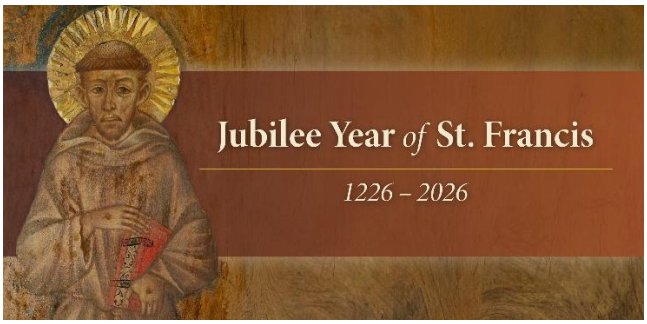
St. Paul Catholic Church
A PARISH OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG
St. Francis of Assisi Ministry

Winter/Spring Newsletter 2026

Pope Leo XIV proclaims Franciscan Jubilee Year for the 800th anniversary of the transit of St. Francis of Assisi OFM, Order of Franciscan Friars January 2026



It is with joy that we announce the promulgation of the Decree establishing a special Jubilee Year in commemoration of the Eighth Centenary of the passage of St. Francis of Assisi.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV has arranged that, from the 10th January, 2026 to the 10th January, 2027, this Year of St. Francis will be celebrated, during which all the Christian faithful are invited to follow the example of the Saint of Assisi, becoming models of holiness of life and constant witnesses of peace. The Apostolic Penitentiary grants the plenary indulgence under the usual conditions to those who participate devoutly in this extraordinary jubilee, which represents an ideal continuation of the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025.

This Jubilee Year is addressed especially to members of the Franciscan Families of the First, Second and Third Regular and Secular Orders, as well as to Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life and Associations that observe the Rule of St. Francis or are inspired by its spirituality. However, the grace of this special year is also extended to all the faithful without distinction who, with their spirits removed from sin, visit in the form of a pilgrimage any Franciscan conventual church or place of worship dedicated to St. Francis in any part of the world. The elderly, the sick and those who for serious reasons cannot leave home will also be able to obtain the plenary indulgence by spiritually joining the Jubilee celebrations and offering their prayers, pains or sufferings to God.

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

- Prayer Service, May 2, St. Paul's Pavilion, 9 AM
- St. Francis Feast Day & Pet Remembrance Mass, Oct. 2, 12:15 PM, St. Paul's
- Blessing of the Animals, Oct. 3, 9 AM, Santo Nino Shrine, St. Paul's

In this time of celebration that culminates eight hundred years of Franciscan memory, we cordially invite all the faithful to take an active part in this exceptional Jubilee. May the shining example of St. Francis, who knew how to make himself poor and humble in order to be true alter Christus on earth, inspire our hearts to live with authentic Christian charity towards our neighbour and with sincere longings for concord and peace among peoples. Following in the footsteps of the Poverello of Assisi, let us transform the hope that made us pilgrims during the Holy Year into fervour and zeal of effective charity. May this Year of St Francis be for each one of us a providential occasion for sanctification and evangelical witness in the contemporary world, for the glory of God and the good of the whole Church.

Conditions for receiving the Indulgence
(for oneself or for the deceased)

- **Sacramental confession** to be in God's grace (in the eight days before or after);
- Participation in Mass and Eucharistic Communion;
- **To visit** in the form of a pilgrimage any Franciscan conventual church or place of worship dedicated to St. Francis anywhere in the world, where one renews one's profession of faith, through the

recitation of the **Creed**, to reaffirm one's Christian identity;

- The recitation of the **Lord's Prayer**, to reaffirm the dignity of children of God, received in Baptism;
- To pray for the intentions of the **Holy Father**, to reaffirm belonging to the Church, whose foundation and visible centre of unity is the Roman Pontiff.

St. Francis of Assisi Ministry Purpose and Mission at St. Paul Catholic Church, Tampa, FL

The purpose of the St. Francis of Assisi Ministry is to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis by embracing humility, simplicity, and a boundless love for the world.

Our mission: Faith in action through living the gospel, helping those in need, caring for the environment, and showing compassion for all God's creatures.



Ministry members together for St. Francis's Feast Day and Pet Remembrance Mass

At the heart of the ministry lies the gospel – the good news of love, redemption, and hope. Living the gospel requires more than prayer; it calls us into action, such as:

- Community engagement: Living the gospel means engaging with those around us, building bridges between people of all backgrounds, and fostering a sense of belonging and hope.

St. Francis was renowned for his care and advocacy for the poor and marginalized. The ministry continues this work, committed to identifying and addressing the needs of the vulnerable. This mission is broad, encompassing individuals experiencing homelessness, hunger, loneliness, and despair.

- Direct service: The ministry organizes food drives, shelter outreach, and visits to those isolated by circumstance.

Following St. Francis, who saw every aspect of creation as a reflection of the divine, the ministry holds a deep commitment to the environment. The earth is not merely a resource to be used, but a home to be cherished and



Street Outreach – Praying with a person in need.

protected. We do this through:

- Action: Members participate in community clean-ups, tree planting, wildlife protection, and other hands-on conservation efforts.

St. Francis's love for animals and nature sets a precedent for radical compassion. The ministry extends this compassion beyond human boundaries, recognizing the inherent value and dignity of every living being. We do this through:

- Animal welfare: The ministry promotes kindness to animals, supports shelters and sanctuaries, and educates others about humane treatment.
- Interconnectedness: Recognizing that all life is intertwined, the ministry strives to make choices that respect the balance of ecosystems and the well-being of future generations.

Translating faith into action requires creativity, courage, and commitment. The ministry encourages individuals to discern their unique gifts and find ways to serve both their local and global communities.

To learn more about the ministry, we meet on the at 9:15 AM the second Saturday of each month in the St. Michael Building on the St. Paul's campus.

St. Francis Blessing of the Animals
October 4, 2025

St. Francis Ministry hosted the annual Blessing of the Animals with Fr. Tamil and Deacon Chuck leading the blessing. The event brought together parishioners and community members, providing an opportunity for pets and their owners to receive a special blessing and celebrate the bond between humans and animals. The ceremony was filled with joy, prayers, and gratitude for all of God's creatures.





Pet Spotlight
"Jackson"
By Karen Probst

Jackson, our chocolate lab and named after Jackson Brown, joined our family when he was just eight weeks old. He was a warm bundle of joy, and it was love at first sight.

Jackson never met a stranger. He greeted everyone with his famous wiggles and a toy in his mouth, welcoming everyone, so much for a watchdog! He loved swimming and spending time at the dog park, running and playing with his furry friends.

Before we knew it, Jackson grew into an adult who enjoyed long walks and car rides, with his ears flapping in the wind and still by our side.

As his journey continued, his walks became shorter. He couldn't climb the stairs to get into our bed, but he remained joyful and loving, taking naps in the sun. The hardest part of loving him was realizing his time with us was limited. He was almost 14 years old. Then, seeing pain in his eyes, we knew it was time to take away his pain and carry it ourselves. He passed peacefully, surrounded by his family who loved him. There is an empty spot where he used to be in our home, but he will always remain in our hearts.

I feel certain dogs go to heaven, so I'm leaving it to God and St. Francis to take it from here until we meet again.



"Paradise is open to all of God's creatures!"; a quote by Pope Francis, inspired by St. Francis of Assisi. "Grief is the price you pay for love." A quote from Queen Elizabeth.

For more information and clarification on the question, "Will I see my pet in heaven?", here is an interesting article that addresses this question with Bible citations. Written by a Franciscan Friar, Jack Wintz, OFM, Franciscan Media.
https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-spirit blog/will-i-see-my-pet-in-heaven

International Food Festival & Mardi Gras
February 17, 2026



St. Francis Ministry participated in the St. Paul's International Food Festival & Mardi Gras, a celebration of many cultures' delicious delicacies. Guests had the opportunity to taste food from fifteen countries. There was entertainment and various dances from the participating countries. Can you guess which country the ministry represented?

Outreach: Happy Tailz Cat Rescue

Happy Tailz Cat Rescue is a local 501(c)(3) organization. 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. They specialize in those with Cerebellar Hypoplasia, injuries, illness requiring intensive care, and those who are FIV+ and/or FeLV+. Once ready, they strive to find all loving forever homes they deserve.

With support from several foster families, all animals are recuperating in a loving home as they prepare for their forever families. Some of these animals have high vet bills, and as a charitable organization, they rely solely on donations and contributions.

As a ministry, we have chosen Happy Tailz as one of our charitable organizations. In addition to needing financial assistance, the organization's headquarters requires building repairs and big-ticket items to support the rehabilitation of the special-needs kitties. If you would like to help or make a monetary donation, they accept:

PayPal: **PayPal.me/happytailzcatrescue**
Venmo: **www.venmo.com/HappyTailzCatRescue**
Zelle: happytailzcatrescue@gmail.com
CashApp: $happytailzcatrescueo

Birthdays and Anniversaries

January Birthdays
January 3 – Sam Bubb
January 9 – Julie Molten
Jan 26 - Jan Hoyt
January Anniversaries
Jan. 6 – Fr. Peter Okojie Ordination
February Birthdays
4 – Pat Hayes
5 – Anthony Valancius
February Anniversaries
23 – Rosanne and Jack Stone

March Birthdays

1 – Fr. Bob Romaine
3 – Tina Bubb
7 – Pamela Martini
9 – Dawn Ellis and Linda Tarrago
15 – Caryn McDermott
18 – Becca Petrilak
20 – Fr. Izzie Hernandez
23 – Fr. Tamil Selvam
24 – Fr. Bill Swengros
March Anniversaries:
3 – Jan and John Hoyt
17 – Jackie and Jim Dremsek
April Birthdays
8 – Patti Cash
14 – Karen Probst
20 – Alex Petrilak
25 – Rosanne Stone
April Anniversaries
16 – Liza and Michael Valancius
19 – Mike & Pat Hayes
May Birthdays
6 – Dcn. Chuck Glass
14 – Fr. Peter Okojie
23 – Liz Gilbert
May Anniversaries
1 – Fr. Tamil Selvan Ordination
12 – Tina and Sam Bubb
15 – Fr. Bob Romaine Ordination
Fr. Izzie Hernandez Ordination
18 – Fr. Bill Swengros Ordination
19 – Fr. Craig Morley Ordination
22 – Karen and John Probst

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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