

December 11, 2022

3rd Sunday of Advent

100th Anniversary THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF 1922 - 2022

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@atanticbbn.net

Facebook – St. Francis of Assisi

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

**MASS SCHEDULE – Monday – 9:00AM, Tuesday – 6:15PM, Wednesday – Saturday – 9:00AM
Saturday – 4:00PM, Sunday – 7:30AM & 9:30AM**

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 – 6:30PM in the Activity Center

ROSARY SOCIETY CANCELLED – Rosary Society for Monday, December 12th has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

OFFERTORY ENVELOPES & 2023 CALENDARS – Are now available! Envelopes are in the back of the Church and Calendars are in the Main Vestibule.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEARS – Sign-up Sheet is in the Main Vestibule for Ministers, Lectors and Altar Servers on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

COMMUNAL PENANCE – We will be holding our Communal Penance at St. Francis of Assisi Parish on **Wednesday, December 14th at 5:00PM.**

CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING – Will be on Thursday, December 22nd after 9:00AM Mass, any and all help is greatly appreciated!

BETTY SCOTT BIRTHDAY – Betty Scott's 91st Birthday is coming up on December 16th. If anyone would like to send her a card to brighten her day, the address is – The Villa Personal Care, 429 Napoleon Place – **Room 202**, Johnstown, Pa 15901.

GOB SALE – St. Francis will be holding a Gob Sale on Saturday, December 17th at the Activity Center from 9:00AM to 12 Noon. Gobs are \$2.00 each.

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.

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

CCD CLASSES – ALL CCD CLASSES are to report to St. Francis Church on, Sunday, DECEMBER 18th for class. Starting January 8th, classes will be held at the Convent across the street from the Church.

CASH BASH – Save the Date for FEBRUARY 11th at St. Francis Activity Center! Tickets go on sale beginning December 17th before and after each Mass, or call Fran at (814)536-3667. Tickets are \$25 and includes food and non-alcoholic beverages. \$200 given away every half hour, \$500 at 7:30 and 9:00. We will also have qualifiers, 50/50, baskets, door prizes and much more! Donations of whiskey and vodka needed. Baskets valued at \$25 needed also. Please call Alice at (814)536-0948 or Georgetta at (814)535-4252. Let's all join in and make the cash Bash a **SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER!**

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK: Loose – \$173.00; Adults – \$2,648.25; Monthly – \$882.00; Candles – \$138.50; Christmas Flowers – \$409.00; Christmas – \$105.00; St. Vincent DePaul – \$45.00; Thanksgiving – \$30.00; Immaculate Conception – \$35.00; Priest Retirement – \$31.00; Donation – \$30.00; Christmas Ornaments – 50.00; Online Giving - \$271.00 – Total Collection - \$4,847.75.

Background on the Gospel Reading

In chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells three parables about losing, finding, and rejoicing. The outcasts of society, the taxpayers, and the sinners approach Jesus eager to hear what He has to say. In Luke's Gospel, *hearing* is a sign of conversion. The Pharisees and scribes, still suspicious of Jesus, complain about Him associating with sinners. So He tells them these three parables.

In the first story, the parable of The Lost Sheep, the shepherd leaves behind the 99 sheep to search for the 1 lost sheep. When he finds it, the shepherd rejoices not alone as in Matthew's version, but with friends and neighbors. In the same way, God rejoices more over 1 sinner who repents—like the outcasts who have come to hear Jesus—than over the 99 righteous like the Pharisees and scribes.

The second story, about a poor woman who will not stop searching until she finds her lost coin, makes the same point. Why are the Pharisees complaining? They should rejoice when the lost are found.

Finally we come to what is probably the most memorable parable in the Gospels, the story we know as The Prodigal Son. Just as in The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin, this story (found only in Luke) is really about the seeker. The loving father is at the center of this parable. Even though his son runs off with his father's inheritance and squanders the money, the father waits for him, hoping for his return. Upon his son's return, the father, "full of compassion," runs out to embrace and forgive him before the son can utter one word of repentance. At this point the rejoicing begins.

The parable does not end there. Rather, it makes one more point about the older son's reaction. This son who never left, just like the Pharisees and scribes who feel they are righteous, refuses to enter his father's house to join in the rejoicing. He has served his father. He has obeyed him. Perhaps it was not out of love. The father's response teaches us that God's care and compassion extend to the righteous and sinner alike. When we are lost, God doesn't wait for our return. He actively seeks us out. And when the lost are found, how could we not celebrate and rejoice?

December 11 — 3rd Sunday of Advent

We are gaining ground on our Advent mountain climb and this is a time to take a moment to rejoice in the Good News that our Savior will come again in triumph one day. On this Gaudete ("Rejoice") Sunday we are filled with reminders of God's final victory over suffering and injustice, and are given encouragement to remain steadfast in our mission to live as faith-filled disciples. St. James, in our second reading, offers wise counsel. "Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord... Make your hearts firm... Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one another, that you may not be judged."

This is excellent advice for us Christian stewards as we face the challenges of everyday life in our broken world, especially in the hectic days that precede Christmas. We can be good stewards of our attitude, "making our hearts firm" by practicing patience with others and refusing to give in to the temptation to complain. We can choose to see and rejoice in God's presence with us, no matter the circumstances surrounding us. (*Stewardship Reflection*, Catholic Stewardship Consultants, Inc. 2022/11/08)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

James Edward Adams, Kathy Barczak, James Bauer, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czynnik, Verne Esposito, Alicia Junghans, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Rowen Ream, Alexandra Rice, Carly Rice, Doug Rice, Rose Rice, James Schuster, Betty Scott, Gary Singel, Betty Spisak, Joanna Stone, Carol Sobczyk, Leona Sutt, Joe Torchia, David Watson, Sheila Weppner, Mark Wojno.

=====

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; **Lt. Col. Melinda Rovon Corallo**, Travis Air Force Base, California; **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, Fort Leavenworth, KS.; **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; **Captain 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;; **Capt. Kenneth Yacynych**, US Army, Fort Hood; **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; **SPC Morgan Rullo**, ARNG Camp Buehring, Kuwait; **Fr. William Appel**, Navy Chaplain, U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

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.

Did you know that it is a custom in Johnstown to wear something RED on Fridays to honor our military?

=====

COMMUNITY NEWS

PRO LIFE VIGIL – is held weekly on various days and various times across from the Planned Parenthood on Franklin Street in Johnstown. Please call Gale Bala for information (814)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. Access to the Church is by ringing the doorbell at the Barron Avenue door for admittance – a matter of safety for the Blessed Sacrament and adorers.

Sacrament and adorers.