



Saint Frances of Rome  
1384-1440

# St. Frances of Rome Catholic Church

P.O. Box 367, 29 Highland Dr., Sparta, North Carolina 28675

**Pastor:** Father Jacob Mlakar

**Phone:** 336-372-8846

**Office hours:** Monday and Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

**Email:** stfrances@skybest.com

**Website:** http://stfrancesofrome-sparta.org

### Mass Schedule:

Sunday 11:15 am, English & 2:00 pm, Spanish

Wednesday 6:00 pm, English

Thursday 12:00 Noon, English & 6:45 pm, Spanish

### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Wednesday 4:45pm - 5:45pm

Thursday 5:30pm - 6:30pm

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Sunday 1:00pm - 1:45pm

Wednesday 4:50pm - 5:20pm

Thursday 5:40pm - 6:10pm

**Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**January 18, 2026**



*"And he put a new song into my mouth,  
a hymn to our God."  
Ps 40:9*

### Administrative Assistant:

Carla Gauldin 336-372-8846 or 336-300-2177

### Finance Assistant:

Marie-Claire Songhurst 860-428-4461

### Parish Operations Manager:

Greg Songhurst 860-428-1145

### Parish Council:

Chairperson: John Pokorney 336-757-1081

### Finance Council:

Chairperson:

### Faith Formation Classes:

Coordinator: Guillermina Limon 336-596-6591

### Hispanic Ministry:

Coordinator: Maria Luisa Olivares 336-359-2139

### Stewardship Committee:

Chairperson:

### Meal Ministry:

Coordinator: Marie-Claire Songhurst 860-428-4461

### Homebound Ministry:

Please call the church office at 336-372-8846

### Vicariate Hispanic Ministry:

Coordinator: Aleksandra Banasika, 336-428-6909



Fr. Jacob has office hours in Sparta on Thursdays from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. If you would like to schedule an appointment to meet with Father, please call the office at 336-372-8846 or call/text Carla at 336-300-2177.

### Online Giving

Would you rather make contributions online? Visit the St. Frances of Rome website at [stfrancesofrome-sparta.org](http://stfrancesofrome-sparta.org) and click on the Online Giving tile located on the home page. Weekly Sunday offerings as well as other collections are available.



*The Rite of Anointing tells us there is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament. A careful judgment about the serious nature of the illness is sufficient. Please do not hesitate to call Fr. Jacob if you believe anointing is needed. In the case of this emergency call 336-372-8846, option 3.*

### Liturgy Schedule

#### Today, January 18, 11:15 am

Lector: Nancy McDowell

Greeter: Janet Pokorney

Usher: Mark Imbus

Server: John Pokorney

Rosary: Nancy McDowell

January Altar Linen: Carla Gauldin

#### Next Sunday, January 25, 11:15 am

Lector: Sharon Orton

Greeter: Marie-Claire Songhurst

Usher: Greg Songhurst

Server: John Pokorney

Rosary: Sharon Orton

January Altar Linen: Carla Gauldin

### Scripture Readings for Year A January 18 – 25

**Sunday - Scripture:** Is 49:3, 5-6 Ps 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10  
1 Cor 1:1-3 Jn 1:29-34

**Monday - Scripture:** 1 Sam 15:16-23 Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 & 23 Mk 2:18-22

**Tuesday - Scripture:** 1 Sam 16:1-13 Ps 89:20, 21-22, 27-28  
Mk 2:23-28

**Wednesday - Scripture:** 1 Sam 17:32-33, 37, 40-51  
Ps 144:1b, 2, 9-10 Mk 3:1-6

**Thursday - Scripture:** 1 Sam 18:6-9; 19:1-7 Ps 56:2-3, 9-10a, 10b-12, 13-14 Mk 3:7-12

**Friday - Scripture:** 1 Sam 24:3-21 Ps 57:2, 3-4, 6 & 11  
Mk 3:13-19

**Saturday - Scripture:** 2 Sam 1:1-4, 11-12, 23-27 Ps 80:2-3, 5-7 Mk 3:20-21

**Sunday - Scripture:** Is 8:23—9:3 Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17 Mt 4:12-23



### Parishioners, Family Members and Friends in need of Special Prayer:

Pam Chapman, Marie Carlson,  
Rick Gauldin, Jack Rollins, Sharon Peterson,  
Nancy Songhurst, Laurel Wood, Patrick Fulkerson,  
Lesbia Aguilar, Natalie Yambo, Miguel Honma,  
Maverick Flattery, Leslie Choate, Kara Harris, Manuel Cortes,  
Marcos Nordelo, Vilma Torrentes, Ed Golden, Frank Duncan,  
Dotty Maddock, Kathi Schwing, Iveth Lugo,  
Francisco Sagaon, Gary Carlson, Susie Woodel,  
Marie Roznowski, Chad Willis, Ezequiel Sanchez,  
and Pini Perez.

### Parishioners in Assisted Living Facilities The Landings at Chestnut Grove, Sparta

Liz Hart

If you know someone who needs prayer and would like to add them to this list, please contact the office.

*We would like to welcome all visitors and newcomers to our mission church! We hope that you find St. Frances of Rome to be a place of warmth and witness to God's love for one another.*

### Mass Intentions for January

January 4 - Vocations to the priesthood and religious life

January 14 - Conner Strother

January 18 - *Clyde F. Villa, Jr. +*

January 21 - *Doris Szkutak +*

January 22 - *Leonard Deal +*

January 28 - Katrina Poirier

January 29 - *Radoslaw Kowalec +*

*+ Repose of the Soul*

### Weekly Calendar

#### Sunday, January 18

9:45 am - Adult Faith Formation w/John Ellison

10:50 am - Rosary, English

11:15 am - Mass, English

12:30 pm - Youth Faith Formation class

1:00 - 1:45 pm - Confessions

1:30 pm - Rosary

2:00 pm - Mass, Spanish

3:30 pm - Confirmation II class

#### Monday, January 19

6:00 pm - Legion of Mary

6:00 pm - Knights of Columbus planning meeting

#### Tuesday, January 20

7:00 pm - Apostles of the Word

#### Wednesday, January 21

4:45 pm - Adoration

4:50 - 5:20 pm - Confessions

6:00 pm - Mass, English

#### Thursday, January 22

12:00 noon - Mass, English

5:30 - 6:30 pm - Adoration

5:40 - 6:10 pm - Confessions

6:45 pm - Mass, Spanish

7:15 pm - Spanish choir practice

#### Friday, January 23

7:00 pm - Children's music practice, Spanish

#### Saturday, January 24

7:00 pm - OCIA, Spanish

#### Sunday, January 25

9:45 am - Adult Faith Formation w/John Ellison

10:50 am - Rosary, English

11:15 am - Mass, English

12:30 pm - Youth Faith Formation class

1:00 - 1:45 pm - Confessions

1:30 pm - Rosary

2:00 pm - Mass, Spanish

3:30 pm - Confirmation II class



*Mass Intentions are special intentions offered to God as prayers of intercession and thanksgiving in and through the Eucharist. If you would like to request a Mass intention for someone living or deceased, please contact the office or write your request on a Mass intention envelope located in the narthex. A stipend of \$10 is typically offered to the celebrant priest.*



Adult Faith Formation with John Ellison meets each Sunday at 9:45 am.

### Exciting news from the Vatican!

Pope Leo XIV has proclaimed a special Jubilee Year coinciding with the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi. According to the decree, it was announced that the Catholic faithful would be granted the opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence during the jubilee year, beginning January 10, 2026 through January 10, 2027.

What is a plenary indulgence?

The doctrine and practice of indulgences in the Church are closely linked to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession). An indulgence is a remission of temporal punishment due to sins that have already been forgiven through the sacrament of confession. Plenary indulgences go beyond partial remissions and offer complete purification, wiping away all temporal punishment for past sins, making the soul as pure as a newly baptized infant.

How does someone gain a plenary indulgence?

A plenary indulgence can be gained **once per day** throughout this Jubilee Year by those who visit St. Francis of Assisi church (how fortunate we are to be so close!) or any qualifying Franciscan site with the intention of honoring St. Francis and obtaining the indulgence. No additional specific prayers are required at the church itself—just coming with that pious intention as a pilgrimage suffices.

To obtain the plenary indulgence, the usual conditions must be met:

- Sacramental Confession (within about 20 days before or after the visit).
- Eucharistic Communion (preferably on the same day as the visit, but can be within several days before or after).
- Prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father (e.g., an Our Father and Hail Mary).
- Complete detachment from sin, even venial sin.
- Importantly, **one sacramental Confession suffices for multiple plenary indulgences** (e.g., over several days or weeks).

However, a **separate Holy Communion** and a separate prayer for the Pope's intentions are required for each plenary indulgence gained.

This means faithful parishioners who attend daily Mass (receiving Communion each day) and have made a recent Confession can potentially gain one plenary indulgence per day by simply coming to St. Francis of Assisi church with the right intention. For those who are elderly, sick, or unable to leave home, the indulgence can still be obtained by spiritually uniting with the Jubilee celebrations and offering their prayers and sufferings to God, while fulfilling the conditions as best they can. For those who may be traveling, there are 4 other St. Francis of Assisi churches in North Carolina: Lenoir, Mocksville, Franklin, and Raleigh.



**With the addition of the new missals**, our pew book racks cannot hold two missals and two hymnals. Extra hymnals are now located in the book cart outside the sacristy door. The choir wants to encourage everyone to join in singing, so please feel free to pick up a hymnal as you enter for Sunday Mass or Holy Days of Obligation. Remember, when we sing, we pray twice!



The Tabernacle candle can be lit in memory or in honor of a loved one. In the narthex you will find an envelope for every week throughout the year. Simply choose the week you want, fill out the information and return it to the office or offertory basket. A monetary offering of \$10.00 is suggested.

### Saints and Feasts for the Week

Sunday - St. Charles of Sezze  
 Monday - St. Fabian  
 Tuesday - St. Sebastian  
 Wednesday - St. Agnes  
 Thursday - St. Vincent of Zaragossa  
 Friday - St. Marianne Cope  
 Saturday - St. Francis de Sales

All Holy Angels and Saints, Pray For Us!

*"I have been a great sinner and have received a sea of graces from His Divine Majesty. Everyone will clearly see the grandeur of His unlimited mercy."  
St. Charles of Sezze*



**Alleghany Pregnancy Care Center 2026 Baby Bottle Campaign** begins today, Sanctity of Life Sunday. Baby bottles are in the narthex. Please take one home and fill it with change, dollar bills, or a check and return it by February 22. By supporting the Alleghany Pregnancy Care Center, you help provide a safe place for young women to go when facing an unplanned pregnancy. APCC offers over 200 classes through its Earn While You Learn and Bright Course Programs. This program allows mothers to earn items for their children while taking classes to prepare them to be children while taking classes to prepare them to be the best mom they can be.

**Happy Birthday!**  
**January 11 - 25**

January 11 - Bosco Keck  
 Brooke Markevicius  
 January 12 - Lizbeyde Flores  
 Alexis Estrada  
 January 14 - Martin Ventura  
 January 16 - Kora Keck  
 January 17 - Don Newman  
 January 18 - Leobardo Ramirez  
 January 20 - Griselda Bibiano  
 January 21 - Sofia Limon  
 Janna Fleetwood  
 January 22 - Nancy Martinez-Cruz  
 January 23 - Fernanda Tavarez  
 January 24 - Ricardo Nuevo

### Financial Figures

Offertory January 11:	\$ 2,095.00
Offertory received in January:	\$ 5,640.00
Offertory needed in January:	\$ 10,000.00

### Second Collections for January

January 18 - National Mission Collection

Your offertory donations can be mailed to:  
**St. Frances of Rome Catholic Church**  
P.O. Box 367, Sparta, NC 28675



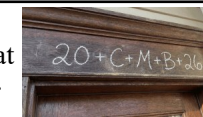
Join us in celebrating National Marriage Week from February 7 to 14! World Marriage Sunday will be celebrated February 8th. National Marriage Week is a special time to reflect on the beautiful gift of the sacrament of matrimony. This year's theme from the USCCB is Man and Woman, He Created Them: Together with Purpose, inviting couples to recognize their unique gifts and how they might use them to build one another up in joy and complementarity.

The USCCB Secretariat on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth is offering a variety of resources for those discerning marriage, engaged couples, and those already living out the vocation of marriage. These include an at-home week-long retreat, a marriage-centered Lectio Divina, and social media graphics.

For more information visit [foryourmarriage.org](http://foryourmarriage.org).

### Chalking the door

Last Sunday, Father Jacob reminded us that it is not too late to do the long-held Catholic tradition of *chalking the door*.



Here are simple instructions on how to do so:

Using blessed chalk, mark the lintel of your front door (or front porch step) as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 26

while saying:

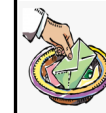
The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand twenty-five years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year. Amen.

Then offer the following prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of Your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of Your love; and grant that we may manifest Your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of You; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen.

Holy water can be sprinkled on the doorstep as well. Holy water containers as well as blessed chalk are available in the narthex.

### Second Collection today: National Mission Collection



Recognizing a need to call the faithful to support missionary work among African American and Native American Catholics, the U.S. Catholic bishops established this Catholic Church charity for the Catholic Missions in 1884 to administer a national collection—the first of its kind in the United States—to support missionary work. This Collection exists to give helpful grants to dioceses across the country to operate schools, parishes, and other missionary services that build the Body of Christ in Native American, Alaska Native, and Black Catholic communities, which would otherwise be in danger of disappearing.

**Job opportunity: St. Francis of Assisi in Jefferson** is looking for a Facilities Manager.



**Brief Description:** The Facilities Manager coordinates and oversees all aspects of property at the church and rectory (including the cemetery), building upkeep and maintenance. Other duties would include janitorial and light repair work. This position is part-time at 20-hours per week. If you are interested, please contact the Church Office at [stfrancis@skybest.com](mailto:stfrancis@skybest.com) or 336-246-9151. Application and Job Description are available upon request from the office.



St. Francis de Sales was born August 21, 1567 into a noble family in the Duchy of Savoy, modern-day France, not far from Geneva. As a young boy, Francis was, in the eyes of his father, a lawyer in the making. Following his father's wishes,

Francis went to Padua to study law, where he excelled, receiving his doctorate. Once he returned home, he cautiously told his parents his desire was to enter the priesthood. His father strongly disagreed and encouraged Francis not waste the opportunities that lay before him. Over time, Francis convinced his father that being called by God to the priesthood was the only opportunity he yearned for. With his father's blessing, Francis was ordained a priest 1593, and elected provost of the Diocese of Geneva. Surrounded by Calvinists in Geneva, Saint Francis de Sales set out to convert them, especially in the district of Chablais. By preaching and distributing the little pamphlets he wrote to explain true Catholic doctrine, he had remarkable success.

At 35, he was appointed bishop of Geneva. Although his duties as bishop were many, he continued to preach, hear confessions, and catechize the children. His gentle character was a great asset in winning souls. He practiced his own principle, "A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar."

St. Francis de Sales was an accomplished author, and therefore he has been named patron of the Catholic Press. His writings, filled with his characteristic gentle spirit, are addressed to lay people because he wanted all to understand that they too are called to be saints.

St. Francis de Sales suffered a stroke while on a diplomatic mission and died on December 28, 1622, at the age of 55. His feast day is January 24. St. Francis de Sales, pray for us!