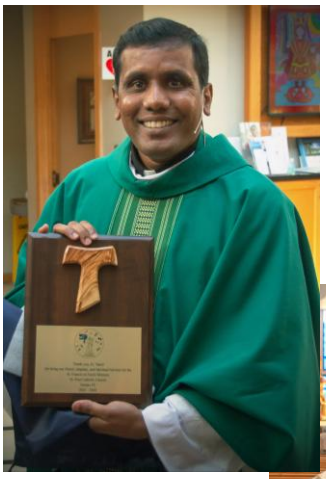
St. Paul Catholic Church
A PARISH OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG
St. Francis of Assisi Ministry

Summer/Fall Newsletter 2026

So Long for now, Fr. Tamil! Hello to Deacon Chuck!



We say farewell to Fr. Tamil and wish him every blessing in his next assignment at St. Tim. Thank you Fr. Tamil for serving the St. Francis Ministry.



Meanwhile, we welcome Deacon Charles Glass as our new spiritual advisor.

St. Lawrence Students Raise Funds for St. Francis Ministry Outreach

Students at St. Lawrence Catholic School, led by STREAM teacher and St. Francis member Jennifer Patierno, turned creativity and compassion into a memorable hands-on learning experience. To raise funds for a local pet rescue organization, the students designed and made crayon ducks, which they sold to their classmates.



Our Regular Events

- *Monthly Meeting – Second Saturday at 9:15 AM – St. Michael Building @St. Paul's*
- *Adoration – First Monday of the month, St. Paul's Chapel, 7:30 PM - Benediction*

Upcoming Calendar of Events

- Blessing of the Animals, Oct. 3, 9 AM, Peace Path, St. Paul's
- Pet Remembrance reception, Oct. 3, after the Blessing of the Animals, Peace Path, St. Paul's
- Pet Photos with Santa, Dec. 12, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Peace Path, St. Paul's

According to the four students who developed the project, they learned valuable lessons about designing, planning, budgeting, and selling a product. One student shared that the most challenging part was managing the budget and tracking sales.

What a wonderful real-world learning opportunity for these 10-year-olds—one they are sure to remember for years to come.

Teaching Preschool Children about how Plants Grow

The St. Francis Ministry taught St. Paul's pre-schoolers, ages two – four, a hands-on lesson about the environment, plants, and seeds. As part of the activity, each student planted marigold seeds in a small pot to give to their mother as a special Mother's Day gift.



Prayer Service with our Pets

This year, the St. Francis Ministry Prayer Service in the Park was relocated to the St. Paul outdoor pavilion. The service was well attended by pets and their parents alike, and the dogs were impressively quiet during Fr. Tamil's homily.

This is an annual event; all are welcome to attend with or without a pet. It is a great time to be grateful for our pet companions and to socialize with one another.



Outreach: Happy Tailz Cat Rescue

Happy Tailz Cat Rescue receives $1400 donation from the St. Francis Ministry.

The St. Francis Ministry is happy to announce we have raised $1400 in donations to give to Happy Tailz Cat Rescue. Happy Tailz is a local 501(c)(3) organization, and their mission is to help sick, injured, and special-needs cats around the Tampa Bay area. They work closely with local shelters, veterinarians, and fosters to provide the best possible care to every animal they take in.



Every dollar donated to Happy Tailz goes directly to veterinary bills, food, and supplies, and our contribution will help immensely. To make an individual donation, go to:

PayPal: **PayPal.me/happytailzcatrescue**

Venmo: **www.venmo.com/HappyTailzCatRescue**

Zelle: happytailzcatrescue@gmail.com

CashApp: $happytailzcatrescueo

Outreach: Lotus Coalition –
Drop-In Center Hours and Needs

The Lotus Coalition is dedicated to addressing the complex challenges faced by individuals impacted by homelessness, addiction, human trafficking, and poverty. They strive to break the cycle of vulnerability and create pathways to stability, empowerment, and a brighter future for those in need.

As a ministry, we help provide supplies and clothing and participate in local street outreaches. The Drop-In Center provides resources and services to area clients in need of shelter, food, clothing, and medical. The Drop-In Center also provides clothing and toiletries to each person who visits.

In preparation for the cold weather, the Drop-In Center is requesting warm clothing, such as men's and women's jackets, sweaters, pants, long-sleeved shirts, blankets, towels, washcloths, and various new sample-sized toiletries such as hand sanitizer, hand soap, shampoo, shavers, and other hygiene supplies.

The Drop-In Center is located at 2210 E. Columbus Drive, Tampa, FL 33605, phone # 813-252-7009.

Outreach: Harmony Vet Care
Did you know?

Harmony Vet Care is one of a few local non-profits, low-cost veterinary services in the Tampa Bay area. Based in Tampa with locations in Brandon and Oldsmar, Harmony Vet Care provides lower-than-average veterinary care for cats and dogs. They are known for its Simon Fund, a dedicated fund designed to help supplement or cover veterinary bills for local families facing extreme financial hardship. They also provide targeted assistance, which is subsidized or low-income spay/neuter programs, community Trap-

Neuter-Return (TNR) programs for community cats, and free microchip events.

In addition to monetary donations, they are always in need of pet supplies such as towels, blankets, and newspapers. Supplies may be dropped off to any of the three locations: Carrollwood, 8501 Ladue Ave.; Oldsmar, 300 State Street East, Suite 112; and Brandon, 3301 John Moore Road.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

June Birthdays
9 – Carol Breland
15 – Jose Puente (aka Santa Claus)
16 – Jackie Dremsek
16 – Valerie Merimee
20 – Mindy Ramos

June Anniversaries
26 – Peg & Pat Huey

July Birthdays
6 – Laura Gregory
31 – Fr. Tim Williford

July Anniversaries
4 – Valerie & Chris Merimee
17 – Fr. George Gyasi - Ordination
19 – Alex & Becca Petrilak

August Birthdays
20 – Mike Hayes
23 - Fr. Craig Morley
28 - Fr. George Gyasi

September Anniversaries
5 – Fr. Eva Nnamene - Ordination
11 – Dcn. Chuck & Maria Glass
14 – Fr. Francisco Hernandez

October Birthdays
27 – Pat Pedota

October Anniversaries
11 – Julie & Randy Molten
20 – Linda & Mark Tarrago

November Birthdays
13 – Joanne Wagner Castillo
18 – Roxanne Welch
19 – Peg Huey
23 – Val Tridico

November Anniversaries
8 – Laura & John Gregory

December Birthdays
24 – Jim Dremsek

Reducing Food Waste Through Franciscan Values

Karla Vega

Saint Francis of Assisi had such a profound love for nature and all living creatures that Pope John Paul II declared him the Patron Saint of Ecology on November 29, 1979. His life and teachings continue to inspire people around the world to care for the environment with humility, gratitude, and compassion.

His example has inspired me to become more aware of the environmental challenges we face and to think about the changes I can make in my own daily life. I believe that protecting our planet begins with small, personal actions that anyone can take. One issue that stands out to me is food waste. In this text, I will discuss why reducing food waste is important and how this practice reflects the values lived by Saint Francis of Assisi.

Following the example of Saint Francis, we can view food as a precious gift rather than something disposable. By planning our meals, avoiding unnecessary waste, sharing with those in need, and caring for the environment, we put into practice the values of gratitude, simplicity, compassion, and respect for creation. These everyday choices not only benefit the planet but also strengthen our sense of responsibility toward others.

Although Saint Francis of Assisi did not speak specifically about the modern issue of food waste, the importance of reducing it aligns closely with many of the principles he lived by. Some of these connections include:

Respect for Creation: Saint Francis taught that nature is a gift that should be treated with gratitude and care. Reducing food waste helps conserve the land, water, and energy required to produce our food, protecting the resources that sustain all life.

Simplicity and Moderation: Francis embraced a simple lifestyle and discouraged excess. Purchasing only what we need and making good use of the food we have reflects his commitment to moderation and mindful living.

Care for the Poor: Compassion for those in need was

at the heart of Francis's life. When we waste less food, we create more opportunities to share with others through donations, community support, or responsible consumption.

Gratitude: Saint Francis encouraged people to recognize God's gifts with thankfulness. Using food wisely and avoiding unnecessary waste is a meaningful expression of gratitude for the blessings we receive.

Stewardship and Responsibility: Although the concept of stewardship is more commonly associated with broader Christian teaching, Francis's example encourages us to care responsibly for the world entrusted to us. Preventing food waste is a practical way to fulfill that responsibility.

The Rainbow Bridge

The National Canine Cancer Foundation

Have you ever wondered who penned one of the most heartfelt poems that helps pet owners in their grieving process? Art historian and cat owner, Paul Koudounaris, did some research and managed to find the original poet decades after the Rainbow Bridge Poem became famous. Edna Clyne-Rekhy, a Scottish artist and animal lover who is now in her 80's is the author. Even though she is well-traveled, she failed to notice how popular her poem had become.

In 1957 at age 19, she had just lost Major, her Labrador Retriever. Her mother told her to write down how she was feeling about the loss.

She says that as she sat down to write, the words just flowed through her head like she was talking to Major. When Koudounaris met with her, she showed him the handwritten original. Over the years, she had given out handmade copies without her name on them to friends who had lost pets.

Now there are several different versions of the poem. People have been inspired to put something of themselves in the versions. In the patent office, there were more than 25 people who claimed the poem and there are many more who just wrote their own version. Some are rhyming; others sound more like a parable.

Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor. Those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. His bright eyes are intent. His eager body quivers. Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross the Rainbow Bridge together....
Author unknown.



For more information about the St. Francis of Assisi Ministry at St. Paul's Catholic Church, check out our web page at https://stpaulchurch.com/ministry/st-francis-of-assisi/.

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