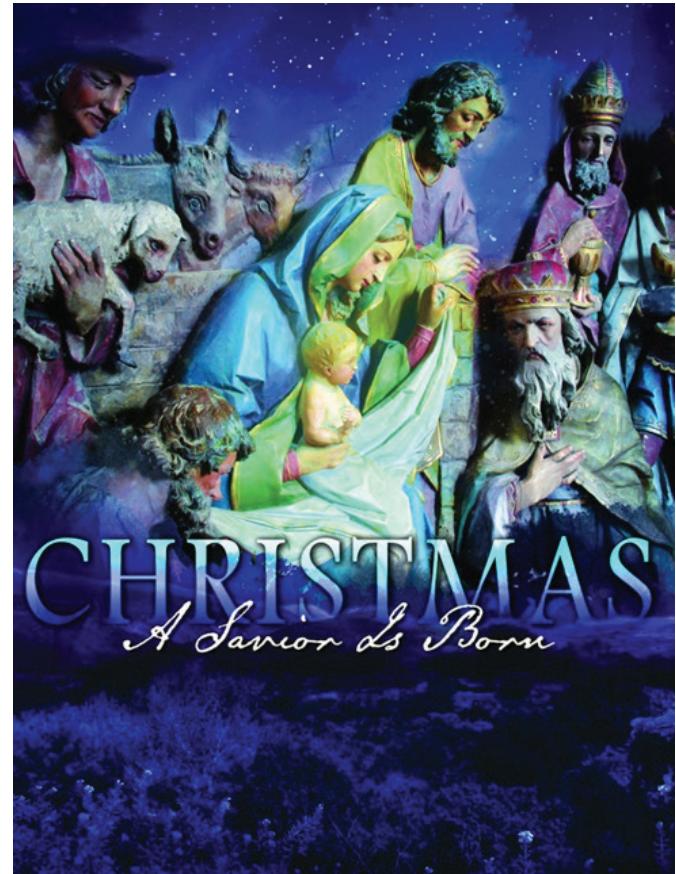
## Saint John the Apostle | December 27

Saint John was one of the Twelve, part of Jesus' inner circle, among the few that witnessed the Transfiguration, the raising of Jarius' Daughter, and the Agony in the garden at Gethsemane. He and his brother James were the sons of Zebedee and Salome. When Jesus called them, they left their father mending nets and followed him. Jesus called the brothers "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder" — they were passionate in their faith and Jesus had to rebuke them for their fiery zeal on more than one occasion. John, the younger brother, possibly the youngest disciple, was the only one present at Jesus' death.

Saint John the Apostle is traditionally thought to be the author of the fourth Gospel, the three Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. However, there has been some debate among scholars from antiquity to the present. Tradition also gives him the title Beloved Disciple and John's Gospel sees him seated next to Jesus at the last supper and the one to whom Jesus gives the care of Mary at the crucifixion.

Although Church tradition says that John survived the other disciples, living a long life, much of it is steeped in myth and legend. Some say he retired to Ephesus after the crucifixion with Mary and remained there until he died. But in other traditions he is more active. For a time he remained in Jerusalem with the other disciples, then founded churches in Asia Minor. In a legend of his persecution, during the reign of the Emperor Domitian, John is taken to Rome and thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil but preserved from death. He is then exiled to the island of Patmos where the Book of Revelation was written.

Most accounts agree that after his exile and the Assumption of Mary he returned to Ephesus where he died sometime after 98, during the reign of the emperor Trajan.



"May the peace of Christ's love be with you this Christmas and always."

With Love,

Fr. Frank, Mark, Charisse, Barb, Sergio, Carol, Jason, Irma and Deacon Brian

## Around the Parish

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### Catholic Q & A :

#### Tithing vs. Stewardship

##### Question:

What is the difference between tithing and stewardship?

##### Answer:

Both tithing and stewardship are part of a spiritual way of life that calls us to use all of our resources for the service of the Gospel. Everything we are and everything we have comes from God. Offering back to God what He has given us is part of how we worship and give thanks to God.

Tithing is the practice of giving back 10 percent of what we earn. It comes from the Old English word for "ten." The first Scriptural example of tithing came from Abraham who gave a tenth of his possessions to the priest Melchizedek. He did so as an act of thanksgiving to God.

Stewardship as a way of life calls us to use well all that we have and all that we are, placing all things in service of others and God. Stewardship helps us see the good we can accomplish by making God and our spiritual life the most important values in our life. Whatever we accumulate in this life stays here. We can't take it with us! Both tithing and stewardship help us remember that nothing is mine or even ours ... all belongs to God.

### Devotions, Explained!

#### Las Posadas, Explained!

Las Posadas, typically celebrated between Dec. 16 and Dec. 25, is a Mexican tradition which recreates the Holy Family's search for lodging in Bethlehem. A novenario, or a devotion which extends over a period of nine days, Las Posadas is a celebration of anticipation for the birth of Jesus Christ, who seeks refuge in the heart of every man and woman.

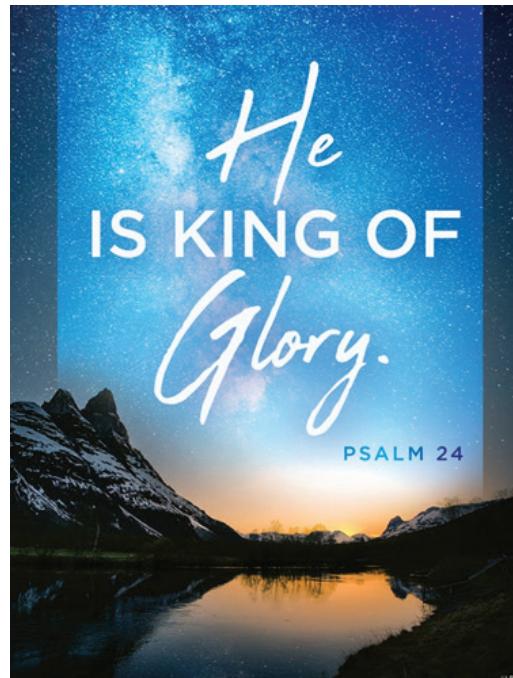
Each night of Las Posadas, a couple portraying Mary and Joseph knocks on the doors of different homes looking for a place to stay. Traditionally, the Holy Family is accompanied by a procession of people singing hymns and bearing candles who stand outside the home as they are denied entry again and again. Finally, they come to the "inn," the house or church that welcomes them. Carols are sung, a feast is enjoyed and star-shaped piñatas are broken open.

Still practiced in Mexico today, Las Posadas has also become an important cultural and spiritual touchstone for communities of Mexican immigrants who have moved abroad.

### Catholic Trivia:

Question: Which saint's nickname is "Santa Claus"?

Answer: St. Nicholas



## Staff

### Fr. Frank Latzko

Pastor

[frfrankjohn56@gmail.com](mailto:frfrankjohn56@gmail.com)

### Charisse Gioia

Office Manager/Technology Coordinator/  
Bulletin

[cgioia@stteresaparish.org](mailto:cgioia@stteresaparish.org)

Charisse is responsible for managing  
the parish office as well producing our  
weekly bulletin and emails.

Charisse has been with the parish since  
2019.

### Mark Neuhengen

Director of Evangelization and  
Parish Mission

[mneuhengen@stteresaparish.org](mailto:mneuhengen@stteresaparish.org)

Mark is responsible for our Parish  
Evangelization and Ministry. Mark is a  
graduate from Loyola University Chicago  
, holds a masters in theology and has  
been with the parish since 2019.

### Barbara McHugh

Religious Education

[bmchugh@stteresaparish.org](mailto:bmchugh@stteresaparish.org)

Barb is responsible for our Children's  
Faith formation programs. She and her  
husband Ed have been parishioners at  
St. Teresa's for over 30 years.

### Carol Spalla-Malone

Part-Time Business Manager

[cspalla@archicago.org](mailto:cspalla@archicago.org)

### Jason Krumwiede

Director of Music

[musicalnut1@mac.com](mailto:musicalnut1@mac.com)

## Staff

### Housekeeping

Irma Saavedra

### Sergio Mora

Building & Facilities Manager

[smora@stteresaparish.org](mailto:smora@stteresaparish.org)

## Parish Council

### Anna Althoff- President

[annamariealthoff@hotmail.com](mailto:annamariealthoff@hotmail.com)

The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body to the pastor and represents a cross section of the parish. Together with the Pastor, the PPC helps to craft and carry out the Mission of the Parish.

## Finance Council

### Don Eldred- Chair

The St. Teresa Finance Council reviews the financial documents and position of the parish and advises the pastor and business manager on financial matters, including the preparation of the annual parish budget.

## Stewardship Committee

### Dan Summins- Chair

[dsummins@hotmail.com](mailto:dsummins@hotmail.com)

The Stewardship Committee's goal is to foster a sense of gratefulness and response of increased sharing of gifts in the parish and communities we seek to support. We do this by creating, encouraging and communicating ideas and programs that help parishioners recognize and share their gifts.

## Contributing to the Bulletin

Past bulletins and guidelines for submitting to the bulletin are available on our website at: [www.teresa.church/bulletins](http://www.teresa.church/bulletins)

## How to Report Sexual Abuse

To report an allegation of sexual abuse and/or neglect of minors, contact the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Hotline at 800.25.ABUSE (800.252.2873) and/or contact your local police department.

You can also contact the Office of Protection of Children and Youth (OPCY) at 312.534.5254.