

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 25, 2026

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER



CATHOLIC CHURCH

1120 MYRTLE WALK
BATON ROUGE, LA 70802

Rev. Ugochukwu "Henry" Ihuoma, SSJ
Pastor

stfrancixavierbr.org

PARISH OFFICE:

MRS. MARVA KADOR WILLIAMS ~ SECRETARY

1134 JULIA STREET

BATON ROUGE, LA 70802

9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

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OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

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SCHOOL OFFICE:

CHRISTOPHER J. ROGERS, PhD ~ PRINCIPAL

1150 SOUTH 12TH STREET

BATON ROUGE, LA 70802

7:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

225.387.6639 OR 225.387.6630

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MASS SCHEDULE:

SATURDAY:

SUNDAY:

TUESDAY:

WED-FRI:

HOLYDAYS:

FRIDAY:

SATURDAY:

VIGIL ~ 5:00 PM

8:00 AM & 11:00 AM

OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP NOVENA- 5:00 PM

9:00AM

9:00 AM & 6:00 PM

SCHOOL MASS 9:00AM

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION—3:30 PM

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM IS CELEBRATED ON THE 3RD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH (NO BAPTISM DURING LENT). BAPTISMAL PREPARATION CLASS IS HELD ON THE THURSDAY BEFORE BAPTISM AT 6PM. THIS CLASS IS MANDATORY. PLEASE REGISTER AT LEAST ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE OF THE CLASS THROUGH THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE OR THE PARISH OFFICE.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IS CELEBRATED ONE HALF HOUR BEFORE EACH WEEKEND MASS.

MARRIAGE LAW OF THE DIOCESE REQUIRES A SIX MONTH PREPARATION PERIOD BEFORE MARRIAGE.

COUPLES MUST ATTEND A PRE-MARRIAGE SEMINAR. IN THIS DIOCESE THERE ARE NO EVENING WEDDINGS ON SATURDAY IT IS NECESSARY TO SEE THE PRIEST BEFORE SETTING A DATE.

CARE OF THE SICK: PLEASE CALL THE PRIEST FOR THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK AND /OR HOSPITAL VISITATION. IF THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK IS CRITICALLY NEEDED, PLEASE CALL REV. HENRY IHUOMA'S NUMBER LISTED ABOVE OR THE CHAPLAINCY OFFICE AT THE HOSPITAL.

FUNERALS: PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE BEFORE SETTING A DATE AND A TIME FOR A FUNERAL.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES ARE EVERY SUNDAY FROM 9:30AM TO 10:30AM.

RCIA (RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION) CLASSES ON SUNDAY FROM 9:30A.M. TO 10:45A.M. PLEASE CALL THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE AT 225.343.3075

Welcome To St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Baton Rouge, LA

Welcome: You enter this Church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God. He is your heavenly Father. Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks on your lips into His presence, offering Him your love and service. Be grateful to the strong and loyal ones who, in the name of Jesus Christ, built this place of worship, and to all who have beautified it and hallowed it with their prayers and praise. Ask His blessing on those who love His house of faith as the inspiration of their labor, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit, and may that blessing rest on you, both on your going out and your coming in.

PSR News January 2026

“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand”

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus’ first public words are, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” These were likewise the words of St. John the Baptist (Matt. 3:2), and now that John has been arrested for speaking inconvenient and uncomfortable truths to the powers-that-be, Jesus takes up the same message with a new authority and urgency.

While we often think of the word “repent” as a Lenten message – a sorrowful self-condemnation for our sins – the Greek word “metanoeite” refers to a deep interior conversion, a reorientation, a change in heart and mind and direction. If we are turning away from something, we must be turning *toward* something else. Yes, repenting means to turn away from sin, but more importantly, a turning *toward* God. The Catechism tells us that it is “a radical reorientation of our whole life, a return, a conversion to God with all our heart.” (CCC 1431)

In order to turn fully toward God, we must turn away from all that keeps us from seeing Him clearly and drawing near to Him as our loving Father. So while part of repentance is looking at our sin, confessing to a priest, and intending not to sin again, the better part is looking at the Lord, seeing His Truth and Beauty and Goodness, and opening ourselves to love Him more than ourselves, our sin, and our comfort.

Why? Because the Kingdom of Heaven is near; the King has arrived and the reign of God begins now. This Kingdom is not a political or earthly administration of borders and laws, but the reign of the King of Love, present to us in our hearts, in the Word, and in the Sacraments. St. Augustine teaches that the Church is the seed and beginning of this Kingdom on earth; we are made citizens of this Kingdom and true members of the family of the King through Baptism, and we grow to maturity through the Sacraments and prayer and service.

John prepared the way but Jesus *is* the way, which He will later make clear. This call to “repent” is a call to hope: hope in the loving Heart of the Savior who came to bring reconciliation and peace, hope in the call and value of each and every life, hope in the truth that no one can out-sin God’s mercy and love, hope in the certain victory of the Kingdom of Love.

By Kathryn Mulderink

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

The prayers surrounding baptism often speak of being “clothed in Christ,” and clothes are an important consideration. In ancient times, adults were probably baptized without any clothes at all, and old texts survive asking people to leave fancy garb and jewelry behind as they enter the font. Baptism was typically in a private place, the community waited elsewhere, and the casting off of clothing was hardly a public moment, nor was it embarrassing in ancient cultures where privacy was largely unknown.

Nonetheless, what was left behind on one side of the font was replaced on the other as a white robe was wrapped around the newly baptized. It was a robe of honor, a dazzling sign of a new beginning for a society that valued clothing as a sign of personal identity. For the newly baptized, a whole week in white garments was the rule, through the second Sunday of Easter, called “Sunday *in Albis*,” because of all the folks wearing their baptismal robes.

—Rev. James Field

PRAYER LIST

John Paul Moore * Geraldine Christopher * Loraine Perry * Martha Proctor * Whitney Robiho * Joyce Decuir * Patricia Armstrong

Elouise Noel * Betty Dupas * Denise Chutz * Fred Dejuan * Loretta Warren * Lorenzia Dardone, * Roslyn Jones * Philip Louis

*Elizabeth Whitfield *Linda Gills-Beshears Phyllis White * Mary E. Bourgeois *Easton Charles *Erica H. Louis*Alphonse Deconge III

Welcome to St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Baton Rouge, LA



Through trials and tribulations, by God's grace, we triumph!

3 Ways to Give St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

*Online Giving: www.stfrancisxavier.org *Text the word "GIVE" to (225) 396-4347 or scan the QR Code.
Mail: St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 1120 Myrtle Walk Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802



SCAN ME

All online methods are safe and secured. Thank you for your generosity!

Bible Study

We will be having our Bible Study every Thursday at 6 pm at the Parish Office.

Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass

The Bishop's Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass honoring couples celebrating 25, 50 or 65 or over years of marriage will be held at Immaculate Conception Church in Denham Springs, LA. The date is Sunday, March 22, 2026, at 2 p.m. Couples who are celebrating one of the anniversary years are required to fill out the forms and forward completed forms to mgernon@diobr.org. The deadline for completed couple registrations to be sent back is February 26, 2026. Please call Mila Gernon at 225-242-0323 if you have any questions or email her at mgernon@diobr.org. Thank you.



"Register your child for the SFX School 2026-27, The Mustang Experience Awaits You." For more information, visit www.sfxbr.org or scan the QR Code.

Enrolling Grades K - 8

(225) 387-6639



Join us for
Adoration, Praise, and Worship
Every First Saturday from 3:00 - 4:30 pm

Upcoming Events in the Parish

- *Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 27, 6 pm.
- *Bible Study, Thursday, January 29, 6 pm.
- *School Mass (CSW), Friday, January 30, 9 am.
- *Black History Month, February 1-28.
- *Bible Study, Thursday, February 5, 6 pm.
- *Adoration, Praise, and Worship, Saturday, February 7, 3 pm.
- *Mardi Gras Ball, Sat. Feb. 7, 8 pm - 12 Midnight.

Mass Intentions January 24-28, 2026

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| Saturday | 5 pm | The People of the Parish |
| Sunday | 8 am | Aline "Cookie" Vaughn
<i>By: Anissa Porter</i> |
| | 11 am | Tyler Irvin & Those Who are Deployed
<i>By: Catrina Irvin & Family</i> |
| Tuesday | 5 pm | Melvin Amar, Sr.
<i>By: The Amar Family</i> |
| Wednesday | 9 am | Marcella Keyes
<i>By: Weesie</i> |

Stewardship January 25, 2026

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Regular Collection: | \$11,120.00 |
| Online Support: | \$ 2489.83 |
| Parish Needs: | \$ 200.00 |
| School Support: | \$ 55.00 |



Thanks for your Generosity!

Today's Readings
Isaiah 8:23 - 9: 3, 1 Corinthians 1: 10—13:17, Matthew 4:12-23

Send in the Clones?

In St. Paul's time, the Church was so new that everyone remembered how they came to the faith. That's not a bad thing. Even today, in helping with the RCIA, I like to hear how the new converts were drawn to the Lord. But it seems that some people in Paul's time actually boasted about who baptized them. They acted as if they were better Christians because of the person whose preaching first attracted them.

Paul, of course, would have no part in those rivalries. In fact, you can almost hear Paul laughing when he talks about people who consider Christ as just another leader of one of the factions. Christ should be the sign of unity for all Christians, not just one congregation. It may be even more difficult to seek unity today, with so many Christian churches and a modern view of diversity as somehow better than unity. While no one says they want to divide the body of Christ, I'm sure you know someone who thinks the only way to have a unified Church is for everyone to pray the same way they do.

Yet even Paul did not expect all believers to be clones of one another. He frequently wrote about people having many different gifts, yet all working to build up the Body of Christ. He doesn't mean that those gifts are divisive or that the Church survives in spite of them. Those differences are necessary; we need all the gifts that the Spirit gives us. So what can we do to help unify the Church?

First, do what Jesus himself did—pray for unity in the Church (John 17:20–21). Pray that you come to know what your own gifts are, have the courage to use them for the Church, and appreciate the gifts of others. Second, Paul was very aware of his own weaknesses. That's what he is talking about in the last line of the reading. Jesus had to die before he could rise from the dead. Without the cross, we would have never heard of the Resurrection. So also, without weakness, how can we experience God's strength? Instead of looking down on those with whom we disagree, look up to see what God may be revealing to you through that person's differences.

Tom Schmidt