

# THE ST. FRANCIS BULLETIN

## FROM THE RECTOR

*Fr. Len Giacalone*

Sunday, October 4, is the feast of our patron saint, Francesco D'Assisi. He was Italian, you know. Since Sundays, the Lord's Day, always take precedence over lesser feasts, we will not be celebrating St. Francis, except with a commemoration in a collect. But it is important to know something about the saint we have chosen for our patron. We know a great deal about St. Francis, not only from his writings but from the writings of his followers. We should all know something about Francis.

One thing that we know is that Francis was dedicated to the poor and the suffering. It was not always that way. He was born into the family of a wealthy merchant and for some time lived the life of the son of a wealthy merchant. One account describes him as dissolute. There were a number of things that eventually caused Francis to turn away from that kind of life, but during an illness Francis heard a voice that seemed to say to him, "Serve the Master rather than the man." It was this moment in his life that brought about a radical change. He eventually gave up everything and began to preach the Good News to anyone and everyone who would listen. Many who heard Francis began to follow him and eventually join him in his work. Francis sought the approbation of the church which was finally granted at the urging of a Cardinal of the church who was taken with Francis' humility and sincerity.

As is often the case in the history of the church as the order grew there became a need for a rule and organization. Francis' rule was extremely simple and consisted mostly in verses from the New Testament. Later on, the order was divided into provinces, and while Francis was named the Minister General of the order, there was movement from within and without to have more organization and a more precise rule than what Francis had originally wanted. He acceded to some of their requests and eventually penned the rule that is still in existence today.

Regardless of the changes that took place within the order, Francis never lost his dedication to serving God with everything he had and encouraging his followers to do the same. His way of life was modeled on simplicity and humility, something that all Christians should take more seriously. His love for the poor and the sick was unrivaled in his time and perhaps still. He took the words of the New Testament seriously and even literally in some cases and he knew much of it by heart.

There are many other things that are part of the life of this great saint. He founded an order of nuns (now the Poor Clares) and received the wounds of the Lord himself on his body (the stigmata). Francis died as he lived, as a poor and humble servant of the Lord.

I really don't know why the parish was dedicated to the honor of St. Francis. That happened before I came here. But the idea of having a patron saint is for the parish or organization to take upon itself the characteristics of the man or woman whose name we are honored to bear. I'm not saying here that we have to take on the characteristics of the Order of Friars Minor (the Little Brothers). What I am saying is that the life of Francis himself could serve as a model for any Christian in his or her life.

One used to have to look hither and yon to find a copy of the Lives of the Saints to read about someone like Francis. Today everyone has the internet. It is relatively easy to get information on him. I encourage you to do so.

### **Vestry**

Many of you know that Libby Ibañez who was elected to the Vestry in January has left the parish. The Vestry has asked Bill Palmer to fill that vacancy and he has accepted. He will join the Vestry at the October meeting and serve out the three year term.

*Fr. Len can be reached at [Rector@stfrancisaustin.org](mailto:Rector@stfrancisaustin.org)*

# ETHICS IN A PANDEMIC – ABORTED FETAL CELLS AND THE COVID-19 VACCINE

The world as we know it has been thrown into confusion during this COVID-19 pandemic. Many of us are concerned about the unemployment rate, the economy, and the health of our family and loved ones. It is unsurprising then that people are increasingly looking with hope at the potential of a COVID-19 vaccine. However, as much as one can understand the desire for a swift answer to this global pandemic, we as the Church need to be aware of the moral and ethical quandaries brought up in this vaccine-producing fervor, specifically related to the use of aborted fetal cells in vaccine research.

The utilization of embryonic and fetal cells from elective abortions in the pharmaceutical industry, including in the creation of vaccines, is unfortunately commonplace, and Christian people have sought an ethical response. The position of The National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) is that individuals should, when possible, use vaccines not developed with the use of these strains. However, in the case where the only vaccine available against a particular disease was developed using fetal cells it states that: "One is morally free to use the vaccine regardless of its historical association with abortion. The reason is that the risk to public health, if one chooses not to vaccinate, outweighs the legitimate concern about the origins of the vaccine. This is especially important for parents, who have a moral obligation to protect the life and health of their children and those around them." Examples of such vaccines are those protecting against rubella, chickenpox, and hepatitis A.

Recently, Life Issues Institute wrote about researchers James L. Sherley, MD, PhD and David A. Prentice, PhD who have analyzed the vaccines in question and provided us with a list of ethical and unethical COVID-19 vaccines.

Here is a snapshot of the current status of COVID-19 vaccines:

- 115 identified vaccines are in development
- At least 78 of them are actively under way
- Many are only at the laboratory investigation stage
- They represent numerous biological strategies being investigated

- 16 are in registered clinical trials or in an early pre-clinical trial stage

Much more information is available in the research paper authored by Drs. Sherley and Prentice. And it is important to note that of the 16 COVID-19 vaccines referenced above, five companies such as Janssen Research and Development have used an abortion-derived cell line.

Fortunately, it is possible to manufacture a vaccine that does not make use of aborted fetal cells. For instance, Sanofi-Pasteur is using its own recombinant DNA platform to produce its vaccine. They have created a DNA platform which utilizes insect cells, specifically the fall armyworm, as its base. The technology produces an exact genetic match to proteins found on the surface of the virus, which could enable the introduction of a vaccine even faster than one produced traditionally. Debi Vinnedge, commenting on the Sanofi process, stated: "This is great news for millions of people world-wide who are concerned with the use of aborted fetal material in life-saving treatments or vaccines. There is a multitude of moral options that are safer and quite frankly, utilize more modern technology."

While the vaccines are still in the development and/or trial stage, life-affirming people should discourage pharmaceutical companies from utilizing fetal cell strains and our government from supporting such development. Although we have been focused specifically on the COVID-19 vaccine, the ethical implications of the use of aborted fetal cells are long-reaching. Each medical benefit or scientific advance gained through the use of fetal tissue desensitizes the beneficiaries, scientists, and doctors to the original evil act that produced these cells. Aborted fetal tissues used in laboratories are minimized and treated merely as "human cells," and the human beings whose lives were taken to provide those cells become irrelevant. The greatest concern is that desensitization will erroneously validate elective abortions, so much so that they will be perceived in the scientific community as a societal "good." Absent careful oversight, the unborn could become, like fetal tissue cell lines, merely cells, cultured within the uterus of a woman to be used for scientific exploration.

Anglicans for Life believes that every human being is created in the image of God and has value from the moment of conception. Abortion, and anything that fosters or encourages abortion, is morally illicit and must be resisted. Therefore, all people of good conscience, even during this pandemic, have the responsibility to voice opposition to the use of fetal tissue from elective abortions in the creation of a vaccine, in order to promote the development of ethical alternatives and to affirm the value of all human life.

To that end, AFL encourages you to contact the U. S. Food and Drug Administration and urge them to ensure that vaccines developed to combat the COVID-19 are not “morally compromised” by any connection to cell lines created from the remains of aborted babies.

<https://anglicansforlife.org/2020/05/11/covid-19-vaccine-ethics-pandemic/>

## WHAT TO SAY—AND NOT TO SAY—TO SOMEONE WHO’S GRIEVING

*How to show up for someone dealing with a death.*

Death is an experience every living being will face, yet contending with it makes people deeply uncomfortable. Talking about death and supporting someone who’s grieving can leave us flustered and awkward, repeating the same tired platitudes and possibly—unconsciously—making our friends and loved ones feel even more isolated. “It’s very natural for us as human beings to want to avoid pain,” says Zainib Abdullah, psychotherapist and co-founder of WellNest Psychotherapy Services.

That’s not to say we don’t have the best intentions. Usually we don’t want to make anyone more upset than they already are, and we’re terrified of saying the wrong thing. Andrea Warnick, psychotherapist and one of the developers of Canadian Virtual Hospice’s MyGrief.ca, says generally people are well intended but they also don’t want to make it harder for the person grieving. “So they default to not saying anything at all. Or sometimes they do or say things that may not be super helpful.”

It’s inevitable that at some point, we’ll be tasked with showing up for someone and supporting them as they deal with a death in their lives. While the experience of death and loss is relative to each individual, we spoke to Warnick and Abdullah to gather some of the best general practices for what to say and not to say to someone who’s grieving.

### **What not to say to someone who’s dealing with death**

#### *Don’t fall into the fix-it trap*

“This is where people really get stuck sometimes, [they] think that their job is to fix it,” says Warnick. “I like to remind people that, as a supporter, your job is not to fix it. Your job is to be with them through it.” The fix-it trap manifests in many ways.

This includes trying to offer silver linings to the person who’s grieving, or offering anything that starts with “at least.”

“At least he’s not in pain, at least it didn’t happen at a different time of year.’ I say, just throw that out the window. Stop talking, nothing was ‘at least.’” However, Warnick says if the person grieving is using that type of language, that’s okay. But we should not be using it as the supporter. For Abdullah, the “at least” is a default reaction of wanting to bring attention to what we perceive as the less egregious aspects of the situation, but it should be avoided as we should not be trying to change the way a person thinks of their own loss.

#### *Don’t give solutions or advise people*

Anything that starts with “you should”—“you should get out and walk,” or “you should try and keep yourself busy”—is not particularly helpful, and also comes with an implied judgement on your part.

The very common “be strong” is also a no-go. Abdullah says it implies that different forms of expression of grief are negative. “Humans experiencing pain is not a sign of weakness, it’s just the experience of life.” Telling someone to be strong could come off as though you’re telling them that what they’re feeling right now should not be what they’re feeling, and they should feel something else that isn’t “weak.”

#### *Don’t tell people that they’re “strong”*

Similar to advising people to be strong, praising them for being strong usually means you’re praising them for emotional containment. “This is often really well intended, but misguided,” Warnick

says. “A lot of my clients have said to me that it really feels like usually people are saying [they’re strong] when their emotions are in check. The flip side of that is when they’re feeling very vulnerable or raw, then they feel like they’re being weak.” She says she spends a lot of time with clients helping them reframe the idea that allowing yourself to feel your biggest, hardest feelings related to grief is actually a strength. “It’s one of the bravest things we can do.”

#### Don’t try to make sense of it

“Everything happens for a reason” is something most of us have heard or said at some point in our lives, but using this line on someone who’s dealing with death isn’t helpful. Again, if the grieving party is using it, that’s perfectly alright. But telling someone, “you aren’t given more than you can bear” should generally be avoided if your person hasn’t brought it up themselves. “We should not be trying to make somebody better,” Warnick says. “The goal is to be present and help [them] feel less alone in the situation because we’re there with them.”

#### Don’t try to one-up their pain

We’ve all likely come across this reaction—someone who responds to you sharing a hard time you’re going through by sharing their own even harder time. “It’s usually coming from a place of concern and wanting to make the person feel as though their situation is less hard,” says Warnick. “Well intended, but totally misguided.” By trying to one-up someone’s grief, you’re taking away from the support that you need to be giving them. It makes it seem like you’re minimizing what they’re experiencing right now.

#### Don’t use “loved one” when referring to the person who’s died

“I never use ‘loved one’ because that’s a big assumption,” Warnick says. You don’t always know the nature of the relationship that existed with the person who died.

Another important consideration: death doesn’t necessarily cause a relationship to end. As a psychotherapist, Warnick has clients write letters to the person who died and she encourages them to attend to the hard feelings. “I think we have this tendency that somebody dies and we feel that we need to put them on a pedestal and only talk about the good things.” For more complex relationships like these, it can be helpful to have somebody who’s skilled in helping people navigate difficult relationships after somebody dies. But as a supporter, being present and allowing them to

express with no judgement is key. “We don’t ever want to judge people’s grief process.”

#### **How to support someone who’s grieving**

##### Do tend to your own grief and acknowledge your discomfort as the supporter

“When we have difficulty saying the right thing [as the supporter], acknowledging that for ourselves could be helpful because it helps us to regulate our discomfort and pain in that moment of witnessing pain. We’re human beings,” Abdullah says.

“Inherently our neurobiology is built to feel the pain of someone and it’s natural. Sometimes actually just saying, ‘I know nothing I could say right now would make this easier, but I’m here for you. Or that I love you.’”

Warnick adds that one of the most important things we can do as a supporter is tend to our grief, whether it’s about the present situation or something that happened in the past. “The most challenging aspect of bearing witness is often bearing witness to our pain and our own sorrows.” As a society, we often default to keeping busy to avoid thinking about what troubles us. “One of the profound lessons I’ve learned about grief is that we actually need to chew on it and process it and feel it all in order to work our way through it. The best way we can show up for others is to attend to our own grief, as well,” Warnick says, acknowledging this process might look different for everyone.

##### Do be present

You don’t necessarily need to have the right words, but showing up with a willingness to talk about the person who died is crucial. Abdullah says that instead of trying to make someone feel better, really being there and allowing them to feel pain is more effective. “Letting them know that whatever they’re feeling is okay and it makes sense, because as people metabolize grief, they go through many different experiences. [That’s] any reaction, or any expression of any emotion—or a lack of expression or emotion, because some people may not express grief outwardly or in the conventional way we think of grief as sadness. So holding space and reminding them that what they’re feeling is okay.”

##### Do use the name of the person who died

“I think people get the sense that we don’t want to talk about the person that died but actually, when you’re grieving, you want to know that the person is not forgotten,” Abdullah says. Sharing stories and memories of the person who died, or things you loved about them or things that reminded you of them can be helpful. While Warnick acknowledges there are, of course, exceptions and nothing she

says will be true for 100 percent of people across the board, she does find that the vast majority of people do not want the person who died to be forgotten and welcome the opportunity to be able to talk about them—though they might not want to have to take the lead.

“When my dad died, one of my colleagues said to me, ‘Andrea, I never met your dad, I wish I had but I would love to hear about him. I would love to learn about him. If you ever want to tell stories about him, I’d love to do that.’ And I just think that was probably one of the most helpful things that was said to me,” Warnick says. She notes that staying connected to the person who died might be easier when the person is older, and you can recall moments and memories. But when someone is dealing with the death of a baby, the same energy of not forgetting should be applied. “A friend of mine, her baby died when she was about 21 days [old]... They make sure their other kids who’ve been born since know her, know they have a big sister, [they] talk about her [and] have photos of her.”

#### Do use intentional language

Because of our discomfort with death, saying outright that someone died might make us uncomfortable. Warnick encourages people to use the actual language of death and dying, and to avoid euphemisms like “passed away” or “passed on.” “It shows that as a supporter I’m comfortable talking about this, I’m not going to skirt around it. I work a lot with kids who are grieving [and] there’s a ton of research and literature that is very clear that with kids, you should absolutely use the right language and not use euphemisms because it confuses the heck out of them otherwise.” But even for adults, she says using the proper language can carry some therapeutic benefit by acknowledging the reality of what happened. When she writes a condolence card, for example, she’ll write, “I was really sad to hear that your sister died.”

#### Do offer concrete, useful ways you can help

A common phrase thrown out to anyone going through a tough time is, “let me know if I can do anything.” But Abdullah says that generally, when people are grieving a death and everything already feels heavy, it can feel like a lot to carry. Placing the onus on the person grieving to come up with a list of things they need might be just another burden. Lightening the load might look like offering specific things like meal trains, where a group of people take turns cooking and providing food, or childcare. The key is to offer tangible things—even if the person turns you down.

Warnick mentioned some of her clients have had friends come together to cover parking fees at hospitals, which can get expensive. Offering to spend time with people, watching movies with them or going for walks with them can ease some of the burden—without them having to ask for it. “Continue to include the person for the long haul. It might be that you’re inviting the person over and they don’t want to come. You’ve had 99 times of them saying ‘no’, but still ask for 100. Don’t take it personally,” Warnick says.

Remember that there’s nothing you can say that will bring the person back, and often, nothing you can say to make the situation better. But Warnick says that bearing witness is very powerful. “While we might be thinking that we’re doing nothing, your presence alone is actually so much for somebody who’s grieving.”

By Radiyah Chowdhury

<https://www.chatelaine.com/living/what-to-say-to-someone-grieving/>

## **NEWSLETTER DELIVERY OPTIONS**

- Receive the newsletter via e-mail with a printable version attached
- Pick up a printed copy on the table at the entrance to the church
- Have a copy mailed to your physical mail box
- View newsletters on our website.

To change how you receive the newsletter, send an email to [info@stfrancisaustin.org](mailto:info@stfrancisaustin.org).

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

Sunday school begins October 4! All classes are held during the 9:30 service. Missy Bernard will be teaching the younger class (kindergarten through 5th grade) and Doug Cooper will be teaching the older class (sixth grade and up). Sunday school students attend the beginning of the service for the readings, and move upstairs to the classrooms during the announcements. If your children are new to Sunday school at St. Francis, or if you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact Missy Bernard at [info@stfrancisaustin.org](mailto:info@stfrancisaustin.org).



## ALTAR FLOWERS

If you wish to make a remembrance, memorial or thank offering, consider donating for the altar flowers. Use an envelope from the back shelf to enclose your donation. Fill out the envelope front as appropriate and place in the wooden box on the same shelf. You can also send in a check or make an electronic donation as you would a pledge and add a note that it is for flowers.

## MOBILE LOAVES AND FISHES

Donations of gently used clothing are being accepted to give to those who come for a meal at the MLF truck. St. Francis is in charge of the 4th Friday Truck Run. Bring your donations to the church and place on the card table in the entry hall. Thanks to all who have donated so far.

## ANGLICANS FOR LIFE Save the Dates

### **Thursday October 15, from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm**

Trotter House, formerly Austin Pregnancy Resource Center, is having their annual fundraising event virtually this year. One of St. Francis' outreach activities is supporting this valuable resource for crisis pregnancies. This is your opportunity to learn more about Trotter House and its numerous resources and services for support of women and families experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. Please take advantage of this chance to be informed and get involved. Invite your friends, neighbors and family to join in the event. Meeting details will be sent out as soon as available.

### **Thursday, October 1 at 11:30 am**

Lt Col Allen West, a powerful pro-life voice, will be at Trotter House located at 2717 Rio Grande Street, Austin, TX 78705 to lead a prayer for life and hold a press conference . Please consider attending this special event.

If you have any questions, please contact Charlotte Ready by email [info@stfrancisaustin.org](mailto:info@stfrancisaustin.org).

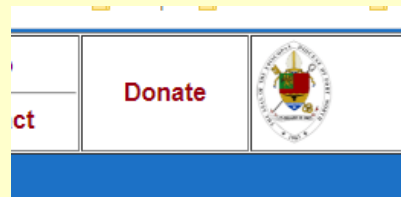
## YOUR PLEDGES

Thank you to those of you who are keeping up your pledges!

During this time, it is essential that you do the best you can to maintain your pledges, both to the general fund as well as our building fund. The best way to do this is to send your contributions to the church at the mailing address:

**3401 Oak Creek Drive, Austin, TX 78727**

There is also the option to make your contributions on line on our website: <http://stfrancisaustin.org/>. Just click the donate button on the top right.



and follow the instructions. Thank you for your continued support.

## AMAZON SMILE

St. Francis is now registered as a charity with Amazon. This means that a portion of your Amazon purchases can be donated to St. Francis. To set this up, click this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2564742> and St. Francis will be set as your charity. Then, each time you go to Amazon, enter Smile.Amazon.com in the address line. This is an easy way for the church to get some extra funds.

## 40 DAYS FOR LIFE

40 Days for Life is a volunteer-based prayer campaign that draws attention to the injustice of abortion through three simple avenues:

- Prayer and fasting
- Community outreach & Education
- Constant peaceful vigil

The fall 40 Days for Life campaign is now ongoing through Nov. 1. Thank you to the five St. Francis members who signed up for an hour or more each week to pray.

These grassroots efforts--like 40 Days for Life--change the abortion landscape, and you can help continue this change.

If you would like to pray at home during the vigil, prayer materials are on the table in the entry hall.

# OCTOBER CALENDAR

## Sundays

9:30 a.m. Holy Communion in-person, live streamed and recorded. Nursery is provided from 9:15-11:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m. Sunday School for youth.

## October 12

6:00 p.m. Vestry meeting

## Thursdays

7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer in-person and via Zoom at the church

## Tuesdays

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Doug Cooper's Home Group. Meeting online via Zoom.

## 2nd and 4th Sunday

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Home Group. Meeting online via Zoom.

## 2nd and 4th Friday

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Home Group. Meeting online via Zoom.

## 3rd Monday

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Readers of First Things group online meeting. Contact Karl Stephan at [kdstephan@txstate.edu](mailto:kdstephan@txstate.edu) to join the online meeting via Zoom.

## October 3

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Prayers for the Nation Group in person at the church and via Zoom

## October 16

NOON to 1:00 p.m. Mother's Prayer Group in person at the church only

## 4th Friday

4:30 p.m. Mobile Loaves and Fishes Make Ready Team (~4:30 pm) and Food Truck Run (~ 5:30 pm)

## Notes:

- For now, the 9:30 service will be live streamed on Facebook and recorded and posted to the web site.
- To join any of the meetings or services held via Zoom, email [info@stfrancisaustin.org](mailto:info@stfrancisaustin.org).

# OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 John and Christina Hatley
- 3 Len and Nancy Giacolone
- 30 Timothy and Morgan McCormick

# OCTOBER SUNDAY

## READINGS

### 10/4 17 after Trinity (Link to Text)

- Isaiah 5:1-7
- Psalm 80
- Philippians 3:14-21
- Matthew 21:33-43

### 10/11 18 after Trinity (Link to Text)

- Isaiah 25:1-9
- Psalm 23
- Philippians 4:4-13
- Matthew 22:1-14

### 10/18 19 after Trinity (Link to Text)

- Isaiah 45:1-7
- Psalm 96:1-9
- 1Thessalonians 1:1-10
- Matthew 22:15-22

### 10/25 20 after Trinity (Link to Text)

- Exodus 22:21-27
- Psalm 1
- 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
- Matthew 22:34-46

## Notes on the readings:

- St. Francis follows the 1979 BCP Lectionary for the lessons We are in Pentecost of Year A. The text read at the service is from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.
- Each of the listed Sunday readings is linked to the corresponding page on [LectionaryPage.net](http://LectionaryPage.net).
- The Sunday collects and text of the psalms are generally from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

# OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Kevin Burnette
- 6 Gideon Hatley
- 8 Mary Sanders
- 13 Ella Collins
- 18 Rudy Montalvo
- 28 David Norris
- 29 Kerry Glenn
- 30 John Hatley



## ST. FRANCIS ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTIN

*A parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth*

Diocese Office: 2900 Alameda St.

Fort Worth, TX 76108

<http://www.fwepiscopal.org/>

**Bishop:** The Rt. Rev'd Ryan Reed

**Rector:** The Rev. Canon Len Giacolone

**Music Director:** Betty Lin Gallardo

**Parish Administrator:** Mark Rambin

**Treasurer:** Grady Collins

### **Vestry Officers**

**Senior Warden**      **Junior Warden**

Donna Hunt

Jim Britt

**Secretary**

Jim Crandell

### **Vestry Members**

Jim Britt, Donna Hunt, David Kristo-Reinking

Doug Cooper, Jim Crandell, Michael Ready

Christina Hatley, Bill Palmer

Fr. Len Giacolone

## St. Francis Anglican Church

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## ST. FRANCIS' MISSION STATEMENT

- We are a community of believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ whose mission it is to spread that Gospel in what we preach and in the way we live.
- We are called to know the Word of God, to act on it in our lives and to share it with our brothers and sisters in the world.
- We are determined to uphold the ancient faith of our ancestors in the Anglican tradition, to offer traditional Christian values based on the Holy Word of God and to be faithful witnesses to the person of Jesus in the Austin Community.
- St. Francis parish is dedicated to the presence of Christ in the lives of the poor, the needy, the sick, to each other and to all those to whom Jesus comes to minister in his life on earth.
- As a community of believers, we intend to entrust our growth in love, in faith and in resources to the generosity of God.