

THE BRIDGE



*With open arms
for all!
All are welcome!*

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH • 4700 LONG BEACH BOULEVARD, BRANT BEACH, NJ 08008



Photo by Canva.com

*“Go up on a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; cry out at the top of your voice”
(Isaiah 40:9)*

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 10, 2023

St. Francis of Assisi, 4700 Long Beach Blvd., Brant Beach, NJ

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS	READINGS	EVENTS
Saturday, December 9	<u>(L) Living +Deceased</u> 9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers 3:30 - 4:30 PM Reconciliation 5:00 PM +Lawrence Byrnes +Richard Bromer +Thomas & Edna Lynch	Is 30:19-21 , 23-26 Mt 9:35— 10: 1, 5a, 6-8	
Sunday, December 10	8:30 AM +Thomas Ackers 10:00 AM +Edward Stein +Gerald & Frances Rothstein +Rose & John Bruno 11:30 AM +Paul Cassidy	Is 40:1-5, 9-11 II Pt 3:8-14 Mk 1:1-8	<i>Live-Streaming 10:00 AM Mass</i> www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlb
Monday, December 11	9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers	Is 35:1-10 Lk 5:17-26	
Tuesday, December 12	9:00 AM +Rosemarie B. Wirth	Zec 2:14-17 Lk 1:26-38	9:45 AM St. Anthony Novena
Wednesday, December 13	9:00 AM +James M. Doyle +Lucy Walsh	Is 40:25-31 Mt 11:28-30	2:00 PM Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
Thursday, December 14	9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers	Is 41: 13-20 Mt 11:11-15	
Friday, December 15	9:00 AM +Frances Buterick	Is 48:17-19 Mt 11:16-19	
Saturday, December 16	9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers 3:30 - 4:30 PM Reconciliation 5:00 PM +Daniel Knode +Davie Weiner +Thomas & Edna Lynch	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11 Mt 17:9a, 10-13	10:00 AM Advent Reconciliation Service
Sunday, December 17	8:30 AM +Vincent & Tess Sharkey 10:00 AM +Dr. Richard & Anne C. Grove +Jack Maher +Theresa & Marie Schwind 11:30 AM +Thomas Ackers +Dave Southwick	Is 61: 1-2a, 10-11 I Thes 5:16-24 Jn 1:6-8, 19-28	<i>Live-Streaming 10:00 AM Mass</i> www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi

Emergency Information

1. Call the main office (609) 494-8861.
There will be a recording.
2. Check Facebook
www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi
St Francis of Assisi Parish for updates.

Read our bulletin online at
www.stfrancisparishlbi.org

Daily gospel reflections can be found on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi



Follow St. Francis Parish on Instagram:
[StFrancisChurchLBI](https://www.instagram.com/StFrancisChurchLBI)

St. Francis is a sending Parish to St. Mary Academy
(609) 597-3800 or visit: www.stmaryknights.org

Winter Mass Schedule

December 2/3 through December 16/17, 2023

St. Francis of Assisi, Brant Beach

9:00 AM Daily Mass
Reconciliation: Saturday, 3:30-4:30 PM
Saturday, 5:00 PM; Sunday, 8:30, 10:00, 11:30 AM
Live-Streaming Mass - Sundays 10:00 AM
www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi

St. Thomas of Villanova, Surf City - **CLOSED for the Season**

St. Thomas Aquinas, Beach Haven - **CLOSED for the Season**

St. Clare, Loveladies - **CLOSED for the Season**

Mass Schedule **CHANGE December 23/24**

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday 12/23 5:00pm & Sunday 12/24 10:00am **ONLY**
See Christmas Schedule page 3

Parish Information - (609) 494-8813

Emergency Information: Available on our answering machine (609) 494-8861 and on the following website: schoolclosingsnj.com and facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi.

Evacuation Information: In the event of a hurricane, severe weather, or extreme high tides, please do not call the Parish Office for assistance and note that **none** of the parish buildings (churches, community center, residences or maintenance facilities) has been designated as an evacuation site. Evacuate as soon as you can, following the direction of local officials.

Parish Registration: The Parish Office is located on the second floor of St. Francis Community Center, 4700 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach Twp., NJ. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The office is closed for lunch from 12:00 to 1:00 PM. Please notify the Parish Office as soon as possible if you are moving.

Baptism: The sacrament is celebrated three times a month at St. Francis Parish. Group Baptisms are the 2nd Saturday at 10:00 AM and the last Sunday at 12:45 PM each month at St. Francis Church in Brant Beach. Baptisms during Mass are celebrated on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the last Mass in each Church. Call the Parish Office for availability and requirements: (609) 494-8813 ext. 154 or 155.

Family Faith: For children in grades one through eight. Please call Judith Clayton at (609) 494-8813 ext. 153 for more information.

Marriage: In accordance with the Common Policy of the five Dioceses of New Jersey, arrangements must be made ONE YEAR in advance. Couples are required to attend Marriage Preparation classes. Weddings are performed on Friday or Saturday. Weddings are NOT performed on Sundays, the beach, Memorial Day, Fourth of July or Labor Day weekends.

Pastoral Visitations: Please notify the Parish Office if you or any of your loved ones are ill, homebound, in SOMC, nursing homes or rehabilitation centers.

Parish Office

Michele Beck, Director, Liturgy & Music
Fr. Scott Brookbank, OFM
Judith Clayton, Director, Family Faith Formation
Deacon Robert Cunningham
Fr. Kevin Daly, OFM
Fr. Francis DiSpigno, OFM, Pastor
Fr. John Frambes, OFM
Sr. Patricia McNiff, OSF
Fr. Andrew Reitz, OFM
Sr. Pat Klemm, OSF (in-residence)
Marie Maslanka, Parish Secretary
Parish Office - (609) 494-8813,
Monday - Friday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Closed for lunch 12:00 - 1:00 PM)
Family Faith Formation - (609) 494-8813 ext. 153

Parish Finance Council

Cecelia Fowler	Fr. Andrew Reitz, OFM
Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM	Jay Pojednic
Joe Hummel	Joe Mack
Joe Vaszily	Peter Williams
Stacey Kelsall, Comptroller	

Anyone who needs to contact the Parish staff or Finance Council can do so by visiting our website at: www.stfrancisparishlbi.org/contact

St. Francis Center

Community Center - (609) 494-8861
Children's Services - (609) 494-8861 ext. 114
Counseling Services - (609) 494-1554
Educational & Career Services - (609) 494-8861 ext. 407
Family Support Services - (609) 494-8861
Food Pantry - (833) 511-0760
Recreation & Aquatics - (609) 494-8861 ext. 105
Senior Services - (609) 494-8861 ext. 108 or 109

A Letter From The Pastor...



Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM,
Pastor

We Await New Heavens and a New Earth

We know Advent is about waiting. It is also about hope. With everything going on in our world, and perhaps with everything going on in our own lives, doesn't Isaiah's words from the first reading resonate? "*Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm.*" Finally, someone to fix all this! God, come and help us!

We might wonder what's taking Him so long. Doesn't he see what we see? He does. Actually, God sees more than we see, and He sent Jesus ... already. And we are still in a mess? What's that about? Well, if God is the one who will save us, Jesus already came, and we're still a mess, then the answer to our question must be ... us. This mess is all about us and what we do or don't do to bring about God's Kingdom in our own lives and in our world.

Yes, God is omnipotent, but perhaps even God's power is limited by a people who do not hear the message. [cf. *MT 13:58*]

This week I was reminded of a quote that I have in my office. A business consultant gave a gift to each member of the President's Cabinet at St. Bonaventure University when his time with us ended. He gave me a framed quote of Mother Teresa that reads, "If you judge people, you have no time to love them." I "googled" the quote and was led to a website I never heard of, Quotespedia.org. The site offered a wonderful reflection on Mother Teresa's words. The author is not listed so I cannot offer my thanks for their great insights.

The author wrote, "*In a world that often seems fragmented, the wisdom of Mother Teresa reminds us of our shared humanity.*" It goes on to say that Mother Teresa "*believed that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, deserved love, respect, and dignity. She did not discriminate based on religion, race, or social status but approached each person with an open heart and a willingness to embrace their humanity.*"

"*In our fast-paced and often judgmental society, it is all too easy to form opinions about others without taking the time to truly understand them. We often fall prey to preconceived notions and stereotypes, allowing them to cloud our perception of individuals who may be different from us. We judge based on appearances, beliefs, or even minor actions, failing to recognize the complexities and unique experiences that shape each person's journey. ...*

It is easier to categorize and label people than to engage with them on a deeper level. But as Mother Teresa understood, love requires effort and understanding. It demands that we set aside our prejudices and preconceptions, to see the beauty and inherent worth in each person we encounter. ...

Mother Teresa's message does not suggest that we should ignore injustice or turn a blind eye to harmful behavior. It is a call to replace judgment with understanding, to approach others with curiosity rather than condemnation. Love, in this context, is not a passive sentiment but an active force that inspires us to seek justice, advocate for equality, and create positive change in the world. ...

Practicing non-judgment and embracing love as a guiding principle requires a willingness to step outside of our comfort zones. It entails cultivating empathy by listening to others' stories and striving to understand their perspectives. It involves challenging our own biases and assumptions, recognizing that our worldview may be limited and incomplete. It means treating others with kindness and respect, even when we disagree with them."

Could you imagine what our world would be like if we could "love our enemy and pray for those who persecute us?" [MT 5:44] I think that is the key to the promise of a new heaven and a new earth. Maybe that is what is holding us up from actually seeing that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Perhaps our waiting should not be passive, but active, as we prepare the way of the Lord, to hear the message anew, and with God's grace, help cultivate a new heaven and a new earth.

May this Advent season truly be an adventure that leads us all closer to Christ.

Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM
Pastor



ST. FRANCIS
**Liturgy &
Music &**

ADVENT SEASON SCHEDULE

Join us as we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord.

First Sunday of Advent- December 2/3

Saturday 5:00 PM & Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holy Day of Obligation

December 7th: 7:00 PM & December 8th: 9:00 AM

Second Sunday of Advent- December 9/10

Saturday 5:00 PM, Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM

Children's Nativity Pageant

Wednesday, December 13 at 5:30 PM

Advent Reconciliation Service with Individual Penance and Absolution

Grace, Mercy and Peace to You

Saturday, December 16th at 10:00 AM

Third Sunday of Advent/Gaudete Sunday- December 16/17

Saturday 5:00 PM & Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM

Fourth Sunday of Advent- December 23/24

Saturday 5:00 PM & Sunday 10:00 AM- **ONLY**

Offertory Collection

This Week's First Collection:

Needed: \$32,000

This Week's Second Collection:

Religious Retirement Fund

Last Week's First Collection:

Collected: \$22,471

Needed: \$32,000

Last Week's Second Collection:

Collection for Adult Family Faith

Collected: \$5,972



(Online Giving totals are included in the above figures)

**** Thank you for your generosity! ****



***St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Online Giving!***
stfrancisparishlbi.org/donate



We are the
**BODY
of CHRIST**
2023 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

6.5 Million Diocesan Goal

Goal: \$100,000.00

Pledged: \$62,497.80 (62% of Goal)

Paid: \$62,348.80 (62% of Goal)

Total Donors: 279

Total Gifts: 313

Average Gift: \$199.67

Thank you for your support of the Diocese of Trenton.
Please visit the stfrancislbi.org/annual-catholic-appeal
for more information from Bishop O'Connell.



Grace, Mercy, and Peace to You

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE

with Individual Confession and Absolution

**Saturday, December 16th
10:00 AM**



ST. FRANCIS
**Liturgy &
Music &**

CHRISTMAS SEASON SCHEDULE

Celebrate the birth of Emmanuel "God with us"

The Nativity of the Lord

Christmas Eve Masses

Sunday, December 24th

4:00 PM Surf City Church

4:00 PM Family Mass- Brant Beach Church

Prelude Music begins 30 minutes before Mass

6:00 PM - Brant Beach Church

Prelude Music begins 30 minutes before Mass

Christmas Day- The Nativity of the Lord

Monday, December 25th

10:00 AM Brant Beach

Feast of the Holy Family- December 30/31

Saturday 5:00 PM & Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM

Mary, Mother of God/ World Day of Prayer for Peace- January 1st

10:00 AM

The Epiphany of the Lord- January 6/7

Saturday 5:00 PM & Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM

Gospel Inspirations:

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."



Advent is not a "mini-Lent;" it is a season of joyful expectation and preparation as we await the birth of our Savior.

Franciscan Spiritual Center Presents:



Spiritual Direction



Are you interested in a deeper relationship with God? Do you experience a desire to pray always? Are you searching for a better understanding of the actions of God's grace in your life?

Spiritual Direction is not about problem solving. It is neither counseling nor therapy. It is about enhancing one's prayer life. Directors help people recognize and respond to God's will in their life experiences. One Director summed up the process this way, "All I do is listen. People already have a spiritual life; they are not starting here. Often they need relief from the pressure that they are not doing the right thing. I help them see the goodness in where they are on their journey, not where they think they're supposed to be." God is the real spiritual director.

The Diocese of Trenton has several training programs called an internship. These are two or three year programs focusing on deepening one's own spiritual life and on learning the dynamics of Spiritual Direction. Upon completion of the program a person receives a Certificate from the Diocese.

Our parish has four certified Spiritual Directors.

There is no charge for Spiritual Direction. If you think this might be a way for you to recognize God's actions in your life please call:

Anne Bock, (609) 204-3835

Kathy Egan, (215) 694-4651

Mary Lou Jacoby, (732) 995-6917

Pat Simmons, (609) 661-661-1361

An Invitation to Contemplative Living

Our times together invite us into prayerful reading and discussion of Scripture or other spiritual writing through Lectio Divina or "Divine Reading" and a period of silent prayer. We meet by *Zoom* on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:30 AM - write Kathy Egan (klegan.chaplain@gmail.com) for the link. On the second Saturday of the month we meet in person in the Senior Lounge of the Community Center at 9:45 AM when we also have a presentation. We always welcome new folks to join us!

Next sessions - Saturday, **December 9**, 9:45 AM, Sr. Lounge

Men's Spirituality Group

The Men's Spirituality Group meets in the Senior Lunch Room on the third Saturday of each month from 10:00 - 11:00 AM. Seating is limited. Please contact Deacon Bob or Father Fran to reserve your place.

Next meeting: Saturday, **December 16**, 10:00 AM, Sr. Lunch Room.



THE DIOCESE OF TRENTON is committed to the initiative outlined in the U.S. Bishop's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and to its own policies and guidelines regarding the reporting and investigation of sexual abuse allegations involving minors.

If you have been sexually abused as a minor by a member of the clergy or anyone representing the Catholic Church, or if you know of someone who was, you can report that abuse through the diocesan ABUSE HOTLINE: 1-888-296-2965 or via email at abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org

The Diocese of Trenton reports any allegations of sexual abuse to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Anyone with an allegation is also encouraged to provide that information to local law enforcement authorities.



Adult Faith Enrichment RCIA

A JOURNEY IN FAITH

RCIA is a journey of faith for any unbaptized individual seeking to follow Christ, any baptized person from another Christian community and any Baptized Catholic looking to

complete the sacraments of initiation
(Confirmation and/or First Communion).

Please call Fr. Andrew or Sr. Pat at the parish office
(609-494-8861 ext. 157).

Tuesday, December 12th

Word Made Flesh

Discussion of the Incarnation & Power Point Prayer
Service

All are welcome...baptized or non-baptized...
believer or non-believer.

Meetings:



Bible Talks After Mass

Tom Troyano will be doing brief monthly talks on the bible after the 9:00 AM Mass. **Next talk** Wednesday, **January 3 & 17**, 9:30 AM, Brant Beach Church

Book Club

We will meet in person at St. Francis Center in the Knight Wing Conference Room, (Room 212) on the last Tuesday of the month from 1:30-2:30 PM. **Bully Market** by **Jamie Fiore Higgins**
Next meeting Tuesday, **January 30** 1:30 PM, Room 212.

Scripture Study

Meets **bi-monthly on Wednesdays**, from 10:00-11:30 AM to learn, discuss and reflect on passages of the Sacred Scriptures. Call Tom Troyano at (732) 261-4721 or email: tomtroyano@comcast.net for more information. **Next meeting** Wednesday, **December 13**, 10:00 AM, Room 102.

Survivors of Suicide

Meets the **2nd Thursday** of each month at 7:00 PM in the Knight Wing Conference Room (Room 212). Call Sr. Pat McNiff, osf at (609) 494-8813 for more info. **Next meeting** Thursday, **December 14**, 7:00 PM, Room 212

Celiac Disease and Holy Eucharist



If you have Celiac disease and wish to receive Holy Eucharist, we now have low gluten hosts in all the churches. Please bring your own pyx [**host container**] to mass. If you forget your pyx, please tell the priest. We have some extras in the safe. Please see the priest before mass and he will provide you with a low gluten host. Complete directions are posted in the vesting sacristy.

SPLENDORS OF OLD-WORLD EUROPE:
Featuring an Eight Day Danube River Cruise on board the Luxurious MS Amadeus Riva

12 DAYS: OCTOBER 13 - 24, 2024

Hosted by
FR. ANDREW REITZ, OFM



Optional Shore Excursion Package Available! Request Brochure for Details!

STARTING AT \$5399 FROM NEW YORK
(Including Government Taxes & Airline surcharges of \$550*)

FOR A BROCHURE WITH COMPLETE DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Fr. Andrew Reitz, OFM
 St. Francis of Assisi Parish
 4700 Long Beach Blvd.
 Brant Beach, NJ 08008
 Tel: (917) 275-6593
 Email: areitz@stfrancisnj.org

Tour Features: Roundtrip airfare from New York, first class/select hotel on land portion, accommodations on the MS Amadeus Riva in handsomely appointed state-rooms sharing in twin-bedded cabins, all meals on board the cruise and breakfast daily on land portion, free-flowing red & white regional wines, beer, and soft drinks with lunch and dinner onboard the cruise portion of the tour, comprehensive sightseeing by private motorcoach including services of professional English-speaking guides and much more!

NAWAS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, INC.

October 9, 2024
 Sight and Sound Lancaster PA
 "Daniel"



\$192 includes show, lunch, transportation, driver tip

Call: Cheryl Krzaczyk, 609-661-5229
 or Mary Lou Ligus, 215-850-7809

*Seating is limited.
 Reservations are now being accepted.*

2023

Christmas Flower

REMEMBRANCE

SCANN ME



Memorialize or honor a family member or friend by making a donation toward the Christmas and Advent Flowers and art and environment items

2023

Sacred Vessels

MEMORIAL FUNDAISER

SCANN ME



Sacred Vessels are the liturgical items that are necessary for the celebration of Mass and for the proper preservation of the Body of Christ for our next liturgical celebration.

St. Anthony Novena

St. Francis of Assisi Church Brant Beach
Tuesdays after the 9:00 AM Daily Mass



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

St. Francis of Assisi Church Brant Beach
Wednesdays, 2:00 - 3:00 PM



Praying the Rosary

St. Francis of Assisi Church Brant Beach
Monday through Saturday, 8:20 AM



21st Annual Men's Cornerstone Retreat
 Friday March 8, 2024
 Saturday March 9, 2024
 Maris Stella Retreat Center
 Brochures at Church Entrances

Employment Opportunity

Community Center (609-494-8861)

Counseling Services

Positions: Full time Licensed Counselor and Full-time or Part-time Bilingual (Fluent English/Spanish) Licensed Counselor **Days:** Monday through Friday (Some evening hours required) Must complete 40-hour Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate Training (provided free of charge by the agency). On-site clinical supervision is provided. **Must have Current Professional License:** LSW, LAC, LPC or LCSW.

Children's Services-Teacher's Assistant

Seeking a person with a warm, nurturing, and friendly personality, be able to relate well with children and families. Be willing to fulfill his/her responsibilities in accordance with the Center's/ Children's Services Philosophy/Mission Statement. Prefer a background in early childhood education. (13-months to 5-years of age). First Aid & CPR Certified and/or Bi-Lingual in Spanish a plus. **Position:** Full-time (40 plus hours) and Part-time (29 hours) **Days:** Monday-Friday **Pay:** \$15 per hour

Recreation/Pool (Year round)

Position: Pool Lifeguard – Part time employment for an indoor pool and 2 seasonal outdoor pools. MUST currently possess Red Cross pool lifeguard certification, CPR/AED and First Aid Certification. **Days:** Monday-Friday, and/or weekend – flexible schedule **Pay:** \$14.13 per hour

Position: Swim Lesson Instructors Year-round part time employment for an indoor pool and 2 seasonal outdoor pools. Pool lifeguard certification, CPR/AED and First Aid Certification are not required but preferred. **Days/Hours:** Weekdays/weekends - Hours range from 8-29 per week. **Pay:** \$15 per hour

Family Support Services

Position: In-home Bilingual Therapist (fluent English/Spanish) Full time Position - Therapist will travel throughout Ocean County to conduct therapy sessions with DCP&P referred clients in home. Applicants must have valid driver's license and reliable transportation. **Must have Current Professional License:** LSW, LAC, LPC, or LCSW. Clinical supervision provided at no cost to the employee. **Days:** Monday through Friday- 35 hours per week.

***Background check and fingerprinting required for all employees 18 yrs. and older.*

**Full-time positions are offered Health Care, Paid time off (with additional earning for years of service), 16 Paid Holidays, Life Insurance, 403B (retirement plan) w/ company match, & more.*

** Part-time positions are offered Paid sick time, Paid Holidays (excluding seasonal/variable) and Employee Discounts. * We are a qualified employer for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF)*

Please send resumes to abodine@stfrancisbi.org

St. Francis Center is an EOE/AA Employer

SPECIAL EVENTS



American Red Cross Blood Drives

Tuesday, **December 12th**, 1:00pm-6:00pm

The need is constant and your donation is important for maintaining a healthy and reliable blood supply.

Please call the Community Center at (609) 494-8861 ext. 118 or visit:

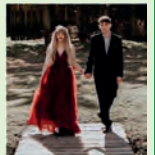
www.redcrossblood.org to schedule an appointment. For detailed donor eligibility questions, please call 800-RED-CROSS or visit: redcrossblood.org.

Dakota & Elle Christmas Concert

Friday, **December 15, 7:00 PM**

St. Francis Church Hall

\$30/ Person



Enjoy music from the tenor /soprano duo Dakota and Elle while they perform sacred and classical Christmas music. Wine and cheese to be served during intermission with a meet and greet. Seating is first come first served. Tickets on sale now at the Community Center Front Desk.

APPLES RAFFLE



A chance to win one of three Apple brand products:

1st place prize - an Apple IPAD PRO

2nd place prize - an Apple Iwatch, Series 8

3rd place prize - a pair of Apple Air Pods Pro

Raffle tickets are on sale now at the Community Center Front Desk, or download the order form online at www.stfranciscenterlbi.org.

Only 1,500 tickets sold.

Drawing being held at the Center's Super Plunge event, Saturday, **February 10, 2024**, 12:00pm.

Tickets are \$20 each and payable by check, cash or credit card.

Did You Know??

Beginning with the 2023 filing season, the law increases the income limit for the Property Tax Freeze to \$150,000 (that's a \$50,000 increase from 2022); and eliminates the requirement that an applicant must be a New Jersey resident for 10 consecutive years. The age/disability and three-year homeownership requirements remain unchanged. Starting in February of 2023 the PTR Books (aka the Blue Books) will start being mailed out. If 2023 will be your first year eligible to file, please call or come into St. Francis Senior Services for the application. There is also still time to file for your ANCHOR rebate until December 31st. Senior Services will assist in filing any of these applications with you. We look forward to assisting you with your needs, call 609-494-8861 Ext 108.

Family Support Services

Human Concerns Food Pantry Hours:

Monday - Thursday: 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Walk-ins are welcome!

*The St. Francis Food Pantry has a variety of food options, personal hygiene products, and cleaning supplies available. Please ask about our Dairy-Free Milk Alternatives, Gluten-Free or Vegan options, Baby Food, Formula, & Diapers. *Spanish-speaking staff is available to translate.*

*Join our text message alert system to receive alerts about the food pantry and annual projects. **TO ENROLL TEXT "PANTRY" TO 833-511-0760** **carrier text message rates may apply***

Donations needed for the Food Pantry:

CANNED GOODS: Soup, Chicken, Vegetables, Beans, Spaghettios, Tomato Sauce, Oatmeal **PERSONAL HYGIENE:** Toilet paper, Shampoo, Bar soap/Body wash, Deodorant, Toothpaste, Feminine products, Laundry Detergent

Donations for the Food Pantry can be left in the bins marked "donation" in the front of the Community Center. If you would like to make a monetary donation to the Food Pantry it can be made through our website: <http://stfranciscenterlbi.org/donate> via PayPal.

Family Support Services:

To learn more about our programs visit our website at <http://stfranciscenterlbi.org>

- Parenting & Anger Management Groups
- Auto Ownership
- Parents As Teachers
- Maintaining the Integrity of Spanish Speaking Families

Children's Services

For information call ext. 114.



St. Francis Community Center's Preschool and Childcare are fully accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

www.naeyc.org/our-work/for-families.org. We are also a Grow NJ Kids 4 Star Program. www.grownjkids.gov.

Masks will be required for 2 years and up - they will be encouraged to wear a mask throughout the day.

Year-round Childcare for Children TODDLER & PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Available Care 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM, 5 Days a Week

Full Day and Work Day

Toddlers: Ages 13 months to 2 1/2

Preschoolers: Ages 2 1/2 to 5

Counseling Service by appointment (609) 494-1554

Counseling Services offers trauma-informed, therapeutic sessions for individuals, couples, and families. Services are available in person or virtually and available: for adult and child victims of crime and sexual assault throughout Ocean County and are free of charge; for general mental health counseling on a sliding fee scale to residents of southern Ocean County (Lanoka Harbor and South) and support groups that are free of charge at our location in Brant Beach. For more information or to enroll in services, please contact us at: 609-494-1554. Monday 9am-5pm, Tuesday through Thursday 9am-9pm, and Friday 9am-5pm.

Recreation & Aquatics

For info. please call ext. 105. Visit the **Fall/Winter Brochure** online at www.stfranciscenterlbi.org or pick up a Brochure at the Center lobby.

**SESSION III
REGISTRATION
ONGOING**

**AQUA AEROBICS
AQUA BOOTCAMP
ADULT YOGA
KIDS TENNIS**

Please Call for Class Availability

Senior Services

For information call ext. 108 or 109.



Information and Assistance, Telephone Reassurance Calls, Caregiver Assistance Options Counseling: Application Assistance for PAAD (Pharmaceutical Assistance for the Aged and Disabled), Meals on Wheels, SHIP Counseling (State Health Insurance Program), Energy Assistance, JACC (Jersey Assistance for Community Caregivers) and many more. Socialization, Recreation, and Exercise programs are available - please call for availability.

The LBI Health Department is doing
Blood Pressure Screenings
the **second Tuesday of each Month**
from 11:00 am - 11:30 am

in the Community Center Senior Lounge. Please call 609-494-8861 ext. 111 for more information.



Cultural Competency Statement

The St. Francis Center recognizes a culturally diverse community and makes a commitment to the principles of multiculturalism as a means of understanding, accepting, valuing, and supporting cultural diversity. The term Multicultural is applied broadly to include issues of minority or marginalized status as it relates to race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, use of English as a second language, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, spirituality, and the elderly. The St. Francis Center proposes to develop programs and practices that assist staff, board members, and volunteers to recognize, accept, and affirm differences and similarities among people and provide services that are supportive and inclusive of all members of the community.

Educational & Career Services

For information call 732-281-8653

Introducing the 23-24 FY Senior Employment Assistance Program (SEA) for Ocean County residents ages 55 & up. Whether impacted by COVID-19 or seeking to enhance skills for reentry into the workforce, the SEA Program breaks down age-related barriers. Our mission is to empower seniors by creating an inclusive environment, redefining the narrative around senior employment. We provide tailored support, skill development, and personalized career guidance, fostering a community that values the expertise seniors bring. Services include soft/hard skills assistance, on-the-job training, resume building, tech & career training, community resource linkages, and counseling. Join us in shaping a future where age is a source of strength and unmatched value.

Fundraiser for St. Francis Community Center!

We now have blue Recycle America bins located:

St. Francis Community Center

4700 Long Beach Blvd., Brant Beach

St. Thomas Aquinas Church

2nd & Atlantic Ave., Beach Haven

St. Clare Church

56 St. & Long Beach Blvd., Loveladies



These bins can be filled with clothes, purses, shoes, bedding and pillows. Recycle America will collect the items and redistribute them to those in need. In turn, this is a Fundraising opportunity for us – we receive a percentage of every pound collected.

Get Updates on Closings sent directly to your phone:

1. Go to [Rainedout.com](https://www.rainedout.com)
2. Search St. Francis Center, LBICC, INC.
3. Opt-in to your organization
4. Validate your phone number

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685 Hooper Ave., Toms River, NJ <http://www.donovancatholic.org>



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**Saturday, December 16, 2023 at 12:00noon at
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Please help us cover all 1,700 veterans' graves with wreaths at our St. Joseph's Cemetery & Mausoleums. The cost per wreath is \$17. Scan the QR code or go to our website for more information and to purchase a wreath.

Hurry, deadline is November 28th!



Join us as we leave from St. Joseph's Campus at 3:00pm, Friday, December 29th on a Deluxe Coach bus for the Big Apple.

Cost is \$145. Food & sightseeing are on your own.

Tickets are limited. First come first served.

Make checks payable to "Rosary Altar Society" and include your name, address, cell phone number, email address AND the number of tickets you would like.

SEND TO: Donna West, 9 B Cardinal Street, Manchester, NJ 08759
For questions, call Donna at 732-598-0751

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3. Contact us for family income limits 730 Lacey Road, Suite G6, Forked River, NJ 08731 (609) 384-0102 coastalvim.org

Appointments are required

Soroptimist Clothes Closet

Stafford Community Center, 25 Pine St., Manahawkin

Clothes Closet Special December Hours: Dec. 2, 10-1; Dec. 6, 4-6; Dec9, 10-1; Dec. 15, 10-4; Dec. 16, 10-1; Dec. 18 & 19, 10-4; Dec. 20, 4-6.

We will resume regular hours in January of every Saturday from 10-1 and the first and third Wednesday of each month from 4-6. Free clothing at 25 Pine Street Manahawkin for women in need. Call Madelyn at 609-276-3308 for more info.

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