

## THANKFULNESS

My father would look out the picture window in the kitchen when he thought he was alone and would say, “I’m glad my parents didn’t miss the boat.” His way of giving thanks for their enabling him to have the freedom to work, and enabling us as a family to have all the benefits of his endeavors. These gifts included education, charity, fruitfulness, love, joy, freedom from fear and hunger. And instead experience kindness, gentleness, and faithfulness, the one he cherished and held dear.

Almost all nations and cultures, both ancient and modern, have a day or season set aside for giving thanks. Our country isn’t unique in that practice. What makes our country unique is that we can do that. We have the privilege, if we so choose, to express our thankfulness every day, and if we want to, at meals or at any time. We have the freedom to do so publicly. May we never forget to acknowledge those who came before us, as well who defended that right. Thank all for enabling us to have the gift of showing our thankfulness as we choose!

I’m forever thankful for all the sacrifices made by our forefathers and mothers made on behalf of all future generations. May the blessings we now have be never taken for granted.

— Margaret C. Barno



# Father Mitch's Notes...



Peace and Grace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord!

Note: "Thanksgiving in December."

I know, I know...It is going to be December, we are not supposed to go backwards to Thanksgiving. Right!? Well, I am actually going backwards in order to go forward.

When a pitcher is on the mound at a baseball game he places the ball into his glove as he comes to a military-like attention stance on top of the pitcher's plate. He peers, usually by squinting his eyes, to the catcher to see what sign the catcher is making. He is trying to see what pitch the catcher is requesting he throw. Either shaking his head "yes" or "no" the pitcher agrees or disagrees. Soon after agreement something weird happens – the pitcher moves his head around, especially if there are base runners around, and then moves backwards. After all of this there is forward momentum until the ball is released.

Why does the pitcher move backwards? To gain as much forward momentum as he can. To propel the ball from zero to speeds of some 100 miles per hour. Then a lot of things work together to make the ball do and go where the pitcher hopes it goes. It does not always hit the mark...

November has been a big month for St. Francis. As we stand on the mound, on the pitcher's plate of the present, sometime near the end of November or early December, we are peering forward into 2016. We consider things, hopes and dreams and prayers, for that future year. We look for signs as to how we can be "A loving community, serving God's kingdom." We hope that what we want and what we see line up agree, and shake our head "yes."

We then step backwards, into the past, to gain momentum. We look at what we have experienced in our life as a church over the last year. We take stock of those successes and learning experiences with us as we wind up. Taking note of the energy of the congregation in terms of time, talent, and treasure. All of which in this year has been great.

We use this momentum to propel our ministry of "A loving community, serving God's kingdom" forward. Not just forward in time but also forward outside of ourselves. We do this in order to be a part of the transformational nature of Christ on the world. Hoping that we hit the mark...

St. Paul would often look back to remind others where he came from to show the importance of why his call to minister to the Gentiles mattered so much. He would also look back on the great heroes of the Jewish people so they could see why they matter so much. Always going backwards to move from the present troubles of the faithful to the future salvation of Christ. Hoping that those to whom he wrote would believe and grow. Hoping his words would hit the mark...

That is why I am giving "Thanksgiving in December."

Peace,  
Mitch+

---

## *UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS*

---

### SUNDAY DECEMBER 6TH

The Saint Francis Youth Group will be hosting a parish luncheon on Sunday December 6<sup>th</sup> immediately following the 10:45 a.m. service. Lasagna, salad, bread and dessert will be served. Cost of the meal is \$5.00 and all proceeds will be used to purchase gifts for the Salvation Army Angel Tree program.

Tickets will be sold in the parish hall after both services beginning this Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

On the day of the luncheon, please proceed to the Education Building where our Host or Hostess will show you to your seat and one of our teen waiters will serve you your meal and make sure you have a wonderful dining experience!

### SATURDAY DECEMBER 12TH

The Saint Francis Youth Group will be “Ringing the Bell” for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive. Come out and support your youth (and drop a little change in the bucket while you’re there). We will be at the Chick-Fil-A on Troup Highway from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Afterwards, we will be going to purchase the gifts for those families we selected from the Salvation Army Angel Tree. (Remember – the money raised from the Youth sponsored luncheon on 12/6 will go towards the purchase of these gifts). Then after a hard day of bell ringing and gift shopping, it’s off to Double Dave’s for pizza and soda!

If you have any questions, you may contact Bob Gray at 903-593-8459 or [newcomer@stfrancistyle.org](mailto:newcomer@stfrancistyle.org)



## Other News:

- Supplying Lunches for the Church Under a Bridge ministry is still going strong. People are putting their money where their heart is and the project is still funding itself!
- Newcomer's Dinner: What a great time!
- Rally Day where we got to see how we can participate in the life of the Church and the World.
- Blessing of the Animals, where not a finger, wing, fin nor paw was harmed.
- Parish Luncheon and Fall Meeting where we elected new vestry and Council Delegates:

### Vestry:

Sandra Dugan -3 years

Michael Matthews -3 years

Juanita Fletcher -3 years

Buz Gagliano -2 years

Margaret Faulk -1 years

### Council Delegates:

Gay Barron

Sandra Dugan

Norma Gagliano

Tommie Ann Grinnell

- Hosted the local community Texans Against Crime!
- Safeguarding God's Children class.
- Fearless and Female. Lots of "stabby kitties" handed out!
- Heavenly Rest Meeting. Informative and relevant.
- Safeguarding God's People class.
- Rum Cake Prep #1
- Fall Dessert Party: A wonderful evening.
- Rum Cake Prep #2
- Plus much, much more!

Thanks go out to the many volunteers and donors that make these things happen!



## **GET TO KNOW YOUR VESTRY...**

This is the first stint for a bundle of energy known as Tommie Ann Grinnell who handles the Newcomers Welcome vestry slot for the members of St. Francis. She was born for the task, being blessed with a smile that welcomes a response. She was born near Abilene, Texas and grew up as a “Cradle Catholic”. She was one of five children and went to school in Clyde, Texas.

Wonder who has stuffed those “goodie bags” on the shelf in the Narthex for two years? It’s Tommie Ann. She sends welcome notes and maintains contact with newcomers and helps them assimilate into the St. Francis family. She is currently working with Outreach Minister Bob Gray in hosting newcomer dinners and coffees, and as duties are further defined for the two of them her work with newcomers will continue.

Tommie Ann earned her undergraduate degree in education from Texas A&M. Her first teaching job was in Lamesa, Texas, where she taught third grade for two years. She then moved to Lubbock, Texas where she worked as a children’s library assistant. It was there that she met her husband, Mike, who was choir director at the Catholic church she attended. They married in 1982 and Mike worked on his graduate degree at Texas Tech. In addition, he worked as a teaching assistant while also playing gigs with a bluegrass band, country band and numerous orchestras.

In 1983 they moved to Victoria, Texas and this is where their children Amy and Jake were born. Mike taught the high school orchestra, and during their five years in Victoria she worked at the University of Houston branch there as a library assistant, and taught school for two years. In 1989 she completed her “Library Certification for Public Schools”. The Grinnells moved to the Houston area in 1988 where they taught for the Deer Park Schools. They lived there for eleven years.

The year 1999 brought the Grinnell family to Tyler, and Tommie Ann worked in Whitehouse as a librarian until she retired in 2009. Husband Mike worked for TISD at Robert E Lee High School as orchestra director. We were blessed by their joining us at St. Francis in 2011 and we enjoy their musical talents on many occasions during worship, as Mike plays violin and she is part of the [hand bell](#) choir.

Tommie Ann's hobbies are painting, writing, travelling, and enjoying a good book. She was a productive helper in setting up our small library in the education building, and works on the "Rum Cake" project each year. She also enjoys volunteer work, and before September 9<sup>th</sup> (her Fall Day) she had just begun volunteering at the Cowan Center. She also volunteers at the Goodman –LeGrande Home.

"Down Time" so to speak...Tommie was sidelined for a time on September 9<sup>th</sup> and has been recuperating from an injured knee. We have really missed her and it has been wonderful to see her back at church, albeit in a wheelchair. She also returned to a vestry meeting last night. Now transitioning to a walker, she reports that things are getting back to the "State of Normality" where she really prefers living. We thank her for all she does, and we like to live with her in that state as well.

Carole M. Barnes  
November 18, 2015



## **SERENDIPITY SUPPER**

"O Come All Ye Faithful!" to the Serendipity Supper Christmas Party! This year it is scheduled for December 11, at 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Parish Hall. We will have live piano playing, carol singing, games, and of course, a great ham dinner! Wear your favorite Christmas outfit and come join us for the fun and merry-making!



## CHRISTMAS TEA

The annual St. Francis Christmas Tea will be held on December 6, 2015 at the home of Norma Gagliano, 1379 LuAnn Lane.

This is a fun afternoon of wonderful food, music by our own Kathleen Davis (with a little help from her friends) and a Crazy Santa exchange of Christmas ornaments. Ornaments must cost no more than \$10.00. If you forget an ornament, we always have a few extra just in case. If you don't have time to make a finger food, we always have more than could ever be eaten.

However, the most meaningful part of the day is drawing a name for prayers for the coming year. When you come in the door you are asked to trace your hand on a piece of paper and write your name on it. All the "hands" are placed in a basket and at the end of the party each person draws a "hand". At our next tea you may tell the



person you drew their name if you wish. Some of us have kept all the hands we have gotten over the years and continue to pray for those women.

The tea is a great way to spend a few hours with the fabulous women of St. Francis. Please join us.



### December Birthdays

- 12/9 John O'Sullivan
- 12/10 Julie Miller
- 12/20 Christine Knighten
- 12/27 Norma Gagliano

### Anniversaries

- 12/5 Randy and Shelley Rocha
- 12/16 Fr. Fenton and Judy Kovic
- 12/22 Marty and Mairi Krausse
- 12/28 Gerry and Polly Kuklewicz

St. Francis Episcopal Church  
3232 Jan Avenue  
Tyler, TX 75701  
Telephone: 903-593-8459  
Fax: 903-526-7756  
Email: [office@stfrancist Tyler.org](mailto:office@stfrancist Tyler.org)  
Web site: [www.stfrancist Tyler.org](http://www.stfrancist Tyler.org)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
TYLER TX 75701  
PERMIT NO. 1191  
RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED



[www.facebook.com/StFrancisTyler](http://www.facebook.com/StFrancisTyler)

