

# 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*

*“...The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (Jn1:5)*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023

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

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS	READINGS	EVENTS
Saturday, December 23	(L) Living +Deceased 9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers 3:30 - 4:30 PM Reconciliation 5:00 PM +Wladyslaw Kochanek +Gail Ann Burns	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 Lk 1:57-66 <i>*see below for vigil readings*</i>	
Sunday, December 24	4:00 PM +Mary English + Davie Weiner + Thomas Ackers + Helen MacDonald + Bert Stahlberg + Marie Cooper + Patricia Willem Downs + Margaret Arthur 6:00 PM + Eugene & Lucille D' Amico + David & Kathleen Barndt + Ann Armstrong, <i>ofs</i> + Margaret "Maggie" Onorato + George & Jane Holland + Andrew Noll + Don Daily + Donna Luszik + Shanley & Filipovsky Families + Joseph & Judith Filoon	<b>10:00am 4th Sunday of Advent</b> II Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Rom 16:25-27 Lk 1:26-38  <b>Christmas Eve Masses</b> Is 9:1-6 Ti 2:11-14 Lk 2:1-14	<i>Live-Streaming 10:00 AM ,4:00 PM &amp; 6:00 PM Mass, Brant Beach</i> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlb">www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlb</a>
Monday, December 25	10:00 AM(L)&Deceased Stein & Kempski Families +Donna Weiss + Henry Scala + Davie Weiner + Patricia Grenier + Joseph Stanilious + Marie Russel + Thomas Ackers + Theresa Prendergast (L) Nancy Bent + John Callanan	Is 52:7-10 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18	
Tuesday, December 26	9:00 AM +Helen M. Kempski + James McConnell Jr. + Mary Beth Fellona	Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59 Mt 10: 17-22	9:45 AM St. Anthony Novena
Wednesday, December 27	9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers	1 Jn 1:1-4 Jn 20:1a, 2-8	2:00 PM Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
Thursday, December 28	9:00 AM +Thomas Ackers	1 Jn 1:5— 2:2 Mt 2:13-18	
Friday, December 29	9:00 AM +Fr. Bill Bried, <i>ofm</i> +Margaret L. Virili	1 Jn 2:3-11 Lk 2:22-35	
Saturday, December 30	9:00 AM + Susan Jenova 3:30 - 4:30 PM Reconciliation 5:00 PM + Tom Ackers	1 Jn 2:12-17 Lk 2:36-40	
Sunday, December 31	8:30 AM +Thomas Ackers + Edward Coyle + Paul Kelly 10:00 AM (L)&Deceased Stein & Kempski Families + Norman David Cella 11:30AM + James Rieger + Helen MacDonald	Gn 15:1-6, 21:1-3 Heb 11:8, 11-12,17-19 Lk 2:22-40	<i>Live-Streaming 10:00 AM Mass</i> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlb">www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlb</a>

**St. Thomas of Villanova Church**  
13th & Long Beach Blvd., Surf City

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS
Sunday, December 24	(L) Living +Deceased 4:00 PM+ Anthony McHale + Alice B. Schiano + Theresa Prendergast

**Mass Schedule CHANGE December 23/24**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**Saturday 12/23 5:00pm & Sunday 12/24 10:00am ONLY**

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**  
**Holy Day (Not of Obligation)**

**Monday, January 1: 10:00 AM**  
**Live-Steaming [www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi](http://www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi)**

**See Page 3 for Christmas Schedule**

**Praying the Rosary**

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



**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**



**Emergency Information**

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

**Read our bulletin online at**  
[www.stfrancisparishlbi.org](http://www.stfrancisparishlbi.org)

Daily gospel reflections can be found on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi](http://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](http://www.stmaryknights.org)

**A Letter From The Pastor...**



Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM,  
Pastor

**Merry Christmas!!**

It is much too warm for a White Christmas this year, but I do hope you're not too disappointed. When a friar friend from Singapore [*think tropical*] asked me once, "What is up with you guys and this White Christmas?" I said, "It just goes to show you the power of mass marketing. If it wasn't for Bing Crosby and a couple of movies, we might have an easier time remembering that Jesus was actually born in a desert!"

But I do love the Christmas music, the decorations, and the bright lights on our houses and Christmas trees. It does add to the joy of this season, but honestly, that is really just the "fluffy side" of this holiday. Much of it is simply cultural adaptations, accumulated over the centuries, of Christians accentuating the great importance of this Feast of the Nativity. Hopefully, it all directs us to what we are actually celebrating, the birth of Jesus and the recognition of one of the basic tenets of our faith: God is with us.

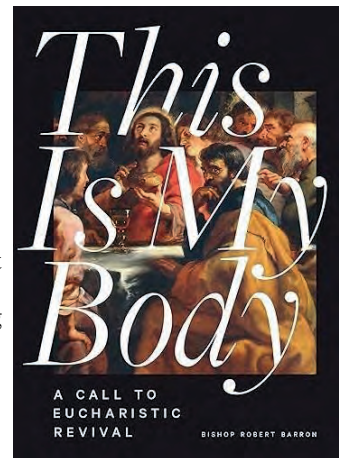
The Catholic Church in the United States is in the midst of a National Eucharistic Revival. This is an invitation for us to grow deeper in our understanding of the mystery of the Eucharist. This Sacrament tells us clearly that God is with us. The Revival is calling us to deepen our relationship with Jesus by encountering him in the Eucharist and then going out on mission to be like Christ to the world

In a time when the divisions in our world are seemingly becoming larger and larger, we remember Jesus' ultimate prayer was that we all become one. [*Jn 17:21*]

As a Church we believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is the *source and summit* of our faith. It is what will heal us, unite us, and bring us closer to Jesus, to one another and to who Jesus is calling us to be.

This year the Parish offers everyone a Christmas gift of the book, *This is My Body: A Call to Eucharistic Renewal*, by Bishop Robert Barron. Bp. Barron explains the meaning of "source and summit" and looks at the Eucharist as a Sacred meal, as the Sacrifice of our salvation, and what Real Presence actually means. This Eucharistic Revival is about exploring what is central to our Catholic faith and how we can truly encounter Christ in our lives and in the life of the world.

Beginning in January, we will offer a number of opportunities to discuss not only the book but other resources that can help us come to a deeper understanding of the Body of Christ. May God bless you and your family in this most special time of the year when we celebrate the birth of Christ, God with us.



Merry Christmas!  
Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM  
Pastor



## **CHRISTMAS SEASON SCHEDULE**

*Celebrate the birth of Emmanuel "God with us"*

### **The Nativity of the Lord**

#### **Christmas Eve Masses**

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

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 25<sup>th</sup>**

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 1<sup>st</sup>**

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



## *Nativity Blessing*

God of every nation and people,  
from the very beginning of creation  
you have made manifest your love:  
when our need for a Savior was great  
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.  
To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,  
bless all who look upon this manger,  
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,  
and raise our thoughts to him,  
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,  
and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Amen.



## **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 7<sup>th</sup>: 7:00 PM & December 8<sup>th</sup>: 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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**

***DUE TO EARLY PRINTING FOR  
THE HOLIDAY  
COLLECTIONS WILL BE  
POSTED NEXT WEEK.***



***St. Francis of Assisi Parish  
Online Giving!  
[stfrancisparishbi.org/donate](http://stfrancisparishbi.org/donate)***



***6.5 Million Diocesan Goal***

**Pledged:** \$62,502.80 (63% of Goal)

**Paid:** \$62,353.80 (62% of Goal)

**Total Donors:** 279

**Total Gifts:** 314

**Average Gift:** \$199.05

Thank you for your support of the Diocese of Trenton.  
Please visit the [stfrancisbi.org/annual-catholic-appeal](http://stfrancisbi.org/annual-catholic-appeal)  
for more information from Bishop O'Connell.

## **Gospel Inspirations:**

***"...for nothing will be  
impossible for God."***



The words of the angel Gabriel to a surprised and puzzled young girl bring hope to all of us who look to God in troubled circumstances.

## Parish Information - (609) 494-8813

**Emergency Information:** Available on our answering machine (609) 494-8861 and on the following website: [schoolclosingsnj.com](http://schoolclosingsnj.com) and [facebook.com/stfrancisparishlbi](https://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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://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

## 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](mailto: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** - Wednesday, **January 3**, 10:30 AM, Zoom  
Saturday, **January 13**, 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, **January 20**, 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](mailto: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).

*Next Session TBA*

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

### Meetings:

St. Francis Center unless otherwise noted.



#### 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 10**, 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](mailto:tomtroyano@comcast.net) for more information. **Next meeting** Wednesday, **January 3 & 17** 10:00 AM, Room 102.

#### Survivors of Suicide

Meets the **2<sup>nd</sup> 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, **January 11**, 7:00 PM, Room 212

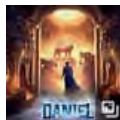
### Celiac Disease and Holy Eucharist



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.

**October 9, 2024**

Sight and Sound Lancaster PA  
**"Daniel"**



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

Call: Cheryl Krzacyk, 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

## WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM

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

**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\*)  
Estimated as of August 25, 2023.

**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) 275-5593  
Email: [areitz@stfrancisbl.org](mailto:areitz@stfrancisbl.org)

**Tour Features:** Roundtrip airfare from New York, first class/select hotel on land portion, accommodations on the MS Amadeus Riva in handsomely appointed staterooms 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.**

Now is the time to register, don't wait until the last minute!  
Registrations are already coming in, it will be a great trip!

## 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 (\$15.13 beginning Jan 1st)

#### Recreation/Pool (Year round)

##### **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 (\$16 starting Jan 1st)

#### 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.

#### Senior Services

**Position: Full time Caseworkers (Outreach and Information Assistance Workers)** – Position available at our Berkeley Satellite Office.

Social work/caseworker experience preferred. Must have Phone/Communication, Computer & Organization skills. Must have valid driver license. Days/Hours: 40 hours a week- Monday-Friday  
Pay: \$15.13 per hour (Beginning Jan 1st)

**\*\*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](mailto:abodine@stfrancisbi.org)

St. Francis Center is an EOE/AA Employer

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### 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](http://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??

Did you know that St Francis Counseling Service has an ongoing community survey to continually assess the needs of Ocean County residents? You can take the survey and let us know your thoughts by going to this web address (<https://questionpro.com/t/ARfTIZxLLe>), visiting our facebook page ([facebook.com/stfranciscounselingservice](https://facebook.com/stfranciscounselingservice)) or using the QR code below! Let us know your thoughts!



## 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](http://www.naeyc.org/our-work/for-families.org). We are also a Grow NJ Kids 4 Star Program. [www.grownjkids.gov](http://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](http://www.stfranciscenterlbi.org) or pick up a Brochure at the Center lobby.

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## 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**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 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](http://Rainedout.com)
2. Search St. Francis Center, LBICC, INC.
3. Opt-in to your organization
4. Validate your phone number

## Community Bulletin Board

### St. Joseph's Parish

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



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

### Coastal Volunteers in Medicine

730 Lacey Rd., Suite G-6, Forked River, NJ 08731

Coastal VIM provides FREE, routine, non-emergent primary healthcare to those who qualify. Services are provided through licensed volunteer clinicians and support staff following a "Culture of Caring" model.

#### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Have no health insurance
2. Live in Ocean County
3. Contact us for family income limits 730 Lacey Road, Suite G6, Forked River, NJ 08731 (609) 384-0102 [coastalvim.org](http://coastalvim.org)

Appointments are required

### Soroptimist Clothes Closet

Stafford Community Center, 25 Pine St., Manahawkin

**Clothes Closet Special December Hours:** 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.*

### St. Mary Academy

400 Doc Cramer Blvd., Manahawkin

*St. Mary Academy, the place where children learn, grow, love, and serve continues to accept applications for the 2023-2024 school year for children in grades PRE-K-8th.*

**For more information or to schedule a private tour, contact**

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