

December 6, 2020
Second 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
St. Francis of Assisi, 120 Barron Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15906
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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

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS the family and friends of +Craig Britton, +Betty Reiking, and +Bernice Hughes who were laid to rest last week. Welcoming God, receive from our hands the loved ones we return to You.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a Holy Day with no obligation this year. Mass will be celebrated on Monday, December 7 at 5:30PM and on Tuesday, December 8 at 9:00AM and 5:30PM.

GOB ICING will be made on Tuesday, December 8 beginning at 7:00AM. Gobs will be filled on Wednesday, December 9 from 8:00AM until 10:00AM and again from 6:00PM until ? All help is greatly appreciated. There will be GOB SALE after Mass on Saturday, December 12 and Sunday, December 13.

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. **Please note the date change due to the Vigil of the Holy Day**(with no obligation this year).

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 now available for pick up at the rear of the Church. 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 1,874.27; Christmas - \$40.00; Thanksgiving - \$548.00; Candles - \$52.00; St. Vincent - \$293.00; Flowers - \$45.00; Retired Priest - \$25.00; All Souls - \$11.00; Holy DAY - \$35.00; Catholic Charities - \$20.00; Misc. - \$725.00. Total Collection - \$4,070.27

GIVING TREES are now located at the rear of the Church. We encourage each of you to consider taking an ornament from one (or all) of the trees. The Cambria City Mission tags are all gone. Thank you & God Bless!. Gifts should be wrapped with the ornament attached and returned to the Church or Parish Office no later than **Sunday, December 13, 2020.**

The ornaments on the second tree are for Giant Eagle gift cards that will be distributed to those who need to purchase food items for the holiday season. *The gift cards should be placed in the collection basket (please do not place them under the tree!) or brought to the Parish Office.*

The Gabriel Project Tree has tags with suggestions for gifts for the babies and families being served by the Gabriel Project. Gifts should be returned no later than **Sunday, December 13, 2020.**

“Prepare the Way of the Lord”

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today’s Gospel is taken from the beginning of Mark. Unlike like and Matthew, Mark does not include any details of Jesus’ birth. Instead Mark begins with the appearance of John the Baptist in the desert. On this the Second Sunday of Advent, we are invited to reflect upon the role of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus and the salvation that He would bring to us.

Mark’s description of the appearance of John the Baptist highlights John’s continuity with the Jewish prophetic tradition. Mark combines quotations from the Old Testament books of Malachi, Isaiah, and Exodus. Mark’s description of John as an ascetic, living in the desert, clothed in camel hair, and eating locusts and wild honey, is

reminiscent of the description of the Prophet Elijah found in Second Kings. The people of Judea and Jerusalem flock to him, listening to his message of repentance and forgiveness; they also come to him to be Baptized. Mark's Gospel is clear, however, that John the Baptist's role is only to prepare the way for another Who will come, one Who is greater than John.

Many scholars believe that the Gospels reflect the tension that likely existed between followers of John the Baptist and Disciples of Jesus. Each of the four Evangelists report on John's preaching and Baptizing, and they each emphasize the importance of Jesus' Baptism by John. The four Gospels also explain that John was sent to preach in preparation for another. In the Gospel of Luke, the question is raised as to whether John the Baptist was himself the Messiah. Just as in today's Gospel, however, John speaks quite explicitly that the Messiah was to come after him.

In today's Gospel we hear John the Baptist contrast his Baptism of repentance with the Baptism that Jesus will inaugurate. John says that he has Baptized with water, but that the One Who is to come will Baptize with the Holy Spirit. John's Baptism was not yet a Christian Baptism, but a preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism through which sins are forgiven and the gift of the Holy Spirit is received.

John the Baptist is presented to us as a model during Advent. We, too, are called upon to prepare a way for the Lord. Like John the Baptist, we are messengers in service to one Who is greater than we are. Our Baptism commissions us to call others to life as disciples of Jesus.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION DURING ADVENT:

- Thursday, December 10 – 6:00PM – St. Anthony, Windber
- 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...*As we prepare to celebrate God's greatest gift to us in the birth of our Savior, have we reconciled our sins so as to continue along the path of Eternal Life? May we recognize our dependence upon God and become as passionate about living our Faith as John the Baptist does in today's Gospel.

It is through repentance that we acknowledge our sins. In their pastoral letter on stewardship, the U.S. Bishops proclaim that "the Spirit of wisdom and courage helps people seek pardon and be mindful that in the face of all their forgetting, the most important work of their lives is to be Jesus' disciples." (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. USCCB, 2002).

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

James Edward Adams; Rose Blaschak, Odessa Bobak, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czzyrnik, 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 Sobacky, 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.

