

December 13, 2020
Third Sunday of Advent
THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Mission Statement: St. Francis of Assisi is a Roman Catholic worshipping community, dedicated to ministering to our members and to the greater community in the image given to us by Jesus. This ministry is centered on the Sacraments and our Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity.



Pastor – Fr. Anthony Francis Spilka, OFMConv.;
Permanent Deacon Bruce Becker
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Web Site: <http://www.stfrancisofassisijohnstown.com>

Parish Secretary – Carol Pisula

Office Hours – 9:00AM to 3:00PM – Mon. thru Thurs

Parish Council President – Gary Woodruff – 248-1776

Finance Council President – Brian Mayko

Cemetery Council President - William Heim – 254- 2942

Director of Religious Education – Carol Pisula 539-1632

Men's Club – Gregory Solomon

Rosary Society – Cecilia Neiderer

ALL ARE REMINDED TO DRESS WITH REVERENCE AND RESPECT AS THEY COME TO LITURGY ALL YEAR LONG

Baptism – Parents are expected to be registered members of the Parish and to attend a class for new parents in preparation for the Baptism of their child. It is encouraged that this be done prior to the birth of the child. Please call the Rectory to make early arrangements.

Reconciliation – The Sacrament of God's merciful love and compassion is celebrated Tues at 5:45 PM and Sat 3:15 PM at St. Francis of Assisi. Communal Penance Services - Advent and Lent.

Anointing of the Sick Communal Celebration 2nd Sunday of Advent and 3rd Sunday of Lent.

Marriage in accordance with Diocesan directives, arrangements must be made at least 9 months before the marriage date. All couples are required to attend Diocesan sponsored Pre-Cana sessions and to participate in the FOCCUS inventory. Call the Rectory for information and schedules.

Christian Initiation (RCIA) – Those who are interested in becoming Catholic, as well as those who are interested in learning more about their Catholic Faith, may call the Parish office for more information.

Parish Membership – We are always happy to welcome new parishioners. You may register at the Parish Office. Registration, the practice of stewardship (the regular use of envelopes) and regular participation in the Eucharist indicates active membership and eligibility to act as a Godparent or Sponsor. Your stewardship of time, treasure and talent is essential for the common good and provides a stable income for the Parish, enabling us to prepare a budget.

Ministry to the Sick - If you or someone you know are unable to attend Mass and would like to receive the Sacrament of Penance or Holy Eucharist please contact the Parish Office to schedule a visit.

First Friday – Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 9:30AM – 5:30PM.

Rosary Society – First Monday of the Month – 6:00PM in the Church

Men's Club – First Thursday of the Month – 7:00PM in the Activity Center

GOB SALE – Gobs will be sold after all the Masses this weekend. Thank you to all who helped with the Gob making last week. May God Bless you!

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS will be presented on Sunday, December 13 at 3:00PM. Please join us as we prepare for the birth of the Christ Child. Since there are so few places to go because of the pandemic, why not come to be spiritually uplifted by Sacred Music and Scripture.

ROSARY SOCIETY will meet on **Monday, December 14** at 6:00PM. Please join us for Rosary, Reflection and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS SCHEDULE:

Thursday, December 24 – 4:00PM
Friday, December 25 – 12Midnight, 9:30AM
Thursday, December 31 – 4:00PM
Friday, January 1 – 9:30AM

FOR UNTO US
A CHILD IS BORN



PARISH OFFICE will be CLOSED Thursday, December 24 through Monday, December 28. Office will also be closed on Thursday, December 31 and Friday, January 1.

SANCTUARY CANDLE will burn this week for +Edward F. Gregorchik by Jim & Sue Ellen Dadey.

MISSALETTES 2020-2021 – 1st Sunday of Advent (Nov. 29, 2020) – The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) has truly upset the apple cart in so many ways! Since at the present time we are not allowed to put Missalettes or hymnals in the Church, the Parish Council suggested that the new Missalettes be made available to parishioners for a donation of \$5.00 and the green covers for \$1.00. If you are interested in obtaining 1 or several (1 per member of a family or household) Missalettes, **please contact the Parish Office (M-Thurs 9AM-3PM) to place your request.**

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2021 are for pick up at the Parish Office Monday through Thursday from 9:00AM until 3:00PM. Please – if you know of someone who is unable to pick up their envelopes and you can do so for them – do not hesitate to help by delivering the envelopes to them. Thank you!

OPLATEK is now available at the rear of the Church. Please use the envelopes provided for your donation and place in the candle money box.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR PARISH LAST WEEK: Adults 1,853.27; Loose - \$93.00; Children - \$4.00; Monthly - \$512.02; Christmas - \$135.00; Flowers - \$247.02; Candles - \$52.00; Thanksgiving - \$20.00; Holy Day - \$52.00; Retired Priest - \$21.00; Catholic Charities - \$10.00; Donation - \$45.00; Misc. - \$15.00. Total Collection - \$3,059.31

GIFTS FOR THE GIVING TREES should be returned to the Church or Parish Office no later than **Sunday, December 13, 2020.** Thank you to all who purchased gifts for those less fortunate. May God Bless you!

Background on the Gospel Reading

This Sunday's Gospel invites us to continue our reflection on the person and mission of John the Baptist. Today we depart from the Gospel of Mark and read a selection from the Gospel of John.

The Gospel for today combines a brief passage from the prologue to John's Gospel with a report about John the Baptist. As in Mark's Gospel, the Gospel of John contains no birth narrative. Instead, John's Gospel begins with a theological reflection that has come to be called the "prologue." This prologue places the story of Jesus in its cosmological framework. It speaks of Jesus' existence with God since the beginning of time. In John's Gospel, Jesus is presented as the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the culmination of the Word, the Light that is coming into the world's darkness.

Following this prologue, John reports on the ministry of John the Baptist. We learn about the attention that John the Baptist received from the Jewish authorities. Messengers from the Jewish Priests, the Levites and the Pharisees question John about his identity and the meaning of the Baptisms that he is performing. John's Gospel uses these questions to establish the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist. John the Baptist is not the Messiah, nor is

he Elijah or the Prophet. In John's denials, we hear echoes of the kind of messianic expectations that were common in first-century Palestine.

The only affirmative response that John the Baptist gives is when he quotes the Prophet Isaiah. Upon answering the next question, John announces that the Savior they seek is already among them, but as yet unrecognized. John's response highlights for us an important Advent theme: Jesus has already come into the world as our Savior. During Advent, we pray that we will be able to recognize Jesus's presence in our midst. Advent also reminds us that Jesus will come again to fulfill the promise of salvation. We pray that we will continue to be watchful as we anticipate that great day.

The third Sunday of Advent is also called *Gaudete Sunday*. *Gaudete*, a Latin word which means "rejoice" is taken from the entrance antiphon for Sunday's Mass. This theme is echoed in today's second reading from the First Letter to the Thessalonians. It is a reminder that Advent is a season of joy because our salvation is already at hand.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION DURING ADVENT:

Monday, December 14 – 6:00PM – 7:00PM – St. Francis of Assisi
Wednesday, December 16 – 6:00PM – 7:00PM – St. Francis of Assisi
Thursday, December 17 – 6:00PM – St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Windber
Friday, December 18 – 6:00PM – 7:00PM – St. Francis of Assisi
Monday, December 20 – 5:00PM – St. Benedict
Monday, December 21 – 6:00PM – 7:00PM – St. Francis of Assisi
Wednesday, December 23 – 6:00PM – 7:00PM – St. Francis of Assisi



*Stewardship Reflection...*How do we respond to St. Paul's challenge to give thanks to God in all circumstances? We respond with an "attitude of gratitude!" Good stewards know they didn't earn their time, talents or treasure. Good stewards have good memories, recalling where they came from, the struggles of their parents, the struggles of their own lives, those peaks and valleys that shaped them and brought them to this very moment. And they find themselves very grateful. These are truly gifts from a generous God; miraculously and randomly scattered over the human race, who asks only that we be generous in response. (*Seven Secrets of Successful Stewards*, Paul Wilke, 2005, Catholic Update, St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, Ohio)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

James Edward Adams; Rose Blaschak, Odessa Bobak, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czynnik, Jean Drop, Verne Esposito, LeAnn Golby, Caleb Herdman, Alicia Junghans, Kathryn Legat, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Margaret Murray, Carl Pavlosky, Cecilia Pribish, Rowen Ream, Kathy Reddy, Alexandra Rice, Carly Rice, Doug Rice, Rose Rice, James Schuster, Gary Singel, Betty Spisak, Joanna Stone, Carol Sobecky, Leona Sutt, Agnes Swarney, Jeanne Toth, Sheila Weppner, Rebecca Woodruff.

SALUTE TO THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY AND A REMEMBRANCE IN OUR PRAYERS

May God bless these brave men and women who serve God and Country.

Ensign Adam Guarino, USCG; Master at Arms 2nd Class Izeke W. Pinkas, Fallon, NV; Lt. Col. Joshua P. Higgins, US Army; Petty Officer 1st Class Paul Rambish, US Navy, Coronado Naval Base, San Diego; Major Melinda Rován Corallo, Nellis Air Force Base, Las Vegas, NV; HMC David Bakos, US Navy; PFC; Lance Corporal Jacob Taylor, USMC; Private 1st Class Zack Taylor, US Army; Trista L. Urban, PFC, Army National Guard; Jared N. Dull, HM3, US Navy, Quantico, Va.; Stefanie Kollar, TSgt. Air Force, Hurlburt Field, Fort Walton Beach, Fla., Fr. Don Fullerton, USS Enterprise, Sgt. Bryan Maxwell Porath, Captain Aaron Donahey, US Army, South Korea; Petty Officer 1st Class Heather L. Dovala, Great Lakes, IL.; Sgt. Jarod Pisarchik, Army National Guard; LCDR Kara Yingling, San Diego; LCDR Shannon Yingling; S/SSgt Devon Gilbert, Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa; Senior Airman Daniel Christner, USAF, 193rd Special Operations Wing; Lt. Col Steven Thomas, USAF, deploying to the Middle East; 2nd Lt. Colin Harrington, US Army, Bethesda, MD; 2nd Lt. Ryan Powers, USMC, Camp Lejeune, NC; Senior Airman Anthony Rosage, USAF; Fort Gordon, GA; Tech Sgt. Daniel Bracken, USAF, deployed to Kobal Afghanistan; Sgt. Adken Torchia, US Army, Fort Drum, NY; Sgt. Lucas Tomak, US Army, Fort Hood, TX; Lt. Kenneth Yacynych, US Army, Fort Lewis, WA; Sgt. Elliott Mulvehill, USMC, Ginowan, Japan.; Senior Airman Jeremy Williams, Kandahar Air Base, Afghanistan; Kasey Meredith, O.C.S., USMC, Quantico, VA.; Pvt. Harrison Barham, US Army, Fort Leonard Wood, MO.; Cpl. Aunna Yingling, US Army; Petty Officer 2nd Class, Gage Pollino, US Navy.

To add a name to our Salute to those in the Military, please call 539-1632. If a person is no longer serving on active or reserve duty, please call the Parish Office to remove his/her name.

A PRAYER FOR OUR DEPLOYED MILITARY: Heavenly Father, inspire those who are overseas for the cause of peace. Send Your Son, Jesus Christ, as the Prince of Peace. Bless the men and women of our military who respond to the needs of peacekeeping. Keep them safe from harm. Let them be models of discipline and courage and bring them home safely to their loved ones. We ask this in Your Name. Amen.

COMMUNITY NEWS

PRO LIFE VIGIL Every Thursday from 3:00PM - 4:00PM. We hold a prayer vigil across from the Franklin Street Planned Parenthood facility here in Johnstown. For more information, call Gale at 539-0155.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI: Connect with your Creator, Redeemer, and Spiritual Guide in a stress-free environment at the Eucharistic Adoration every First Friday of the month from 9:30AM until 5:30PM at St. Francis of Assisi Church. It is important that each ½ hour or hour have two adorers to adore and protect the Blessed Sacrament. PLEASE SIGN UP on the schedule of times provided in the Main Vestibule.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS: Lord Jesus Christ, Shepherd of souls, Who called the Apostles to be fishers of men, raise up new apostles in Your Holy Church. Teach them that to serve You is to reign: to possess You is to possess all things. Kindle in the hearts of our young people the fire of zeal for souls. Make them eager to spread Your Kingdom on earth. Grant them courage to follow You, Who are the Way, the Truth, and the Life; Who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

*Rejoice in the Lord
ALWAYS. I will say it again
Rejoice*