The Crossroads Messenger

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

Advent 2026



FALL FUN IS CALLING!

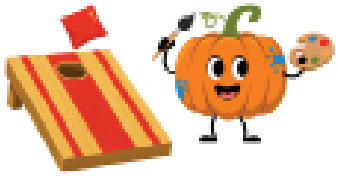
Celebrate Autumn at St. Francis Xavier

Trade in your costumes and candy for chili, hotdogs, and fall fun!

Join the St. Francis Xavier community for an Autumn Celebration on **Sunday, November 8, 2026, at 2:00PM** in the Xavier Center. This family-friendly event, held in place of our traditional Trunk-or-Treat, promises an afternoon of good food, friendly competition, and fun for all ages.



Enjoy free chili and hot dogs while taking part in a variety of activities. Challenge a friend to cornhole, cheer on the competitors in the pie-eating contest, race in the sack races, or let the kids enjoy seasonal crafts, apple dipping, a cake walk, and more!



A special highlight of the afternoon will be our **Pie Baking Contest**, open to both youth and adults! Whether you have a treasured family recipe or simply enjoy baking, bring your best pie and show off your skills. It's a great opportunity to share your baking talents, enjoy some friendly competition, and earn some bragging rights!



Bring the whole family, invite your friends, and come celebrate the season with the St. Francis Xavier community. The SFX High School Youth Group looks forward to welcoming everyone for an afternoon filled with food, fellowship, and fall fun!

PLAN TO JOIN THE FUN!

RSVP HERE to Celebrate Autumn

Enter the Pie Baking Contest



The Seasons Are Changing

Earl Baker

Deacon's Desk

The changing of the seasons makes us aware that in this life, at least on this side of our existence, no state of being is permanent. Recognizing this fact allows us to cultivate a perspective of life's ever-changing tides: times of waiting, times of growth, times of loss, times of hope, to name only a few. The changing of the natural seasons around us helps us to align ourselves with the natural cadence to meet various times in our lives with a quiet assurance that winter will give way to spring, that loss can give way to joy. Even the abundant and long days of summer teach us to savor those precious gifts of time for they are fleeting.

Recently, a Benedictine Monk and Priest, Fr. Simon, visited our parish for the weekend and he challenged us to contemplate how God is revealed in all of creation. As Autumn is upon us, it dawns on me how the trees around us do not fight against the arrival of autumn; they gracefully surrender their leaves one at a time. I notice that some trees release their leaves early, unlike the oak tree in my back yard that will not release them until January. This releasing of leaves can represent the act of letting go, of releasing old habits, old roles and attachments that no longer serve us well.

Each season does in fact provide us with a natural awakening all around us. The cold and barren landscape of Winter provides a period of hidden preparation, which in turn reminds us that periods of stillness can be fertile for us. The first green shoots of growth emerging from the soil in the Spring reminds us of the persistence of life, which in turn reminds us of the stored energy we have within our souls that, with courage, can allow us to begin anew. All these seasons remind me of the providence of God.

For me personally, having retired from the workplace, I'm slowing transitioning from a day filled with agendas, meetings and tasks to days that are filled with free time and fewer agendas. It affords me with more time for family, friends and the things that I enjoy. This is truly a gift, and I am grateful to God to have reached this milestone in life. In reflection of this new season in my life, it has become clear that our lives are worth more than what we produce. As the Catechism teaches us (CCC 1700-1706) our worth lies in the "God-given dignity that we are all created in His image and are called to be in communion with Him." We can love and serve one another as brothers and sisters in Christ as we are called at our baptism.

May this next season in your life be filled with His peace and love, and may you share it with those around you.

Friends Of Saint Francis

With this issue of Crossroads Messenger, we continue our new series on individuals or families who pattern their lives after our patron, St. Francis Xavier. By living lives of strong commitment and deep spirituality, they deserve the title "friends of St. Francis Xavier." We hope you will enjoy getting to know these members of our faith family.



Miles Spalding



It is easy to categorize the saints as people who had a little something special about them, smarter than us, more loving that us, more giving than us. Our patron, St. Francis Xavier, seems to fit this mode. By the time he was 35 years old, he had taken vows to the priesthood, helped form a religious order and accepted a lead position on a mission to India. Would you be surprised to know that St. Francis Xavier did not believe he was qualified to take on such an important role or that he wanted to back out of his mission to India because he struggled to learn new languages? He went on to become the patron saint of missions.

By the pattern of their lives, Steven and Pam Collett imitate the life of St. Francis Xavier. They believe that by putting their faith into practice, they are doing the will of God. It is young couples like Pam and Steven who enrich our faith family at St. Francis Xavier church.

Steven is the son of Terry and Nancy Collett and is a lifelong member of St. Francis Xavier. Pam is a cradle Catholic also. She is a native of Stanton, California where she was a member of St. Polycarp. The couple met at Murray State University and were married at St. Francis Xavier church on September 12, 2026. Currently, Steven is a Civil Engineer and works for MSD. Pam works for the Department of Revenue as a GIS analyst.

The future of the Catholic church is in good hands based on the care and compassion that Steven and Pam display in their daily walk with Christ. Pam is active in the choir. She volunteers her time at the Franciscan Kitchen in downtown Louisville. Pam is active in environmental causes and through her job, she provides support in times of disasters like the recent floods in eastern Kentucky and through storm relief. Steven has participated in the ministries of gift bearer and usher, and generally supports the parish in any way he can. With Father Dale's support, he constructed a sidewalk beside the parish hall as his Eagle Scout project.

Steven and Pam love St. Francis Xavier church because of the sense of community. Everyone is welcomed. They feel that their contributions are appreciated. Father Jeff was a source of strength, inspiration and organization when they were married and they feel blessed to have him as their priest. The choir, the fish fries, and the family atmosphere make St. Francis Xavier feel like home to them. They live in Louisville now, but the benefits of St. Francis Xavier parish make the forty-five-minute drive to Mass a welcomed sacrifice.

It was by answering God's call that St. Francis Xavier grew in spiritual stature. He lived out his faith to the best of his ability and in doing so, he inherited membership into the family of saints. The next chapter on the faith journey of Steven and Pam is still being written, but it is safe to assume that we can expect great things. Steven and Pam are truly "friends of St. Francis Xavier."

Hear It for the Spirit: An Afternoon of Music and Fellowship



Carrie Gary
Director of Worship

On Sunday afternoon, September 27, 2026, the Saint Francis Xavier music ministry gathered for our annual Hear It for the Spirit concert, celebrating the joy of music, faith, and community.





The tradition began during the COVID-19 pandemic, when our desire to make music together remained strong, even when group singing indoors was deemed not safe. We took our music outside, discovering a special way to share our voices, lift our spirits, and stay connected with our community through song. What began as a response to a challenging time has grown into a beloved tradition that continues to bring our parish family together.

This year's concert featured our adult choir and youth choir, with a record number of children participating! One of the afternoon's most memorable highlights was a beautiful duet by Bryan Kerr and Tony Bullock, who delighted the audience with the beloved classic What a Wonderful World.

Following the concert, our SFXMW Youth Group generously hosted a cookout, giving everyone an opportunity to continue the afternoon with food, fellowship, and friendship. We are so grateful to Lisa Pence and the SFXMW Youth for their hospitality and for all who helped make the event a success.

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, when there are so many ways to spend our time, it is truly special to see our community choose to gather, share in beautiful music, and enjoy one another's company. Hear It for the Spirit reminds us that our faith family is strengthened not only through worship, but also through the music we make, the friendships we nurture, and the time we choose to share.

Thank you to everyone who sang, attended, volunteered, and helped make this afternoon such a joyful celebration of the spirit of Saint Francis Xavier!

Hopeful Season of Advent

Miles Spalding

Are you looking to jump start your Advent this year? Open your hearts and minds to the hope and expectation of this most blessed of seasons!

Advent reminds us that some of life's greatest blessings are found in waiting. Waiting teaches us patience. Hope strengthens us when the future seems uncertain. Faith reminds us that even in our darkest moments, God is at work in ways we may not yet understand. As Pope Leo XIV reminds us, "Let us take the time to make our hearts attentive and vigilant as we await Jesus, so that His loving presence may become the treasure of our lives and hearts forever."

Advent is an invitation to transformation. It calls us to make room for Christ by letting go of things that unnecessarily weigh us down. As Mother Teresa reminds us "Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern." Chose compassion over indifference in this season of overwhelming materialism.



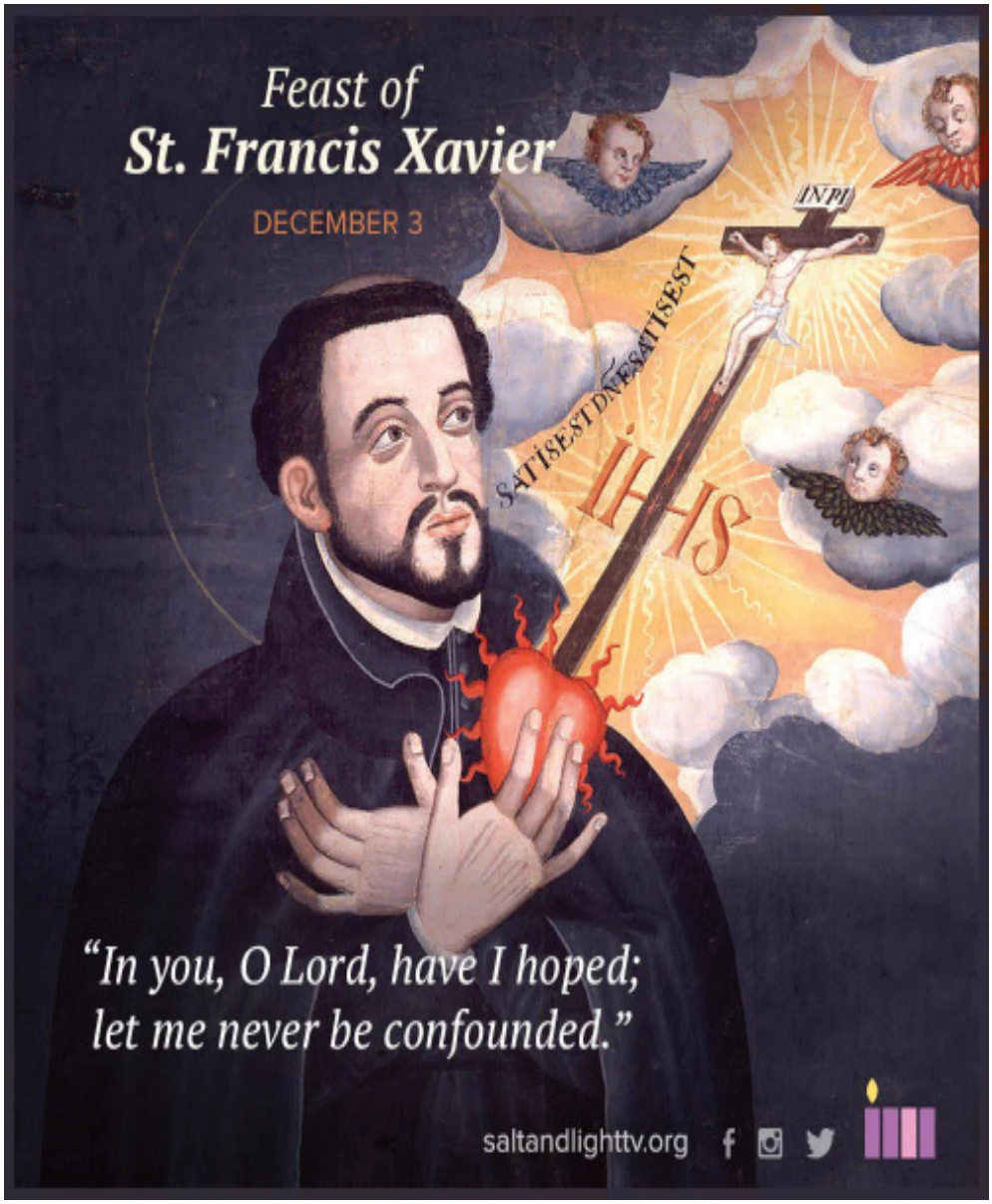
"The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before… What is possible is to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. So, stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder. There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing. For now, stay. Wait. Something is on the horizon." - Jan L. Richardson

Hope is the hallmark of the Advent season. It may not come easily, but G.K. Chesterton tells us that "In the struggle for existence, it is only on those who hang on for ten minutes after all is hopeless, that hope begins to dawn." Accepting that God became man is worth the wait and the effort. Endeavor to focus more deeply on the presence of Christ in your life during this Advent season, the rewards will far exceed your expectations!

Celebrating our Patron's Feast Dec. 3

Miles Spalding

Did you know that the feast day of our patron, St. Francis Xavier is December 3? It is a major government holiday in some parts of Spain. He is considered by some to be the greatest missionary since the time of the Apostles. We are fortunate to have such a magnetic, resolute, and compassionate patron. How often do we say, "St. Francis Xavier, pray for us," but do we know who he really was or what role he played in our church history?



Francis Xavier was born in Navarre, Spain, on April 7, 1506. He traveled to Paris in 1525 to complete his studies and here he befriended Ignatius Loyola. Ignatius, Francis and five of their friends took vows of poverty and chastity in 1534 and called their group the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Pope Paul III officially recognized the order in 1540.

Xavier was called by King John III of Portugal to evangelize the people of the East Indies. If he lived today, he would have racked up a lot frequent flyer miles. Here is Francis Xavier's itinerary from 1541 to 1552, he traveled to India, Malaysia, India, Malaysia, Japan, India, Japan and finally to an island off the Chinese coast where he died of a fever.

When one considers all the challenges Francis endured, from dangerous sea voyages, to belligerent natives, to language barriers, one is left to conclude that his success was due primarily to divine intervention. Francis realized that despite the hardships, he was a tool in the hands of our Creator. He stands as an example of what is possible through prayer, conviction, and hard work.

Francis is the patron saint of missionaries. We may not feel like we are qualified to preach the Good News or we lack the charisma to entice new followers to our faith, but we all can contribute to the building of the Church Universal by just doing our part, big or small, here at St. Francis Xavier Parish. Our patron is proof of this.

SAVE THE DATE

Viva St. Francis!



SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2027

Mark your calendar and get ready for a night of casino-style games, raffles, auctions and dinner. Stay tuned for details - you won't want to miss this winning night!

St. Francis Xavier Church

Mount Washington, Kentucky

Christmas Bazaar

Hosted by the SFX Women's Club

Saturday November 7, 2026

9am - 2pm Xavier Center & RE Building

155 Stringer Ln, Mt Washington, KY

50 Fantastic Vendors

Do your Christmas shopping here!

Pottery, resin crafts, laser engraved woodcraft items, acrylic paintings, plush and wooden door hangars, painting kits, hand crafted leather goods, Christmas ornaments, décor and trees, quilts, baby items, jewelry, religious items, fabric crafts, 3D printed ornaments and much more.

10¢ Cake Wheel **$1 Vendor Raffles**

2 Special Cake Lay Downs

Homemade Chili & other concessions

2026 Raffle ($5 per Chance)

Grand Prize - Couple's Bourbon Trail Getaway:

- 2 Night Stay (valid Sun-Thur) at The Inn at Woodhaven (includes breakfast, bourbon sampling and bourbon chocolates)
- Frazier History Museum Tickets (2)
- 2 Whiskey Tastings at Left Bank Distilled Spirits
- Actors Theatre of Louisville Tickets to A Christmas Carol (2 Adults)
- Old Louisville Ghost Tour (2 passes) and copy of David Domine's recent novel A Dark Room in Glitter Ball City.

2nd Prize - Children's Chistmas Quilt

3rd Prize - Christmas Quilt

Visit with Mr. & Mrs. Santa!

Charitable Gaming Lic #ORG0001325