

As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. -Joshua 24:15

Live Your Faith

We each have a vocation and state of life. We are young, old, and somewhere in between. We are single, married, parents. We are consecrated religious, others are ordained. We all know the lyrics of the old familiar song, “They Will Know We Are Christians by Our Love.” How we live touches the lives of others, whether or not we take notice. How do we live our Catholic faith out in the world? Here we offer some ideas and suggestions to influence our world or make a difference in the lives within our community by simply living our faith.

Elections and Civility

We are called to exercise our rights and duties as citizens. As Catholics we are called to draw from both faith and reason as we seek to affirm the dignity of the human person and the common good for all. These resources will help you form your conscience and engage in civil conversation.

- **Prayerfully Discerning Your Vote**, a message from Bishop Joensen.
- **Civilize It, Dignity Beyond the Debate**, a pledge to honor human dignity through civil conversation.
- **What does it mean to form my conscience?**, a resource from WeAreSALTandLight.org
- **Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship**, from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- **Faithful Citizenship for Iowa Catholics (video)**, a 20-min video facilitated by Tom Quinlan, Director of the St. Joseph Education Center, and Tom Chapman, Executive Director of Iowa Catholic Conference. In conjunction with the video, the Iowa Catholic Conference has
- **Faithful Citizenship for Iowa Catholics (document)**, an easy to read document from the Iowa Catholic Conference that identifies “hot button” topics for you to consider how the candidates respond to those areas of concern, how to vote, and how to engage in political conversations with civility.

For Households with Children

Read about the role of parents as leaders in your **Domestic Church** and look at **Five Ways to Help Your Child Develop a Prayer Life**.

Learn about Discipleship

Listen to **Heart of Discipleship**, where Fr. John Ricarrdo discusses the need for Catholic discipleship and what it takes to be a true disciple of Christ.

Offer a Rosary for Those Preparing for the Sacraments

Offer a rosary (with one decade for each group) or intercessory prayer for those preparing for the sacraments; couples for marriage, teens for confirmation, youth for First Reconciliation/Holy Eucharist, those discerning their faith journey, and those in vocational formation.

Reach Out

Write a note, send a text, or call someone you haven't heard from in a while to let them know you are praying for them.

Meet the Saints

One of the beautiful things about our faith is the saints. As Catholics we respect and honor the saints and consider them to be heroes of the Church. The saints are timeless examples of how to live a Christian life, providing endless hope. Not only were they sinners who kept trying to grow closer to God, but they also exemplify ways a person can serve God. The Church emphasizes that they were ordinary people from ordinary families and they were totally human. We will highlight a different saint each month of Together in Faith.

Saint Francis of Assisi

Saint Francis, whose feast day is celebrated in October, is the patron of our parish. Saint Francis grew up in a wealthy family in Assisi, Italy. He led a life characterized by pride and sin as a young man. While his journey to repentance and conversion unfolded over several stages, a pivotal moment occurred one day while Francis was praying before a crucifix at a run-down church. He heard Christ speak to him from the crucifix, "Francis, go and rebuild my Church". Francis responded, "yes" to that call from God and made a difference to the Church. Saint Francis said, "Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible." What better example of a saint as we journey to rebuild our domestic church.

Watch a [reflection by Fr. Mark on Saint Francis](#), complete one of these [Saint Francis Kid Friendly Activities](#) in honor of Saint Francis or learn more with the resources below:

Books

- [Through the Year with Francis of Assisi: Daily Meditations from his words and Life](#) by Murray Bodo and Bob Knox
- [St. Francis of Assisi: A Biography](#) by Omar Englebert
- [St. Francis: A Novel](#) by Nikos Kazantzakis

- St. Francis of Assisi: A Biography by G.K. Chesterton

Kids books

- Francis: The Poor Man of Assisi (Life of a Saint) by Juliette Levivier
- Brother Francis of Assisi by Tomie DePaola

FORMED movies

- **The Saints and Hero's Collection: Francis: The Night of Assisi** (for kids)
- **St. Francis of Assisi: A Sign of Contradiction** (approximately 1 hour, 17 minutes)
- **Saint Francis of Assisi: His Life and Miracles** (approximately 1 hour)
- **Saint Francis** (approximately 3 hours)

Serve the Lord

The Church is known for its emphasis on social justice and the importance of service to express the love of Jesus Christ to the world. Our faith teaches us that we should serve others, showing love and kindness to everyone. We can serve others in many ways, and we should ensure that we use every opportunity that we can. It goes without saying that those who learn how to serve others grow in many ways: empathy, awareness, concern, and closeness to Christ. There are many ways to serve Jesus by serving others and the Church. Each month of Together in Faith there are opportunities to serve inside and outside of our parish.

At St. Francis-Usher Ministry

Being an usher is an important ministry and a way that you can serve the parish. As an usher you are one of the most visible faces of our parish. If you are an usher or considering becoming one, read this [helpful guide](#) on the duties and responsibilities of the position.

In the Community-Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS)

Since 1992 Central Iowa Shelter & Services' mission is to provide low-barrier shelter, meals and support services at no cost to adults experiencing homelessness and to facilitate their move toward self-sufficiency. Here are three ways to support CISS.

1. Sign up to donate food! The St. Francis Homeless & Hungry Committee provides the evening meal for CISS on the 9th and 10th of every month. Volunteers purchase and prepare the food. On average we serve 200 of our brothers and sisters, and during the

winter months we provide for nearly 300. By SFA providing two evening meals every month, CISS can utilize their budget towards other programs that help individuals reach self-sufficiency. If you would like to be added to the email distribution list please contact the parish office or sign up for [SFA Central Iowa Shelter Meals](#)!

2. Re-purpose an old t-shirt into a no-sew t-shirt bag using [this pattern](#). The bags are used by those who come to the shelter. It's made like a tie-blanket so no sewing skills are required. If you have children, they can help! Older children can cut the strips, younger ones can tie them together, and everyone can pray over each bag for the person who will receive it.
 3. Visit the [CISS website](#) to learn about their organization and find additional ways to volunteer or donate!
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Sing His Praises

Music is a beautiful way to elevate our prayer and express our faith in God. Enjoy and pray with these resources:

- [Music with Miss Emmy](#) (for the young and the young at heart)
- Pray with a [musical daily examen](#)
- [October Spotify Playlist](#)