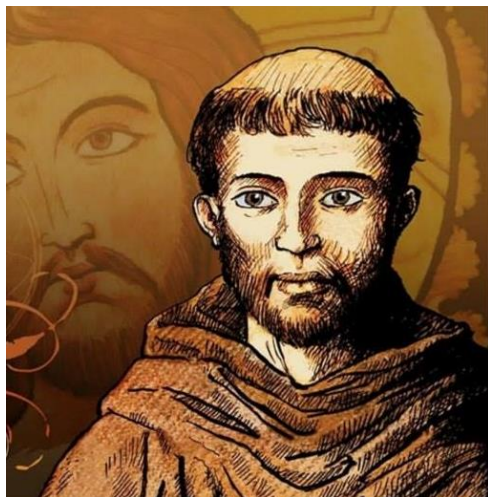


February 21, 2021  
*First Sunday of Lent*  
**THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF  
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

*Mission Statement: St. Francis of Assisi is a Roman Catholic worshipping Community of Faith, dedicated to the concept of putting "Christ first" in our hearts, lives, family and community, with the hope that our world can become a better place and that we can all be made worthy to enter into the Kingdom of God. Our 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*  
*Rectory Phone – 814-539-1632*  
*Activity Center – 814 – 539-3518*  
*Fax: 814 – 539-5888*

**Email – [sfassisich@atlanticbbs.net](mailto:sfassisich@atlanticbbs.net)**

**Oremus Ministry (Prayer Chain) – 814-539-1632**

**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** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 +Jeanne Toth who was laid to rest last week. Welcoming God receive from our hands the loved ones we return to You.

**FISH FRY** – is scheduled for **FRIDAY, February 26**. Due to an aging work force and lack of additional volunteers, the time for the Fish Fry will **change** from 11:00AM – 6:00PM to **2:00PM until 6:00PM for PHONE ORDERS ONLY**. **Orders will be taken on Thursday, February 25 from 9:00AM until 11:00AM and on FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 from 10:00AM UNTIL 5:00PM**. We are still in need of any and all help, especially with breading and dishwashing. PLEASE consider sharing some of your time and talent to keep the Fish Fry up and running. Contact the Parish Office as soon as possible if you are able to help. Many hands make light work! **THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED IN ANY WAY WITH THE ASH WEDNESDAY FISH FRY!!**

**FR. STEVEN FRENIER** former Parochial Vicar here at St. Francis of Assisi Parish remains in the ICU but not improving. All the friars of St. Mark Friary, Boynton Beach, Fl where Fr. Steven is assigned have tested positive for COVID19. Our prayers are with them.



**LENT SCHEDULE** – Daily Mass will be celebrated at 12:05PM with the exception of Tuesday when Mass will be celebrated at 6:15PM and Saturday at 9:00AM. Stations of the Cross will take place each Friday of Lent at 7:00PM. Divine Mercy along with Lenten Lamentations and Benediction will be held on Sundays of Lent at **2:30PM (Please note time change)**.

**ROSARY SOCIETY** will meet on Monday, March 1 at 6:00PM. Please join us for Rosary, Reflection and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 5** is the First Friday of the month. Adoration will begin after the 12:05PM Mass and continue until 5:30PM. Signup sheets are in the Main Vestibule. There should be at least two adorers present for each time slot. (This is also a matter of safety for the Blessed Sacrament – adorers adore and protect).



**SANCTUARY CANDLE** will burn this week for Improved Health of Joann Donahey by Fran & Dave King. Candle by Our Lady, Queen of Heaven will burn for +Raymond E. Toth, Jr. by Jim & Sue Ellen Dadey

**REMINDER** – because of the COVID-19 pandemic, please **DO NOT** bring Religious articles (pamphlets, books, Rosaries, etc.) to the Church. We have to dispose of them for sanitation purposes.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR PARISH LAST WEEK:** Adults 2,002.25; Loose - \$185.00; Children - \$12.00; Monthly - \$361.00; Ash Wednesday - \$45.00; Black & Indian - \$15.00; Catholic Register - \$10.00; Mandeville - \$30.00; First Offering - \$5.00; St. Vincent - \$2.00; Misc. - \$100.00. Collection - \$2,767.25.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE:** with the assistance of the Parish Council the Mission Statement here at St. Francis of Assisi has been updated. The statement can be found on the front page of the bulletin.

*A Prayer for Lent...* O most gentle Jesus, by Your Precious Blood, deliver us from all evils. By Your most bitter Death give us a lively Faith, firm hope and perfect charity, so that with our whole hearts we may love You with all our soul and strength. Make us persevere in Your service, firm and steadfast in good works, so that we may always able to please You. Amen. *St. Clare of Assisi*

#### *Background on the Gospel Reading*

On the First Sunday of Lent, the Gospel reading in each Lectionary cycle is about Jesus' temptation in the desert. This event in the life of Jesus is reported in each of the Synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke – but it is not found in John's Gospel. This year we read Mark's account of this event.

Compared to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the details throughout Mark's narrative are sparse. This is evident in Mark's account of Jesus' temptation in the desert. Mark tells us only that Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit and that for 40 days he was tempted by Satan. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke explain that Jesus fasted while in

the desert, that Satan presented him with three temptations, and that Jesus refused each one, quoting Scripture. Only the Gospels of Matthew and Mark report that Angels ministered to Jesus at the end of His time in the desert. In each of the Synoptic Gospels, the temptation of Jesus follows His Baptism by John the Baptist. In Mark's Gospel, we are told that Jesus went into the desert immediately after His Baptism, led by the Spirit. Jesus' public ministry in Galilee begins after His temptation in the desert. Mark's Gospel makes a connection between the arrest of John the Baptist and the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus' preaching about the Kingdom of God is in continuity with the preaching of John the Baptist, but it is also something new. As Jesus announces it, the Kingdom of God is beginning; the time of fulfillment of God's promises is here.

The fact that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert is significant. This recalls the 40 years that the Israelites wandered in the desert after being led from slavery in Egypt. The Prophet Elijah also journeyed in the desert for 40 days and nights, making his way to Horeb, the mountain of God, where He was also attended to by an Angel of the Lord. Remembering the significance of these events, we also set aside 40 days for the season of Lent.

In Mark's Gospel, the desert marks the beginning of Jesus' battle with Satan; the ultimate test will be in Jesus' final hours on the Cross. In a similar way, our Lenten observances are only a beginning, a preparation for and a reinforcement of our ongoing struggle to resist the temptations we face in our lives. During Lent, we are led by the Holy Spirit to remember the vows of Baptism in which we promised to reject sin and to follow Jesus. Just as Jesus was ministered to by the Angels, God also supports us in our struggle against sin and temptation. We succeed because Jesus conquered sin once and for all in His saving death on the Cross.

### **Operation Rice Bowl**

As you well know, the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has been in partnership with the Diocese of Mandeville in Jamaica for several years. The Mandeville Diocese is the poorest Diocese in Jamaica, with 22% of its inhabitants living in poverty. While great strides have been made in the country in recent years, the pandemic has set them back considerably in the areas of education and assistance. The parishes are struggling as well, and our help to them at this point is vital.

Our Diocesan church has also participated in Operation Rice Bowl for many years and continues to encourage the faithful to make Rice Bowl a family Lenten Program. Operation Rice Bowl benefits Catholic Relief Services which is the official international relief agency of the American Catholic Church, as well as several charities here in our own Diocese. In particular, Catholic Relief Services has been working diligently to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, while helping the communities that have been the hardest hit, both from the virus, and its economic impacts. I hope you will encourage your parishioners to continue in this effort to help those in need and proclaim the Gospel. *Most Rev. Mark L. Bartchak, Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown.*

Rice Bowls are included with this bulletins and can also be found in the Main Vestibule and at the Barron Avenue Entrance. Did you take one home?

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND**

James Edward Adams; Rose Blaschak, Odessa Bobak, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czynnik, Verne Esposito, LeAnn Golby, Caleb Herdman, Alicia Junghans, Kathryn Legat, Carol Mangus, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Paulette Mirilovich, Margaret Murray, 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, Sheila Weppner, Rebecca Woodruff.

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### **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 Guarno, USCG; Master at Arms 2<sup>nd</sup> 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; PFC; Lance Corporal Jacob Taylor, USMC; Private 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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, 193<sup>rd</sup> Special Operations Wing; Lt. Col Steven Thomas, USAF, deploying to the Middle East; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Colin Harrington, US Army, Bethesda, MD; 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.*

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**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.

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#### 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.

