



St. Francis of Assisi Parish

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March 31st, 2024

Dear Parishioner(s),

Happy and Blessed Easter to you and your family! On behalf of the Parish Staff –Father Murray McDermott, Miss Ruthann Fisher, Mrs. Terrienne Moulton, Miss Amanda Sage, Mr. Gary Howell, and myself - I extend to you our sincere greetings of Easter joy!

Our Lenten journey is now complete, and we celebrate with joy the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Our Lenten practices – prayer, fasting, charity – have renewed and strengthened us in our life with God, in our families, with our friends, and in our community.

I wish to thank those parishioners who made special efforts during Lent to join in the celebration of the Eucharist, and to share in the Stations of the Cross. Our Lenten series this year was a special program initiated by the Laudato Si Committee of our parish and took place on Wednesdays, at 1:30 and 7:00 pm. This series reflected on Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si', calling all people of good will to further reflection, dialogue and action. It was very interesting and informative. If you wish to share in some of the fruits of this activity, I invite you to follow the link below, where you can watch one of the most interesting videos from this series. It is called, The Letter: <https://tinyurl.com/3m5kbnxk>. Considering the association of St. Francis of Assisi with ecology, this is part of our Parish spirit. His 'Canticle of the Creatures' (1225 A.D.) speaks so beautifully of Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Wind, Sister Water, Brother Fire, and Sister Mother Earth.

I am happy to write this message to you as your Pastor. Many of us already know one another from my time here as Associate Pastor from 1977 to 1980, and then as Pastor from 2000 to 2005. St. Francis Parish has always had a special place in my heart, and I am overjoyed to serve you once again. St. Francis remains a vibrant Parish community in liturgy, worship, catechetics, social programs and outreach. During my short time here (since January 1), we have noticed an increase of attendance at Mass. The pandemic has seriously affected participation in so many activities of life, including the spiritual. It is encouraging to see more people returning to the active practice of their faith by sharing in the Eucharist, being nourished by the Word of God and by the Body and Blood of Christ. We have encouraged people, if they feel it necessary, to continue to wear a face mask for their protection and safety.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your financial contributions to St. Francis Parish. On Sunday March 3, the Financial Report was included in the Parish Bulletin,

with a balanced budget for 2023. We have the same hope for 2024! As I commented on that Sunday, this is my first experience without a collection being taken up at Mass with the passing of baskets. Rather, the custom here has become to put a basket on a table near the entrance of the Church, where people put their donations (envelopes, bills and coins). Thank you also to those who contribute regularly online. Fortunately, donations have not decreased. Thank you for your support of St. Francis Parish!

One particular area of pastoral concern in our Parish is ministry to the sick and homebound. With our aging population this is becoming more and more a reality. Due to lack of mobility, or other physical conditions, so many faithful parishioners can no longer join in the Sunday Eucharist. Fortunately, we have some generous Ministers of the Eucharist who volunteer in this ministry to share the Word of God, and distribute Holy Communion with the sick and homebound. Father Murray and I continue to be available for the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. If you, a member of your family, neighbour or friend, requires this pastoral attention, please let us know. Also, due to Confidentiality and Privacy Legislation, we do not have access to the names of parishioners in local hospitals, so please inform us when someone is hospitalized.

May this Easter season be one of grace for you and your loved ones. May the joy and new life of the resurrection of Jesus be with you! God bless you!

In the Risen Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul S. Voisin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "V".

Rev. Paul S. Voisin, C.R.
Pastor