

## *St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community*

Madison Heights, MI [www.stvincentferrer.net](http://www.stvincentferrer.net)

**FEBRUARY 16, 2025 + SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

### **From The Pastor**

To live a meaningful, purpose-driven life it is necessary to be conscious of the world around you. To live a mature Christian life, it is necessary to be aware of the life of God within you as you engage and interact with the world around you. The cost and consequence of not being aware of the inner self or the world in which we live can lead to a chaotic or disordered life with little direction beyond the needs and desires of personal comfort and security.

In the first reading, Jeremiah the Prophet contrasts those who are cursed against those who are blessed. The reading is a clear parallel with Beatitudes of Jesus in the gospel. Cursed is a harsh word. Comparative words might be depraved, unenlightened, troubled, or double-minded. The word implies a selfish orientation for one's own good, trusting in the self alone to create a secure and prosperous life. Similarly, the word blessed has been paired with happiness, humble dependence, knowing one's need for others.

The matter is one of trust. Trust is a virtue of faith dependent on the support of others, and ultimately on the providence of God. By its nature, faith and trust are words dependent on relationships in the awareness of the ignorance of self-sufficiency. No one can have a meaningful, purposeful life all by them self. To be human in any meaningful way is to be in relationship with God and others.

Why is Jeremiah confronting the people of his time with this challenge? The super power Babylon threatens the Northern Kingdom of Judah. The leaders of Israel, without seeking the will or help of God, attempt to create an alliance with Egypt with a disastrous result. Jeremiah warns them against this action, directing them back to the wisdom of God. Their attempt to overtake Babylon with their own foolish plan leads to disaster in the destruction of Jerusalem, their Temple, and their being led off into exile.

Notice the effective images Jeremiah uses to make his point. Those who trust in the power of men (the world) are like a barren bush in the desert with no change of season, a lava waste of salt and empty earth. Trusting in the things of the world implies a poor inner life unaware or unconcerned with the ways of God. Living only with a worldly identity leads from one thing to the next seeking happiness and security that never satisfies. The next thing is never enough.

This is contrasted by the blessed who trust in the Lord. The blessed or happy ones who trust in God can weather the storms of life with the strength of their

inner being that trusts in God. The images are opposite of the cursed, giving life even in times of drought, meaning personal dryness or distress. Like a tree beside running waters with its roots reaching to the stream, fearing not the heat when it comes, remaining green and fruitful.

It begs the question, in whom do we really trust? We know the correct answer is to trust in God, but what about the immediate troubles that surround us in the world? This is the question today. Troubles and uncertainties swirl around us on many fronts. It is a clear time for faith with an unwavering trust in God. To think we could solve the problems of the world through power over others, is like planting a tree in the desert presuming it will give us sufficient cover.

The Beatitudes are not comfortable. By their nature, they create an uncomfortable contradiction. Human nature tells us to seek control, security, and personal interests on the strength of our own doing. For too many people, self-sufficiency is a virtue. Creating their own smallness of life, many people refuse the help of others, preferring to do for themselves, not risking the vulnerability of depending on anyone risking a possible payback. Poor choice.

Blessed are they who know they are poor and dependent on God, knowing they are vulnerable on their own. Poor is not just about economics, it is life, love, friendship, relationships, a sense of belonging and being a part of something larger than them self. The same is true for the hungry, the mournful, the hated, and the falsely accused. To be human is by nature to be dependent, in relationship with others. We are the creatures, not the Creator.

To trust in God is the source of life, love, happiness, and inner peace humbly accepting in the Divine providence of the One who is the giver of all life. This is not always easy. In the face of distress and problems larger than ourselves, we are inclined to look to the world for timely solutions. God in Christ invites us to look to him. We pray from our hearts with confident faith and secure hope that God is aware of our every need.

God is fully aware that the world and its nature is passing away. This is the wisdom, and the gift of prayer grounded in faith and maturing trust in God. Attend to your inner life in God and you will be like the tree planted near running waters. We are a community. Pray for each other for we are one.

Father John Esper



## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

**DAILY MASS**

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

**WEEKEND MASSES**

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm  
in Chapel


LIVE  
STREAMING

Live Streaming of Mass  
Monday thru Thursday 8:00am  
and Sunday 9:00am

Adoration on Tuesdays  
8:45am to 10:00am

Livestream of Rosary on  
Thursdays following Mass

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in  
Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or  
connect via our APP or website



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE**

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071  
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721  
Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday through Thursday

9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm,

Friday 9am to Noon, Closed Saturday &amp; Sunday

**Parish Office Staff**

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum  
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation  
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin  
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator  
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/  
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator  
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor  
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

**FAITH FORMATION OFFICE**

248-398-1743 – call for appointment

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

For information on Baptisms, OCIA and  
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720

**MONDAY, February 17, 2025**

8:00am Mass: Robert Velez† req. by Family

**TUESDAY, February 18, 2025**8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention) req.  
by Mom**WEDNESDAY, February 19, 2025**

8:00am Mass: Abbey Phillips req. by Debbie Tourville

**THURSDAY, February 20, 2025**

8:00am Mass: Deanna req. by Family

**SATURDAY, February 22, 2025**

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer

Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

Donna Dietrich† req. by Family

H.I. Fletcher† (7th R.A.) req. by Terri &amp; Tom Riley

**SUNDAY, February 23, 2025**

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer

Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

Anna Perry† req. by Corrine McCarthy

Carlo Virga† req. by Virga Family

**FEBRUARY**

Month of The  
Holy Family




## READINGS FOR THE WEEK

**February 16, 2025**

Sunday: Jer 17:5-8/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6, (40:5a)/1  
Cor 15:12, 16-20/Lk 6:17, 20-26

Monday: Gn 4:1-15, 25/Ps 50:1 and 8, 16bc-17,  
20-21/Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday: Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10/Ps 29:1a and 2, 3ac-  
4, 3b and 9c-10/Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday: Gn 8:6-13, 20-22/Ps 116:12-13, 14-  
15, 18-19/Mk 8:22-26

Thursday: Gn 9:1-13/Ps 102:16-18, 19-21, 29 and  
22-23/Mk 8:27-33

Friday: Gn 11:1-9/Ps 33:10-11, 12-13, 14-15/  
Mk 8:34—9:1

Saturday: 1 Pt 5:1-4/Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6/Mt 16:13-  
19



Anointing of the Sick

## HEALING MASS NEXT SATURDAY

FEBRUARY 22, 2025 - 4:00pm

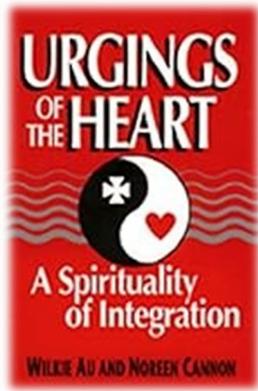
Fr. John will administer the Sacrament of the Sick after Mass. Prayer teams will be available for individual prayer.

## URGINGS OF THE HEART

written by Wilkie Au & Noreen Cannon

### A Breakfast Book Study

Wednesdays March 5 thru April 9  
9:00am to 11:00am



“Using stories and images the authors blend the best of spirituality and psychology to help the reader live in peace with self, others and God.”

To register, please sign up in back of church or call the Parish Office during business hours.

## Dementia Communication & Caregiving

Tuesday  
March 4th  
10am to Noon  
Admin Bldg.

Communicating with a person having dementia can be stressful, but it doesn't have to be.

Marie Sankuer, Parishioner & Certified Dementia Practitioner will offer the following information in a two hour workshop

Easy to follow handout to the 3 E's of dementia care:

- ◆ *Environment*                      *Those with dementia deserve a quality of life & so do you!*
- ◆ *Emotions*
- ◆ *Energy*

**Techniques** in speaking with persons with dementia. **Practical** solutions to enrich everyday communication & better relationships.

**Tips** for a calmer caregiving experience & a happier loved one.

**Coping** with memory losses & decline.

Registration fee of \$10

Register by Monday, Feb 24<sup>th</sup> at parish office 248.542.8720.

*Helping...Coping...Communicating*

## INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Too many of us make the mistake of expecting prosperity here on Earth as a reward for following Christ. But Jesus is very clear: sorrow and hardship are a part of life. But when we offer these sufferings to Christ, they become transformed. They become blessed. And so do we.

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**"Come to me all of you who hunger and I will give you rest."**

## Eucharistic



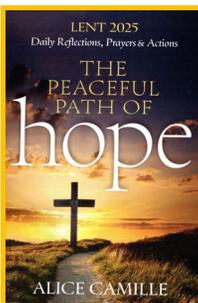
## Adoration

Do you believe God answers your prayers? Do you really stop and listen? Do you believe it's His voice and not yours when He speaks to you?

Step away from the noise of the world to find the meaning in "Be still and know I am there."

During Lent hours of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Tuesdays are extended following 8:00am Mass until Noon.

Please sign up to visit with Jesus at the table outside the chapel wall.



## LENTEN REFLECTION BOOKLETS

will be available in back of church the weekends of February 15/16 & 22/23.

A donation of \$2.00 is asked to defray the cost.



## PLANTED NEAR WATER

We all know that there are times when life can feel, as Jeremiah writes, empty and wasted. There are moments when we think we resemble a barren bush, thirsting in the desert sun.

That's why it is imperative for us to know the location of our water source. I promise you, it's closer than you think. God never planted a seed in barren ground.

For me, it's the Mass. Going to Mass is where I find total peace and renewal. I don't have any great theological explanation for this — Mass is simply where I can truly rest in God for a time, where nothing and no one in the world can touch me. And wouldn't you know it, it's in the toughest times that I need Mass the most — that my roots stretch harder for that water.

Woe to the rich, says Jesus — woe to the popular, to the content, to the happy. It's not because He hates to see us smile. It's because He knows our humanity. He knows our limitations. He knows that when things are going really well, we often stop looking for God.

What replenishes you as a disciple, as a steward, as a Christian? If it feels far away or hard to reach, why is that? How can you bring it closer?

We are all trees planted near water, to yield our fruit in due season. Let's pray for the strength to know where our water source is, and to seek it both in good times and in bad.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS  
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# SEARCH UNTIL YOU HAVE FOUND HIM



Sunday: 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Monday: The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order; Presidents' Day  
Friday: St. Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church  
Saturday: The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle  
Next Sunday: 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

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*...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding peaceful solutions to world wars and tensions.  
...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from hardship due to catastrophic weather, fires, wars, floods, earthquakes and disasters.  
...respect for life from conception to natural death  
...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.  
...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.  
...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.*

*Lord Jesus,*

*You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey.*

*Amen*

## DEVOTIONS, EXPLAINED! – CONNECT WITH TRADITION AND GROW YOUR FAITH

### THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

"I claim you for Christ by the sign of his cross." These words from the Rite of Baptism, spoken as the priest traces a cross on the infant's forehead, perfectly communicate the significance of that simple, familiar action. In signing the cross, we claim ourselves again and again for Christ, unite ourselves with His sacrifice on Calvary, and confess his victory over death.

Christians have been making the sign of the cross since ancient times, as evidenced by writings from Tertullian, Hippolytus and St. Cyprian. The ritual action is not only an important component of formal liturgies and sacramental rites, but also a daily devotional practice whereby the faithful invoke the blessing and protection of God.

In the Latin rite, it is made either with a movement of the full hand from one's forehead, breast and shoulders (going right to left) or with the thumb tracing the cross on the forehead, lips and breast.

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## WHY DO WE DO THAT? CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

### MARDI GRAS

**Question:** Carnivale and Mardi Gras celebrations are linked to Ash Wednesday, Lent, fast and abstinence. Can you tell us more about the connections between these events?

**Answer:** Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the forty days known as Lent. Every year, Christians highlight this penitential season as a time of self-examination, reformation of one's life, and continued development of a deeper spiritual life. The recommended practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving become the focus of Lenten activity and ritual. Each of these spiritual practices is aimed at personal discipline as well as continued concern for the other, especially the poor or alienated.

Forty days is a symbolic biblical period of time, during which personal transformation occurs and out of which people surface as more spiritual, ready to carry out God's mission. Relying on God's providence and care, no matter how difficult life becomes, is crucial to Lenten spirituality. Fasting was initially stricter, permitting only one simple meal a day without meat, fish, or other delicacies. Such things were not even allowed in the house.

In order to prepare for this in an age of no refrigeration, people gathered to consume whatever was not allowed during Lent. This led to parties or celebrations originally referred to as Carnivale, literally meaning "goodbye to meat," or Mardi Gras, literally meaning "Fat Tuesday." The eating and celebrating ended on the Tuesday just before Ash Wednesday. Today we focus more on moderation in all things, as well as a strong concern for the poor. What are you doing for the poor this Lent?

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## QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Jer 17:5-8

**Question:** Jeremiah believes it is wise to trust in the Lord. When have you had to place your trust in God?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20

**Question:** Paul challenged those in the Corinthian community who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. How do you support family or friends who are non-believers?

**Gospel** Lk 6:17, 20-26

**Question:** We hear today how Jesus brought comfort to those struggling in life and challenged those who lived a life of ease. Is there someone you know who could benefit from your words of comfort this week?

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## Women's Sacred Journey

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND  
9:00AM**

**FAITH FORMATION OFFICE  
SVF SCHOOL BLDG.**



All women in our Family of Parishes are invited to join other women to pray and reflect on Scripture passages. The gathering is every other Saturday. No registration or fee required.



“Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring. Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt. Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God’s word helps us find reasons for that hope.”

*From Spes Non Confundit,  
the papal bull of St. Francis for the Jubilee Year 2025*

## Ministry Schedule

February 22/23, 2025

Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	T Riley	C McCarthy
Reader #1	M Kairis	R Grant
Reader #2	T riley	C McCarthy
EME	M Simmons	P Allen
	P Miles	R Grant
	M Kairis	M Black
Greeters	J Ballantine	M McLaughlin
	P Miles	N Oparka
	T Pasiak	T Oparka
	R Pasiak	T Lane

**Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of February 22/23  
Frank & Nina Virga**

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS

SERVANT OF GOD THOMAS FREDERICK PRICE  
1860—1919

Thomas Frederick Price was born in Wilmington, North Carolina on August 19, 1860, to parents who were Catholic converts. As a child he was an altar server and developed a deep faith... Upon graduating from high school, he decided to pursue the priesthood.

...his parish priest, helped him enter St. Charles College in Catonsville, Maryland... To get there, Price traveled as a passenger on a wooden steam cargo ship called the *Rebecca Clyde*. While in route, on September 17, 1876, the steamer was caught in a hurricane and ... was completely destroyed... Frederick, being one of the survivors, attributed his fortune to Blessed Mary, the Mother of God's intercession. Price returned home for a year to regroup... He was ordained a priest in 1886... making him the very first person born in North Carolina to be ordained a priest.

Early in his priesthood he began a statewide evangelization program through a magazine he published that he entitled *Truth*. His efforts with this publication continued from 1897 until 1912 when he passed the work of creating it into the care of the International Catholic Truth Society. Early in his priesthood he also started the Nazareth Orphanage. The orphanage's success paved the way for Price to organize local seminarians into catechizing teams and open a training house for these missionaries. Regina Apostolorum, a preparatory seminary focused on the formation of missionaries for their home missions. He became the primary spiritual director and educator for this institution.

Following the success of the Apostolorum, Father Price met Father James Anthony Walsh of Boston, and they formulated a vision for the establishment of a seminary for foreign missionaries. After receiving approval, they traveled first to Rome to meet with the Pope and then to France to take a pilgrimage to Lourdes. This trip was transformative. Upon their return they purchased property in Ossining, New York, for their new organization — the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America — better known today as Maryknoll.

By 1918 the seminary had prepared their first three priests for overseas missions. The missionaries established their mission in Yeungkong, now called Yangjiang, near the South China Coast.

While in China, Price became seriously ill. He had to travel a long way to Hong Kong via primitive means to secure adequate medical care. By the time he reached St. Paul's Hospital in Causeway Bay, run by the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, he was found to have an advanced case of appendicitis. Despite operations to help, he died of a burst appendix on September 12, 1919. His death date was on the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary which held significance to those who knew him due to his deep devotion to Mary. He was originally buried in Hong Kong but, he was transferred to the Maryknoll Cemetery in 1936 and then interred in the crypt below Maryknoll Seminary Chapel alongside Fr. Walsh's remains in 1955. (above edited for space)

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## In the End, Does it Matter?

by Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

When I was a teenager, the priest I would go to for confession used to tell me, over and over: "In the end, we all get the same dirty hole in the ground."

What he meant was, it doesn't matter how rich or smart or well-liked we are. We're all heading to the same place. This life comes to an end for every man. All the money he earns, all the *stuff*, all the worldly esteem, will at some point be of no further use. We all get the same dirty hole in the ground.

It was an important message for me to hear, because at the time, it all seemed so *important*: my after-school job and my FAFSA application and my grades. The admiration of my friends and teachers. I was so consumed with *what* I was going to become that I wasn't spending a lot of time thinking about *who* I was going to become. But the *who* is the only thing that lasts until the next life.

And to be honest, it's all still too important to me. Avoiding sadness and disappointment. Saving money and being liked. Focusing on "the five-year plan" when it comes to career, house plans, and a whole bunch of other things I can't take to my dirty hole in the ground.

Jesus was radical in his teaching that the "stuff" in life wasn't all that important. It was radical for him to say that the worldly signs of success — wealth, popularity, pleasure — did not amount to a whole lot in the grand scheme of things and that suffering could sanctify us. It was radical in the ancient world, and it's radical today.

Are we ready to be radical, too?

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## Save the date! Come...walk with us on our journey!

We are seminarians at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. Every year in preparation for ordination to the priesthood our first-year theology class makes a pilgrimage to the Holy Land or the European continent. This year we will spend four weeks participating in intensive prayer, study and spiritual formation. Our journey will culminate in Rome.

At this special dinner, seminarians will talk to the guests about the seminary and their preparation for the priesthood. Please attend this great event and assist us in raising the funds necessary to make this Desert Formation Experience possible.

The Shrine of the Little Flower Vocations Committee, Knights of Columbus and Detroit Oakland Serra Club invite **you and your family** to participate in the

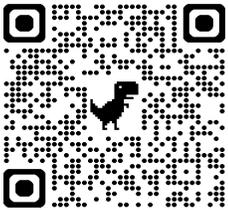
### 2025 DESERT MEAL

A potluck dinner to support our seminarians on their journey  
(Goodwill Donations)

**Sunday, March 2, 2025 - 3-6pm**

National Shrine of the Little Flower Grade School Gym  
12 Mile Road at Woodward Avenue (SE corner)  
Royal Oak, Michigan

To support St. Vincent Ferrer with a financial contribution scan the QR code below to connect to our [tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) giving site.



## ACTS OF GENEROSITY

When I was a child, I often thought of the Church as something mystical and supernatural. I wasn't wrong in my understanding of the Body of Christ, for surely the Church has these characteristics. However, even though we speak about the foundation of all we are as Church being the "mystery of Christ," Jesus became a man so that supernatural element could break into the natural world in a profound way. What we once could not see, we now see. What we saw as a God in a distant place now dwelt among us. It is one of the aspects of Catholicism that I have grown to appreciate the most as I have matured: for a Catholic, the supernatural is natural. The communion of saints is heavenly and earthly at the same time.

The Beatitudes instruct us about this reality. Pope Francis reminds us that holiness is "not about swooning in mystic rapture." Holiness is about living in the real world and doing extraordinary things with our ordinary lives. Our stewardship way of life consists of actions in the natural world that have extraordinary repercussions.

Do not ever take your simple actions of generosity and love for granted. As disciples called to a life of stewardship, we participate in something more profound than what we can see. We are blessed to be called to follow Jesus, and we bring blessing to all those with whom we choose to share ourselves.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS  
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### CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

**Question:** What is the term for sharing of the faith through witness of life and word?  
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**Answer:** Evangelization

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING FEB 8/9, 2025

Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	243			
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 5,448.22	263.22	11,089.73
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	254.00	(218.00)	215.75
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	228.00	(1,445.00)	(10,823.71)
Bequests		80.00		2,476.00
AOD Collections:				
Holy Days:				5,590.00
CSA 2024 Pledged 76,160.34				Paid 74,382.84

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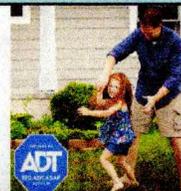
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