

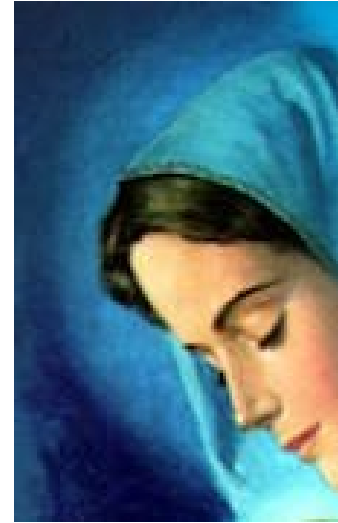
## ***St. Francis of Assisi Parish Ann Arbor.***

December 28, 2020  
Feast of the Holy Innocents

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I suspect that like me, many of you will be glad to see the back of 2020 and to embrace the promise of the New Year. ***So, as we enter into 2021, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very blessed, safe and happy New Year and hope that very soon we can all begin to return to a normal way of life.***

May I also thank all those who attended Mass here at St. Francis over the Christmas days for their adherence to our precautions and restrictions. I know that they were a great inconvenience, but please be assured that they were for the safety of all. Your cooperation was greatly appreciated and allowed us all to worship and celebrate in peace.



Also, a word of gratitude to all those who assisted at our Christmas Masses- deacons, readers, Ministers of Holy Communion, ushers, servers, live-streamers, musicians and cantors. Having nine Masses in less than 24 hours was indeed a marathon, but it did allow us to maximize the numbers who could physically join us in Church. Thanks also to the priests who celebrated with us- Frs. John, Terry, Leo Joseph, and Paul Tarabay.

### ***Your Christmas Gift to our Parish Community.***

To those also who financially supported our parish with a Christmas gift- Thank you! Your commitment and support of our community means a great deal and allows us to continue our ministry and work.

For those who would like to give now- your support would be greatly appreciated. Please note that our Parish Office will close on Dec 31<sup>st</sup> (New Year's Eve) at 12 noon, allowing you to drop off your gift ***or*** you may contribute online through our parish website: <https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Giving/stfrancisannarbor/>

### ***Sunday Mass Dispensation***

Our bishop has extended the current Sunday dispensation to Feb 16. In chatting with folks, it struck me that many have misunderstood the meaning of the dispensation. While the obligation to attend Sunday Mass has been temporarily suspended, the sacred obligation to keep the Sabbath holy, as commanded in the Ten Commandments, is still in place. As Catholics we should never treat Sunday as just another day to which Mass is attached. Sunday should always remain different- a time

for faith and family- a time for prayer and rest. Until such time as we can all worship again safely, we will continue to live-stream some of our Sunday Masses and to distribute Holy Communion after others- details can be found in the bulletin and online.

***The Continued Impact of 2020- dealing with grief.***

Finally, as 2020 comes to a close, we remember with love all those who left us in the past twelve months- and who hopefully worship with us on another shore. The Christmas season can be a difficult time for all who grieve. Once again, we invite you to join us for our annual Workshop: [Grieving with Great Hope](#). This year it is an online 5 week series on Mondays from Jan 25 to Feb 22. I know that many will find it helpful in a time of grief. Further details can be found in the bulletin and online.

Once again, may I wish you all a happy and safe New Year. Remember, you are always in our thoughts and prayers and we ask you to continue to pray for and support your parish family.

*Fr. James*

<https://www.stfrancisa2.com/>