



In This Issue

- 2. Donations to San Xavier Mission School and Catholic Community Services
- 5. National Christ Child Convention
- 6. Program Updates (Layettes, Literacy, Wings)
- 9. St. Augustine Catholic High School Volunteer Day
- 10. In Memoriam
- 12. Calendar of events for our Fiscal Year
- 13. In Closing ... St. Francis' quotes

The National Christ Child Society Convention is in Tucson this Month!



With the National Convention right in our own backyard, don't miss the opportunity to experience and participate in the proceedings. Also, Tucson's own Angela Schneider will be inducted as the President of the National Society. See page 5 for more.

CCST Officers (2021-2023):

President: **Deborah Auclair**

Past President: **Nancy Thorpe**

Vice President: **Vita Balsino**

Vice Pres. Membership Chair & Chapter Liaison: **Dianna Balsamo**

Recording Secretary: **Jean Brabenec**

Corresponding Secretary: **TBD**

Treasurer: **Nancy Thorpe**

Board Members at Large:

Bonnie Alberts

Frances Smith

Pat Lunsford



“Thanks CCST” from San Xavier Mission School

This quarter the CCST helped Catholic Community Services and San Xavier Mission School (SXMS). The two speakers at our fundraising event were Vanessa Rothstein, Principal of SXMS and Lillian Downing, Catholic Community Services’ Child Welfare Programs’ Director.

As you may be aware, SXMS has closed for this school year and the children have been

moved to Santa Cruz School. The letter from the Pastor to the students’ parents is on the next page. In it, he told the parents “although they have suspended operations indefinitely, the goal is to reopen SXMS in the future.”

He also mentions that the students’ scholarships will transfer with them. Our donation to SXMS will not be in vain, but will help with the reorganization and financial health of the school.



Dear CCST,

Thank-you for the visit, the pictures, and your never-ending generosity. Your assistance is greatly appreciated; without your help we would not have been able to provide the children of San Xavier Mission School with the wonderful literature program that we were able to purchase. Your contributions mean so much to our school and the children. May God continue to reward you.

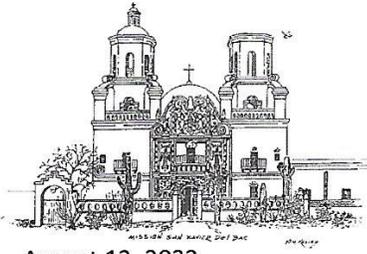
Have a most blessed day,

Vanessa Rothstein, M.Ed., Principal

San Xavier Mission School



Bonnie Alberts, Angela Schneider, Vanessa Rothstein, Patricia Horton, Deb Auclair



San Xavier Mission
1950 W. San Xavier Rd. • Tucson, Arizona 85746-7409
(520) 294-2624

August 12, 2022

Dear San Xavier School Parents and Families,

Peace and good.

As you know, since my arrival I have been getting acquainted with the parish and school community, including the wonderful children attending our school. I have also been apprised of the operational necessities of running a school, which has included discussions about the budget and restructuring plan that was put in place for this school year.

Unfortunately, since the start of school on August 1, we find ourselves in a most challenging situation: The principal resigned, and we discovered that the school did not have a teacher for the kindergarten children. The families of the kindergarten children were notified and have since found other schools to accept their children. This has now resulted in an enrollment that the school budget cannot support.

It my goal to be as transparent as possible with you, so to be clear we must suspend school operations indefinitely with the goal of restructuring and reorganizing with the goal of reopening San Xavier Mission School in the future.

To help place your children in another Catholic school, we are providing the following information for the closest Catholic school, Santa Cruz Catholic School, whose pastor and principal are aware of this situation and are very willing to visit with you about enrolling your child(ren):

Santa Cruz Catholic School
29 W 22nd Street
Tucson, AZ, 85713
520-624-2093

Principal: Theresa Dolan-Dixon, tdolandixon@santacruzschool.org

Scholarship Director: Erica Otero, eotero@santacruzschool.org

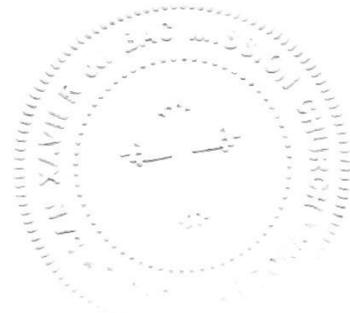
If you choose to move your child(ren) to any of our Catholic schools, your ALF scholarships would transfer with your children, and we will work with CTSO to make sure those scholarships would be available as well.

I am so very sorry we find ourselves in this situation. But your child(ren) deserve a Catholic education that, at this time, San Xavier cannot provide. Please know that I am here and available if you wish to discuss this further. In addition, members of the Department of Catholic Schools will be calling you to answer any questions.

Peace and blessings,

Fr. Ponchie Vasquez, OFM

Pastor



An Arizona Non-Profit Corporation

“Thanks CCST”, from Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona

Lillian Downing is the Catholic Community Services' Child Welfare Programs Director. When Nancy Thorpe and Deb Auclair met with her on June 15th, she was very appreciative for our donation from our fundraiser.

The money will be used to develop foster care and in-home programs as well as improving recruitment and retention of foster parents.



Deb Auclair, Lillian Downing, Nancy Thorpe



June 24, 2022

Christ Child Society of Tucson
PO Box 36212
Tucson, AZ 85740

Attn: Deb Auclair, President and Nancy Thorpe, Treasurer

Dear Deb and Nancy,

Thank you so much for your check #1003 in the amount of \$8,125.00, dated June 15, 2022, to be used for the development of foster care and in-home programs, improvement of recruitment and retention of foster parents, and to incentivize families.

Thank you also for your donation in the amount of \$2,000.00, check #1002, dated June 15, 2022, to be used for healthy snacks to feed hungry children on supervised visits.

We appreciate your sharing these donations from your live auction, held on May 14, 2022, with us. Your gifts help make our work possible, and your compassion touches our hearts.

Best wishes,

Sandy Erickson
Sandy Erickson
Development Administrative Coordinator

/se

Cc: Lillian Downing, Associate Director
Child Welfare Programs

NCCS Convention is in Tucson, September 15th-18th!

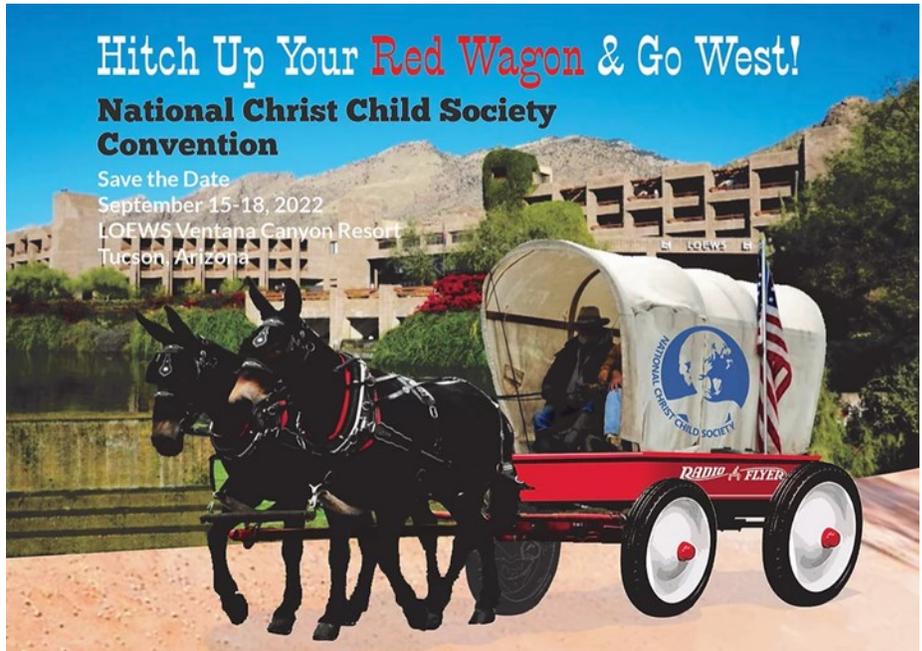
It is in our backyard at Loews Ventana Canyon Resort. We are hoping that those who have never experienced a NCCS Conference or Convention ... enjoy this opportunity of a lifetime!

Thank you to all who have signed up and are volunteering at the Barbeque that CCST is hosting on Friday 9/16/22.

Bishop Weisenburger is attending and looking to meet you all. He loves the work our chapter does in Tucson serving those in need. Bishop Kicanas will be there too, celebrating Mass. Looking forward to sharing this event with you.

Blessings, Angela Schneider,

NCCS President Elect



NOTE CCS Tucson's own Angela Schneider will be inducted as the President of the National Christ Child Society at this convention on 9/17 after dinner!

 2022 TOGETHER IN TUCSON <small>Celebrating 135 years of service!</small>		
Wednesday, September 14 Celebrating Together in Tucson		
3:00pm - 5:00pm	Early Registration	
Thursday, September 15 Celebrating Together in Tucson		
8:45am - 2:00pm	Optional: Tucson Sightseeing	Lobby
1:00pm - 5:00pm	Registration	Lobby
3:00pm - 3:15pm	Welcome and Opening Remarks <i>Molly Fanning and Moira Lynch</i>	Ballroom
3:15pm - 4:00pm	Turning Dreams into Reality – Lessons Learned from Make-A-Wish and Other Philanthropic Organizations Speaker: <i>Paula Van Ness</i>	Ballroom
4:00pm - 4:45pm	Detroit and Christ Child House - Love Lives Here Speaker: <i>Laura Keziah</i> , Detroit Chapter Member	Ballroom
5:30pm - 8:00pm	Welcome Reception and Raffle CLP Groups at Reception Happy 135!!	Upper Terrace
Friday, September 16 Working Together in Tucson		
7:00am - 9:00am	Breakfast Roundtable Topics: Fundraising, Membership, Leadership Development	Upper Terrace
9:00am - 10:15am	Faith-Based Non-profits – How to Get Noticed Keynote Speaker: <i>Debbie Himsel</i>	Ballroom
10:15am - 10:30am	Break	
10:30am - 12:00pm	Program Committee Panel: Chapter Commitment, Creativity and Perseverance Moderator: <i>Mary Beth Baucco</i>	Ballroom
	Red Wagon Winner Presentation	Ballroom

12:00pm - 1:00pm	Lunch	Ventana Dining Room
1:00pm - 2:00pm	Breakout Sessions Two 1 hour sessions that repeat Interpersonal Skills Coaching, Leadership - <i>Betsy Wallace</i> Grant Writing and Fundraising – <i>Carolyn Owens</i>	TBD
2:00pm - 2:15pm	Break	
2:15pm - 3:15pm	Breakout Sessions Two 1 hour sessions that repeat Interpersonal Skills Coaching, Leadership - <i>Betsy Wallace</i> Grant Writing and Fundraising – <i>Carolyn Owens</i>	TBD
3:15pm - 3:30pm	Break	
3:30pm - 5:00pm	NCCS Reports and 2023 Budget Overview	Ballroom
5:00pm - 6:00pm	How Tradewing Benefits You	Ballroom
6:00pm - 9:00pm	Cocktail Reception, Dinner and Commitment Ceremony	Coyote Corral
9:00pm (optional)	Cascades Lounge to continue the conversations (optional)	
Saturday, September 17 Putting It All Together in Tucson		
7:00am - 9:00am	Breakfast Roundtable - Tradewing Topics: Treasurers, Social Media	Upper Terrace
8:00am - 8:45am	Optional Walk with CCS attendees	Lobby
9:30am - 11:00am	Annual Business Meeting	Ballroom
11:00am - 11:15am	Break	
11:15am - 12:15pm	Plant a Seed, Watch Your Chapter Grow <i>Angela Schneider</i>	Ballroom
12:15pm - 1:15pm	Lunch	Ventana Dining Room
1:15pm - 2:45pm	Case Study and Break-Out Sessions <i>Deb Himsel and Paula VanNess</i>	Ballroom
2:45pm - 3:00pm	Break	
3:00pm - 3:30pm	Wrap Up <i>Debbie Himsel, Paula VanNess, Molly Fanning</i>	Ballroom
5:00pm	Mass followed by Dinner and Installation of Officers	

Program: Layettes (Dianna Balsamo)

A group of us meet almost every Wednesday to assemble items for layettes and pack them. Vita, Deb and I used to work alone, but now I am pleased to say that Eileen Geraghty and Karen Klavetter have joined us:

Both of these ladies work very hard and allow us to get so much done.



Eileen Geraghty (left) and Karen Klavetter

We are grateful for our volunteers in SaddleBrooke for creating their beautiful crocheted blankets and gorgeous toys. They and other friends and members have given us a plentiful supply.

I am proud to say that we have given out at least 20 to 40 layettes this summer. We are also scheduled to give out almost 60 more this fall.

One week this quarter, we were feeling overwhelmed with the number of layettes and Wings drawstring bags we needed to assemble to meet our delivery schedule. Enter the Jr. Christ Child Girls! They answered our prayers.

Ten of the girls came to the storage unit on Wednesday, July 6, 2022 and spent three hours unwrapping toothbrushes, putting covers on them, making up layettes, cutting those plastic



Jr. Christ Child Girls resting briefly after helping us assemble layettes and drawstring bags. Also pictured Deb Auclair, Vita Balsino and Theresa Osborne

tags off and making up drawstring bags. They are incredibly efficient and cheerful about helping!

The National Self Storage - Dove Mountain is the location of our storage units.

Arlo Dill is the manager. He and his staff have been very kind to us by helping with the storage of the items for layettes. We presented the girls who work there a certificate and gift cards for all of their help.



Vita Balsino, Dianna Balsamo, Eileen Geraghty, Arlo – Mgr. National Storage

Program: Literacy—National Day of Service (Bonnie Alberts)

Our National Day of Service will be held the week of October 23rd- 29th.

2022 Read, Imagine, Succeed: Embrace the Possibilities is the theme for the 2022 National Day of Service.

Our Chapter is being encouraged to plan an activity that has a literacy theme -- from a book

drive to reading to children, your choice, between the dates of October 22nd through 30th. We will utilize this time to gather our members, to serve the needs of children.

Across the country we see that children missed out on many learning opportunities due to school closings in 2020-2022. Online learning was difficult for many, especially for younger children.

Massive Book Drive

Organized by
Christ Child Society of Tucson
National Day of Service
To Support Schools and Agencies in
Tucson and Southern Arizona



WE COUNT ON YOUR HELP - TO FIX THIS PROBLEM!

If you have shelves of children's books that your kids have outgrown, there are some young people in town who could really use them. Christ Child Society chapters across the country are banding together to collect 100,000 children's books and get them into homes and schools that need them and the Christ Child Chapter of Tucson is part of this massive effort.

One of the best indicators of academic success is getting children's books into homes and then reading them to our kids. **Yet, 61 percent of low income families have no children's books.**

Help us build up reading levels! Clean off bookshelves at the same time!

BOOK DROP-OFF LOCATION: THE HIGHLANDS CLUB HOUSE LIBRARY

WHEN: OCTOBER 22ND-OCTOBER 30TH 2022

WE ACCEPT: NEW OR GENTLY USED BOOKS, BABY BOARD BOOKS AND ALL CHILDREN BOOKS

Monetary donations for books are also welcome, online or by mail.
CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF TUCSON PO BOX 36212 TUCSON, AZ 85740 OR ONLINE AT
Christchildtucson.org.

If you have any questions, please contact Bonnie Alberts or Angela Schneider at
aschneider@nationalchristchild.org

Thank you in advance for your support!

Bonnie Alberts
Literacy Chair



Program: Wings Foster Teens Program (Deb Auclair)

The Wings Drawstring Bag Program for Tucson's Foster Teens is so blessed that our storage unit is filled with donations and purchases of the bags' contents.

Wonderful volunteers sew the 360 drawstring bags that are needed each year. These special ladies put their time and talent into making these bags. Aviva Children's Services, Christina Greenberg said in a June 2022 thank you letter to CCST: "Because of you, we are able to ensure the kind folks who welcome foster teens into their homes have what they need to ensure those teens are cared for."

Lourdes sums up the way we all of us who sew feel:

On August 7, 2022, Lourdes Rodriguez said, "Every time I sew one of these bags, I cannot help but hope and wish it helps a teen to face the challenges life throws at them."

In addition to Aviva, we supply drawstring bags to Casa de los Ninos on a monthly basis.



Lourdes Rodriguez

They sent an acknowledgment to us:

From: Kimberly Gutierrez 7/7/22

Subject: Thank you CCST Wings Program

We are so excited for the opportunity to work with you through this partnership and were so happy we got to meet the amazing group of girls that put the bags together!

Our Foster Care program facilitators were so excited for the items that were included; everything was perfect! I will keep you posted moving forward if they would like to include something different for the future months. Again, thank you so much for your incredible work you do, we are very proud to work with the CCST team.

Kind Regards, Kimberly Gutierrez

Development & Public Relations Coordinator



Casa de los Ninos' representatives: Kimberly Gutierrez and Lizbeth Canez-Pompa pick up their first month of drawstring bags in July.



St Augustine Catholic High School Volunteer Day



Volunteering is a wonderful thing as St. Augustine is quoted as saying:

“Do not complain that you were born in a time when you can no longer see God in the flesh. He did not in fact take this privilege from you. As He says, ‘Whatever you have done for the least of my brothers, you did for Me.’ ”

On August 26, 2022, seven members of CCST spent the morning with thirty students of St. Augustine’s Catholic High School in what has become a tradition. St Augustine’s feast day was August 28, 2022 and the Friday before this day is Volunteer Day at St. Augustine’s. Fleece fabric and supplies were provided and the students made almost 40 blankets for the underserved children of Tucson. The students were just wonderful and really enjoyed the activity. The CCST members all agreed that these young people are wonderful examples of our future leaders.



Frances Smith completes a blanket with a student.



Pat Lunsford and Nancy Thorpe help students complete a blanket.



St. Augustine’s High School students posing after choosing their favorite completed blanket.

In Memoriam

The Christ Child Society of Tucson received a \$500 donation from the SaddleBrooke Charity Sewing Group in memory of Patricia Tygielski, who passed way in June of 2022.

Patricia Tygielski was a leader in the SaddleBrooke Charity Sewing Group and she was instrumental in making toys for babies that we include in our layettes.

CCST member and layette toy maker, Judy Bodor, noted that Patricia worked with her making CCST toys for over 20 years at the SaddleBrooke Activity Center. Patricia loved children and couldn't do enough for them. Judy wanted us to know how thankful she was that Patricia worked so hard for the children. The toys she made we some of the babies' favorites – Montessori balls (which are made from 56 pieces sewn together) and stuffed bunnies.



Nancy Thorpe accepts from Judy Bodor one of the five bags of donated blankets and Montessori Balls made by the SaddleBrooke Group.

SaddleBrooke Charity Sewing Group's letter to CCST

RE: In the memory of Patricia Tygielski

We are members of the SaddleBrooke Arizona sewing club that meets in SaddleBrooke. We have known Pat, some of us, for over 20 years. She was a wonderful Christian woman and friend as well as a kind, caring, loving woman to all of us. She will be greatly missed.

Since our group has sewn many items for the Christ Child Society of Tucson, and we know how much this organization meant to Pat, we would like to donate, in memory of Patricia Tygielski, a check in the amount of \$500. We've sewn many baby ball toys and dogs and bunnies and Pat was one of our great leaders in this endeavor.

We pray these funds will be put to good use for the children in the Tucson area. It is with kind regards,

The members of SaddleBrooke Charity Sewing Group:

*Sue Wolf
Mary Ziats
Rene Anderson
Lanna Lopez
Judy Bodor*

*Karen John
Pat Herman -
Chris Shephard
Blenda Anderson
Georgene Brickard*



Vita shares CCST' Layettes mission with the SaddleBrooke Charity Sewing Group and thanks them for their monetary donation but also for their sewing contributions to our bags over the years.



Memorials / Donations

Wanda Riley

Wanda Riley was a former member of our organization. Wanda supported our fashion show



and Gaslight Theater for years before she became a member.

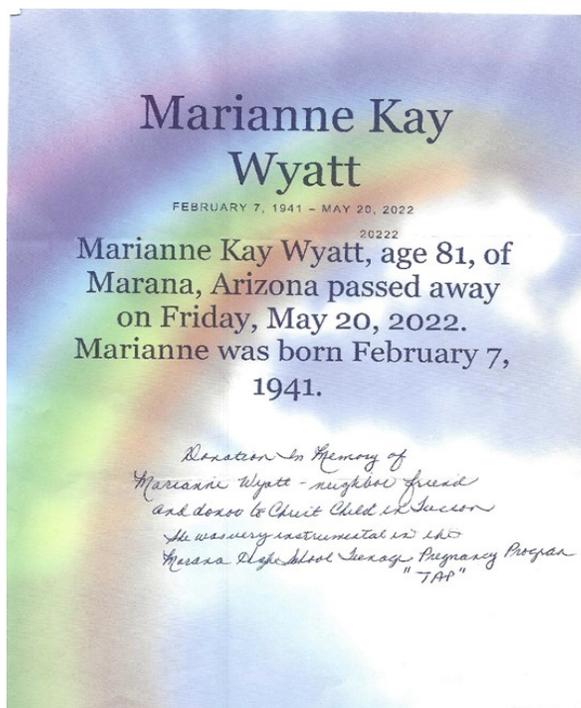
Wanda fell on Easter Sunday morning this Spring and passed away from a blood clot while the Doctors were doing surgery on her break. She was a special lady, raised a large wonderful family and worked at her

church. She was the mother of five children, many grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Wanda was a good friend to many of our members who all enjoyed playing Bunco with her. Jim, her husband, volunteers at the Gospel Rescue Mission to stay busy.

- by Pat Lunsford

Marianne Kay Wyatt

Marianne passed away on May 20, 2022. She was a neighbor and friend of Angela Schneider and we are pleased to say a donor to the Christ Child Society of Tucson. She was very instrumental in the Marana High School Teenage Pregnancy Program "TAP". We hope her surviving family is doing well.



Thank You, Jim Click

Since 2003, Jim Click, Jr. has initiated 12 raffles for charities in the Greater Tucson area and has donated a vehicle as the raffle prize*. As one of the eligible 501(c)(3) charities we received \$1,000.00 from Jim Click in addition to keeping 100% of the donations from the raffle tickets we sold. The Click family has been able to give back to the community that has given his family so much since they came to Tucson in 1974.

If you would like to buy any tickets for this year's raffle, please contact Deb Auclair at Deb@christchildtucson.org or call (585)309-9064. Tickets are \$25.00 each or 5 for \$100.00. Raffle tickets must be received back by 12/10/22.

WIN ONE OF **THREE** GREAT PRIZES!

2022

TICKET PRICE
\$25 OR 5 FOR \$100

RAFFLE BENEFITING TUCSON CHARITIES
100% OF FUNDS RAISED STAYS HERE

GRAND PRIZE
NEW 2022 FORD MAVERICK LARIAT HYBRID

2ND PRIZE
TWO ROUND-TRIP, FIRST-CLASS AIRLINE TICKETS TO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD*

3RD PRIZE
\$5,000 CASH

The Jim Click Automotive Team is presenting a NEW 2022 Ford Maverick Lariat Hybrid to the entire community to be used as the featured prize in our ongoing effort to raise millions of dollars for non-profit organizations in Southern Arizona. With your \$25 contribution for 5 tickets for \$100 you could win this stunning vehicle or one of two other great prizes! The best part is that 100% of your contribution will support Southern Arizona charities that keep all the proceeds from the maximum 100,000 tickets which will be sold. The drawing will be held on December 15, 2022. Entries must be received by December 9, 2022 at Raffle Headquarters.

2022-23 CCST Fiscal Calendar

Jul-22							Aug-22							Sep-22						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	⁸ CCST	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	¹¹ CCST	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	¹² CCST	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
²⁴ 31	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	
Oct-22							Nov-22							Dec-22						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	¹⁰ CCST	11	12	13	14	15	13	¹⁴ CCST	15	16	17	18	19	11	¹² CCST	13	14	15	16	17
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
²³ 30	²⁴ 31	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31			25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Jan-23							Feb-23							Mar-23						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4
8	⁹ CCST	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	¹³ CCST	14	15	16	17	18	12	¹³ CCST	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31	
Apr-23							May-23							Jun-23						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	⁸ CCST	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
⁹ 10	¹⁰ CCST	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	¹² CCST	13	14	15	16	17
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
²³ 30	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	

Note: Our meetings are the second Monday of the month at Scordatos Pizzeria on 4911 N Stone Avenue beginning at 11:30 AM.



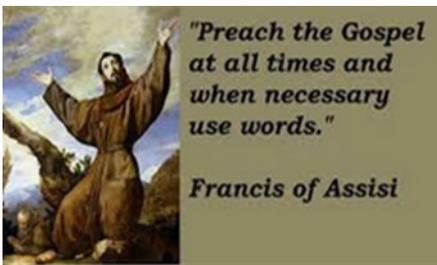
Would you like to know more about us?
Contact our membership extraordinaire:

Dianna Balsamo
520-270-1950
d.balsamo@comcast.net

Saint Francis of Assisi's Feast Day is next month, October 4th. Saint Francis of Assisi preached necessary messages of love and peace:

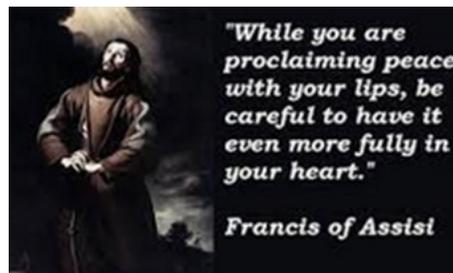
- Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.

Lord, help me to live this day, quietly, easily. To lean upon Thy great strength, trustfully, restfully. To wait for the unfolding of Thy will, patiently, serenely. To meet others, peacefully, joyously. To face tomorrow, confidently, courageously.

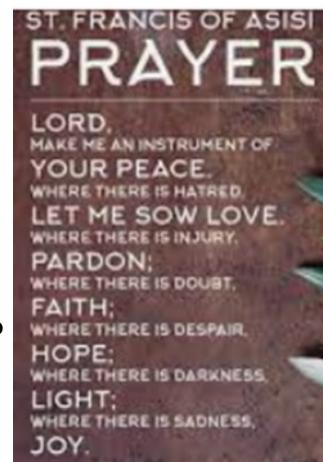


- What is it that stands higher than words? Action.
- What is it that stands higher than action? Silence.
- Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.
- Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.
- The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today.
- All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle.
- The only thing ever achieved in life without effort is failure.

- All things of creation are children of the Father and thus brothers of man. ... God wants us to help animals, if they need help. Every creature in distress has the same right to be protected.



- What do you have to fear? Nothing. Whom do you have to fear? No one. Why? Because whoever has joined forces with God obtains three great privileges: omnipotence without power, intoxication without wine, and life without death.
- Do few things but do them well, simple joys are holy.
- We should seek not so much to pray but to become prayer.
- The journey is essential to the dream.
- Spiritual joy arises from purity of the heart and perseverance in prayer.
- Be patient in trials, watchful in prayer, and never cease working.
- Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission - to be of service to them whenever they require it.



Francis of Assisi (born Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone; 1181 or 1182 – 3 October 1226), was an Italian Catholic friar, deacon, and mystic. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_of_Assisi - cite note-FOOTNOTEDelio2013-3 He founded the men's Order of Friars Minor, the women's Order of St. Clare, the Third Order of St. Francis and the Custody of the Holy Land. Pope Gregory IX canonized Francis on 16 July 1228. Along with Catherine of Siena, he was designated patron saint of Italy. He later became associated with patronage of animals and the natural environment, and it became customary for churches to hold ceremonies blessing animals on his feast day of 4 October. In 1219, he went to Egypt in an attempt to convert the sultan and put an end to the conflict of the Fifth Crusade. Once his community was authorized by the Pope, he withdrew increasingly from external affairs. Francis is known for his devotion to the Eucharist. In 1223, Francis arranged for the first Christmas live nativity scene. According to Christian tradition, in 1224 he received the stigmata during the apparition of a Seraphic angel.

