

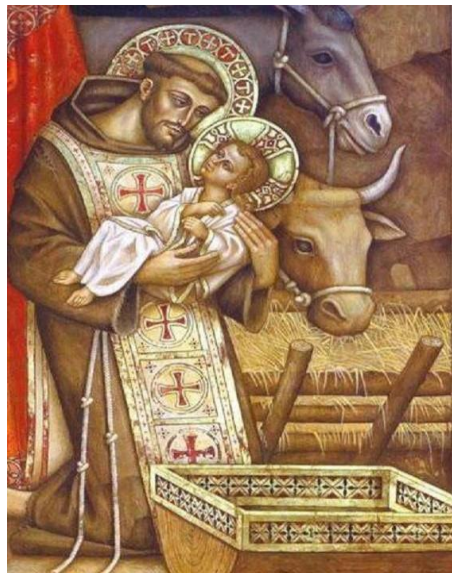
**December 18, 2022**

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**100<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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** 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 – 6:30PM in the Activity Center

## **OUR CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 – 4:00 PM  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 – 12:00 MIDNIGHT, 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM

**OFFERTORY ENVELOPES** – Are now available! Envelopes are in the back of the Church. Please pick up your envelopes. After this weekend, they will be in the Rectory.

**CHURCH DECROATING** – **Due to unforeseen circumstances**, the Church was decorated this past week and we will **NOT** be meeting on **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, TO DECORATE THE CHURCH.**

**SPECIAL THANK YOU** – to Heather Kmetz and her “elves” for the fantastic children’s Christmas Party last Sunday. It was a good time for all – even St. Nicholas!

**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 18<sup>th</sup> for class.**

**JOE BARTKO FOOD DRIVE** – A HUGE THANK YOU, To all who donated to the Joe Bartko Food Drive for St. Vincent DePaul. It was a HUGE SUCCESS!! We donated as **680.4 LBS** of FOOD!! I CAN’T THANK YOU ALL ENOUGH FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

**CASH BASH** – **Save the Date for FEBRUARY 11<sup>th</sup> at St. Francis Activity Center!** Tickets go on sale beginning December 17<sup>th</sup> 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 – \$448.00; Adults – \$1,585.30; Monthly – \$470.00; Candles – \$100.49; Christmas Flowers – \$74.00; Christmas – \$85.00; St. Vincent DePaul – \$20.00; Immaculate Conception – \$440.00; Priest Retirement – \$201.00; All Saints – \$2.00; All Souls – \$5.00; Donation – \$500.00; Online Giving – \$271.00 – Total Collection – \$4201.79.

## Background on the Gospel Reading

Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: “Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about” (Matthew 1:18).

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the Birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel Passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the Evangelist has listed the genealogy of Jesus, tracing His lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Angel and the Shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke).

We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their Faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes.

The message of the Angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and His role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means “Yahweh saves.” He will be the fulfillment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: “. . . The Virgin shall be with Child . . . and shall name Him Emmanuel [God with us].”

Joseph does as the Angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the Child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

### December 18 — 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

As our Advent preparations draw to a close and Christmas fast approaches, it is fitting that today's readings demonstrate the intensity of the Father's perfect and passionate love for each of us, culminating in the gift of His own Son, Jesus Christ, on Christmas Day. In response to such an overwhelming gift, what can we do but offer our lives as a gift in return, embracing a Stewardship way of life with all the love and strength we have to give. In our Gospel passage from Matthew, we find an unparalleled example of one who embraced this way of life in St. Joseph, as he obeys God's call. Though we do not hear any words from St. Joseph, his actions clearly show that he offered himself, his whole life, as a gift to his family through his strong guidance, protection, and service. Let us imitate St. Joseph, then, as good stewards, giving our very lives to those around us in love and gratitude to God Who has given us everything we have, especially His own Son, Jesus Christ. We will no doubt find that the more we give ourselves away, the more our generous Father will fill us with His grace and peace. (*Stewardship Reflection*, Catholic Stewardship Consultants, Inc. 2022/11/15)

**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 Sobecky, Leona Sutt, Joe Torchia, David Watson, Sheila Weppner, Mark Wojno.

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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 Guarino**, 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; **Lt. Col. Melinda Rovon Corallo**, Travis Air Force Base, California; **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, Fort Leavenworth, KS.; **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; **Captain 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;; **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 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, Gage Pollino**, US Navy; **Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> 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?

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**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.