

**December 5, 2021**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
**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– [stfrancisofassisi@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stfrancisofassisi@atlanticbbn.net)**

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

**Web Site: <http://www.stfrancisofassisijohnstown.com>**

**Parish Secretary – Megan Billow-Berchick**

**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 – Deacon Bruce Becker**

**Men's Club – Acting President, David King**

**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

**\*\*\*OFFERTORY ENVELOPES\*\*\* – 2022 Offertory Envelopes are delayed from the Manufacturer, when we receive them they will be placed in the back of the Church as soon as possible.**

**THANK YOU** - To Ozog Funeral Home for the generous donation for our Men's Club Turkey Raffle, Christmas Dinner and the 2022 Parish Calendars.

**GIVING TREES** –Gifts should be wrapped with the ornament and returned to the Church or Parish Office no later than Sunday, December 12, 2021.

The Gabriel Project Tree gifts should be returned no later than Sunday, December 12, 2021.

Thank You to all who purchased gifts for those less fortunate. May God Bless You!

**THE CHILDREN OF THE PARISH** enrolled in our Religious Education Program are encouraged to participate in the 4:00PM Mass on Christmas Eve. We will be singing a few Christmas Carols during Mass and present a tableau of the Nativity. The children should dress in their "Sunday best" and be in the vestibule of the Church by 3:30PM so we can organize and begin Mass promptly at 4:00PM. Thank you for your cooperation.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8** – Is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a Holy Day. **Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM and December 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM and 5:30PM.**

**iGIVECATHOLIC** – Sincere Thank You to all who have generously donated to the iGiveCatholic Campaign. **December 6<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of St. Nicholas, ends the iGiveCatholic Campaign.**

**CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING** - Will be on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, any and all help is greatly appreciated.

**TABLES FOR SALE** – Tables from the Hall are being sold for \$5 each. They are a sturdy 8 foot long wooden table with folding legs and wooden top.

**OPLATEK** – Is now available at the rear of the Church. Please use the envelope provided for your donation and place in the Candle Money Box or in the Collection Basket.

**ROSARY SOCIETY** – Will meet on **Monday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM.** Please join us for Rosary, Reflection, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

**OREMUS MINISTRY (PRAYER CHAIN)** – We are seeking new members for the Oremus Ministry. If you would be willing to help people in need through prayer, Please contact the Parish Office at (814)539-1632.

**PARISH DIRECTORY PHOTOS**– There is no cost to be photographed for the St. Francis Picture Directory. If we have 75 households participate, each family photographed receives a complimentary directory and a free 8 X 10 photo. Additional photos will be available for purchase at a reasonable cost but there will be no high pressure sales pushed. All sales are optional. Please sign the list in the vestibule ASAP. Thanks!!

**LOOKING AHEAD** - St. Francis of Assisi Parish was established in 1922 as a Slovak ethnic Parish in the West End of Johnstown, PA. The 1<sup>st</sup> Mass of the Parish was celebrated December 24, 1922. The present Parish Council is in the process of planning a 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, October 16, 2022 at 12Noon with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Mark followed by an anniversary dinner. More info coming soon.

## Background on the Gospel Reading

This week and next, our Gospel readings invite us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. To affirm this, Luke quotes at length from the Prophet Isaiah. John baptizes for repentance and for forgiveness of sins, preparing the way for God's salvation.

The three Synoptic Gospels—Mark, Matthew, and Luke—attest to the importance of the Baptism of John in preparing for Jesus. Only the Gospel of Luke, however, extends the connection between these two men to their birth. The first two chapters of Luke's Gospel contain the Infancy Narrative, which tells about the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. These stories set the stage for the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in chapter 3.

The Evangelist Luke is the author of the Gospel that bears his name, and he also wrote the Acts of the Apostles as a continuation of the story of Jesus and the Church. In these two works, Luke's sense of time and history emerges. He identifies three epochs of Salvation History: the time before Christ, the time of Christ, and the time of the Church and the Holy Spirit. In today's Gospel reading, as elsewhere, John the Baptist is presented as the figure who bridges the time before Christ and prepares the way for Christ's own ministry.

In today's Gospel we also note Luke's attention to political and historical detail. Luke shows that salvation is for all people and situated in world events. Therefore, Luke lists the political and religious leaders at the time of John's appearance in the desert. Salvation is understood as God's breaking into this political and social history.

John's preaching of the coming of the Lord is a key theme of the Advent season. As John's message prepared the way for Jesus, we too are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by repentance and reform of our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ, who announce by our lives the coming of the Lord, as John did.

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>

The stewardship way of life is very much a journey. We don't have to have every aspect of our life perfectly nailed down; we are all "works in progress" called simply to take one step at a time to Christ. It is God Who started this good work in us on the day of our Baptism. He cares deeply about this journey of ours and He will give us the strength and grace we need to stay faithful to Him and continue growing in love and imitation of Christ.

This Advent, let's turn away from bad habits or sin that may have crept into our lives and turn our hearts and minds back to Christ. This is what the stewardship way of life is all about, moving closer and closer in relationship with Christ, ready to celebrate His Birth, with eyes fixed on Eternal Life. When we share our time especially with the "least of our brothers and sisters," we are imitating Him. (*Stewardship Reflection*, Catholic Stewardship Consultants, Inc. 11/9/2021)

**CONTRIBUTIONS WEEK LAST WEEK:** Loose - \$199.00; Adults - \$2084.29; Children - \$6.00; Monthly - \$90.00; Candles - \$160.00; Christmas - \$217.00; Christmas Flowers - \$25.00; All Saints - \$15.00; All Souls - \$15.00; Immaculate Conception - \$25.00 – Catholic Charities - \$206.00; Thanksgiving - \$424.25; Donation - \$275.00; Retired Religious - \$25.00; Missalettes - \$10.00; - Total Collection - \$3776.54.

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

James Edward Adams, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czyrnik, Verne Esposito, Alicia Junghans, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Paulette Mirilovich, Rowen Ream, Alexandra Rice, Carly Rice, Doug Rice, Rose Rice, James Schuster, Betty Scott, Gary Singel, Betty Spisak, Joanna Stone, Carol Sobecky, Leona Sutt, Agnes Swarney, Paulette Torchia, Joe Torchia, Sheila Weppner.

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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 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; 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, Ft. Steward, GA; 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;; 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; Pvt. 1st Class Daylee Ragno, US Army, E-3 Paratrooper, Fort Bragg, NC..

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.

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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 1/2 hour or hour have two adorers to adore and protect the Blessed Sacrament.

Please uplift in prayer our Confirmation Candidates (Alana Murphy, Connor and Christian Haberkorn, and Brandon Wincer) who officially were enrolled in the Confirmation Program. They are scheduled to be confirmed on Thursday, May 5, 2022.