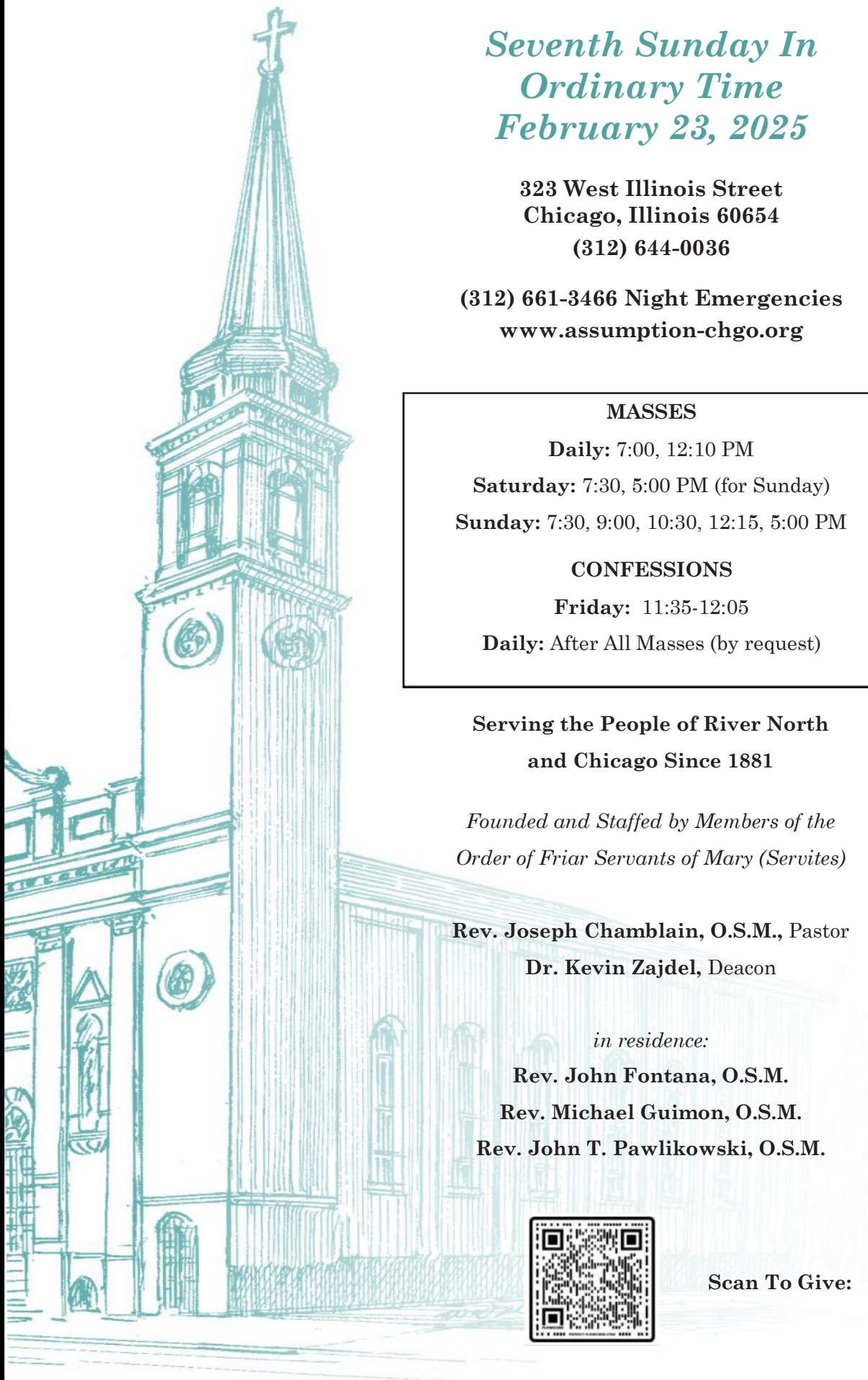


# ASSUMPTION CHURCH



## *Seventh Sunday In Ordinary Time February 23, 2025*

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(312) 661-3466 Night Emergencies  
[www.assumption-chgo.org](http://www.assumption-chgo.org)

### MASSES

Daily: 7:00, 12:10 PM

Saturday: 7:30, 5:00 PM (for Sunday)

Sunday: 7:30, 9:00, 10:30, 12:15, 5:00 PM

### CONFESSIONS

Friday: 11:35-12:05

Daily: After All Masses (by request)

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*in residence:*

Rev. John Fontana, O.S.M.

Rev. Michael Guimon, O.S.M.

Rev. John T. Pawlikowski, O.S.M.



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## THE FUTURE OF LOVE?

A week ago Wednesday, during the great snowfall that never quite happened, I did something I have not done in quite a while. I trudged up to the other end of Illinois Street to watch a movie. The film I ended up watching was called *Companion*. It was interesting and well-acted, and in an era of three hour blockbusters, managed to tell a story in a little over 90 minutes. It was a relationship movie of a different sort. Although not obvious at the beginning of the movie, several of the characters were actually robots. Robotics had developed to the point that one could order a life companion on-line, programming in the qualities that one desired and even memories of romantic moments that never happened. The robots were totally devoted to their partner's wishes and were incapable of deception. Adjustments could be made in the partner after the product arrived. Naturally things start to go wrong with the robots, or there would not be much of a movie. Still, it caused me to wonder if this is the future of love. Thanks to AI, we already have the ability to create a profile of an imaginary ideal lover, with whom we can text back and forth. These AI folks are presumably more attractive than anyone we might meet on a dating app—except for the fact that we cannot actually meet them. They only exist in cyberspace.

Meanwhile, back in actual reality, the institution of marriage continues to take a hit. In the United States, marriage rates declined by 25% between 1969 and 2019. Catholic marriage took an even deeper dive. The number of Catholic marriages declined 55% between 1990 and 2020, even as the Catholic population has grown. Based on my experience, that trend is likely to continue.

When I was first ordained and assigned to a town in New Jersey in the early 1980's, most of the brides and grooms grew up in that community, were still living at home with their parents, and married in the Catholic Church they had known most of their lives. Now that most people getting married are older and cohabitation before marriage has become common, couples are much more likely to be disconnected from their roots. Many of the couples who come to Assumption to be married have no formal affiliation with any parish and have given little thought to church in recent years. There is one factor, though, that I have noticed. When I meet with couples for the first time, almost invariably at least one of the partners will mention going to church as a family or going to Catholic school or religion classes. They may not have gone to church in quite a while, but the foundation was still there. As fewer young families attend Mass together and fewer families enroll their children in a religious education program, the number of Catholics seeing any significance to a Catholic wedding will also decline. An increasingly popular trend is to have a family member buy a minister's license on-line and have that person officiate at the reception hall.

So, we try to be as welcoming as possible here at Assumption to the couples who do inquire about a Catholic wedding, meeting them wherever they are at in their relationship with God and church. Some couples who plan to have their cousin marry them in front of a crowd elsewhere still see the value of having a small religious ceremony in church. Couples attend a pre-Cana day led by a married couple and complete a FOCCUS inventory that covers a dozen different areas in a relationship. This past Monday I went through our sacramental records and discovered since coming here on a part-time basis in 2006 and becoming pastor in 2009, I have officiated at 853 weddings. Yes, it can become physically tiring, but it is never boring. I usually meet with each couple four times before the wedding; so, every ceremony is about two people whom I have had the privilege of getting to know. I never feel like I am just "doing a wedding." Some couples I worry about more than others, because one or both parties comes from a very unstable family. But I long ago gave up trying to predict who is going to "make it." Some couples who seem to have it all together only seem to have it all together; and others whose relationship is a bit of a mess are willing to put in the hard work and pull themselves together and have a great marriage. At Assumption, I have also helped a handful of couples apply for a decree of nullity from a marriage I performed and have conducted a funeral for two of the people whose ceremonies I conducted.

If Jesus taught us anything it is that real love involves sacrifice. That is why I think that a robot can never truly replace a human marriage partner. A relationship with a robot is totally self-centered. In spite of all the challenges real life couples face, it is through the sacrifices they make for one another and by facing the challenges of life together that they grow in holiness and become a blessing to one another. Couples have the potential to bring out the best in one another. That is the miracle of the sacrament of matrimony, and that is not something you can order on Amazon.

Fr. Joe

**ASH WEDNESDAY IS MARCH 5**

**Mass with Ashes:**

7:00am, 12:10pm, 6:00pm

**Ashes Only in Parish Hall:**

7:30--9:00am, 11:30—1:30pm, 4:30—6:00pm

*(The 311 garage will be open for the 12:10 and 6:00 Masses)*



**LENTE FISH FRY**

Back by popular demand, the Men’s Group Lenten Fish Fry is slated for Friday, March 14 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm in the Parish Hall. It’s \$25 for adults and \$15 for children. Meal includes fish, three sides, salad, dessert, and beer, wine, or soft drink. Reservations are necessary and may be made on-line. If you can volunteer that evening, email [mripiani@handler.law](mailto:mripiani@handler.law).

**ROSARY OF THE SEVEN SORROWS**

During Lent, the Rosary of the Seven Sorrows of Mary will be prayed every Sunday morning at 11:40am. All are welcome. Rosaries are provided.

**HOSPITALITY SUNDAY**

Next weekend, March 1-2, refreshments and conversation will be served in the Parish Hall, following the 9:00 and 10:30am Masses.

**WEDDING GREETERS**

As we prepare to enter the season of Lenten reflection and renewal, consider offering your heart to serve others by joining our wedding ministry. You will help guide couples, their families, and their guests as they begin their sacred journey together in Christ. For more information, email [wedgreet@assumption-chgo.org](mailto:wedgreet@assumption-chgo.org)

**PROMOTING LIFE**

During Lent the Knights of Columbus will conduct a fund drive in support of The Well of Mercy, a charitable organization that provides transitional housing, spiritual nourishment, and other support services to women with unplanned pregnancies who choose to carry their baby to term. On the weekend of March 1-2, the Knights will hand out empty baby bottles. Bring the bottles back full of cash and change by April 6.

**ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL**

If you have received a pledge envelope through the mail, please return it as soon as possible Those who did not receive an envelope through the mail need have no fear of missing out. You will have the opportunity to complete your pledge in church this weekend.

**A VISIT FROM BLEST ART**

Representatives from Blest Art will be at Assumption the weekend of March 1-2. You will have the opportunity to purchase hand-carved nativity sets, statues, crosses, rosaries, and many other pieces of beautiful olive wood art. Blest Art raises funds to support Christian families in the Holy Land. Visit their display in the Parish Hall after all weekend Masses. They accept cash, checks, and all major credit cards.

**BAPTISM PREPARATION**

Our next preparation session for parents (and, if possible, godparents) of infants to be baptized is Monday evening March 10 from 7:00 to 8:15. This session is for new parents and for those who have never before attended a baptism session. Call the parish office to register. Baptisms normally take place on the second and fourth Sunday of the month at 1:15pm and on the first weekend during Mass.

**LENTE BIBLE STUDY**

Lent is a little more than a month away. We invite you to participate in one of two weekly guided studies and discussions of the Scriptures assigned for the Sundays of Lent. We have two separate groups meeting this Lent; one in the daytime and one in the evening. The daytime group will meet on Fridays at 10:00am beginning March 7. The evening group will meet on Mondays at 6:00pm, beginning March 3. To sign up, please email [bible@assumption-chgo.org](mailto:bible@assumption-chgo.org).

**HYMNS:** #212, #323, #603 *(except 5pm Sunday)*

**PRAY FOR THEM:** Annette Russo, Davy Hart, Frank Cardenas, Erin Gentile, Kathy Escher, Patrick McRae, Rich DiVito, Carolina Gomez, Willie & Mary Priego, Michael Graul, Mike Foster, Peter Lammer.

**MASS INTENTIONS ~ WEEK OF FEBRUARY 22, 2025**

Sat	22nd	5:00	Antimo G. Candel (RIP)
Sun	23rd	7:30	Leo & Helen Dillon (RIP)
		9:00	Daniel Schuman (RIP)
		10:30	Charles & Marion Joachim (RIP)
		12:15	Assumption Parishioners
		5:00	Dorothy C. Brennan (RIP (b'day)
Mon	24th	7:00	Michael & Rose Marie Sopko, Helen Morris, Deceased of Sopko, Morris, Pfiester & Jenkins Families
		12:10	Marty Kacin (RIP)
Tues	25th	7:00	Gay White Caswell (RIP)
		12:10	Greg Gumbel (RIP)
Wed	26th	7:00	The Dubuque Family
		12:10	Fr. Ed Shea, O.F.M. (surgery)
Thurs	27th	12:10	Richie O'Keefe (RIP)
Fri	28th	12:10	Lillian LaCrosse (RIP)
Sat	1st	7:30	Dr. Eileen Harmon Council

**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:** In light of the more aggressive action anticipated by Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents in Chicago, it is important to know that, regardless of one's immigration status, all people are entitled to certain rights by the Constitution. If approached by an ICE agent, you have the right to remain silent and you do not have to sign any papers. If you are not being arrested or detained, you may walk away. ICE agents cannot search you or your house without your consent or a search warrant signed by a judge. You have the right to speak to an attorney and to have your lawyer with you at any hearing before an immigration judge.

**CATECHISM 101**

Is your knowledge of the Catholic faith a little fuzzy? Are you an OCIA graduate who would like to learn more about the beliefs and practices of the religion you have chosen? Has your own spiritual journey led you to a deeper hunger for knowledge and understanding of our Catholic heritage? For these and many other reasons you may want to join Deacon Kevin for a course on Catholic beliefs, using *The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. Sessions are every other week and are ongoing. Contact [AssumptionDeacon@gmail.com](mailto:AssumptionDeacon@gmail.com).

**THE MINISTRY OF GREETER**

Would you like to see our parish community grow? Do you enjoy meeting new people and helping them feel welcome? If so, consider becoming part of our Greeter Ministry at weekend Masses. Email [greeters@assumption-chgo.org](mailto:greeters@assumption-chgo.org) to find out more.

**HELP SAVE GOD'S CREATION**  
Please see the **Laudato Si'** and **Me** section of Assumption's website ([assumption-chgo.org](http://assumption-chgo.org)) for practical ideas and helpful links.




Help care for aging Friars who served at Assumption. Remember **The Order of Friar Servants of Mary, USA Province** in your will.



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- Mother Teresa



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