

December 4, 2022
2nd 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

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED – On Thursday, December 8th, in Observance of The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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!

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.

THANK YOU – To all who donated Body Wash to The Atrium for Christmas gifts for their Residents.

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 first tree contains names of children submitted by the Cambria City Mission (**now complete**). Gifts should be wrapped with the ornament and returned to the Church or Parish Office no later than Sunday, December 11, 2022. 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!**) 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 11, 2022.

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.

ROSARY SOCIETY – Will meet on Monday December 5th at 6:00PM. Please consider joining us for Rosary, Reflection and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

CCD & CONFIRMATION PREP CLASSES – CCD Classes for December is: December 4th, 11th, & 18th. Confirmation Prep Class for Grade 11 is on December 11th. Confirmation Prep Classes for Grades 9 & 10 is on December 18th.

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK: Loose – \$235.00; Adults – \$1,781.25; Candles – \$142.00; Christmas Flowers – \$20.00; St. Vincent DePaul – \$305.00; Thanksgiving – \$251.00; All Saints – \$6.00; All Souls – \$6.00; Catholic Charities – \$10.00; Rent – \$75.00; Donation – \$652.00; Online Giving – \$186.00 – Total Collection – \$3,669.25.

SANCTUARY CANDLE – Will burn from November 27th – December 10th – For: Kathy Barczak – From: All Your Friends at St. Francis of Assisi.

Background on the Gospel Reading

In this week's Gospel Reading and next week's, our Advent preparation for Christmas invites us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. In this week's Gospel, Matthew describes the work and preaching of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets of Israel, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. In fact, the description of John found in this reading is reminiscent of the description of the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 1:8). In this reading, John directs a particularly pointed call to repentance to the Pharisees and Sadducees, parties within the Jewish community of the first century.

John marks the conversion of those who seek him out with a Baptism of repentance. Other groups in this period are thought to have practiced ritual washings for similar purposes, and John's Baptism may have been related to the practices of the Essenes, a Jewish sect of the first century. John's Baptism can be understood as an anticipation of Christian Baptism. In this passage, John himself alludes to the difference between his Baptism and the one yet to come: "I am Baptizing you with water, for repentance . . . He will Baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11).

In this reading, John makes very clear that his relationship to the Messiah yet to come (Jesus) is one of service and subservience: ". . . the One Who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry His sandals" (Matthew 3:11). In the context of Matthew's Gospel, today's passage is followed by Jesus' Baptism by John, an event that is attested to in all four of the Gospels and appears to have been the start of Jesus' Public Ministry.

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 in the first century, we, too, are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' Coming. We respond to John's message by our repentance and reform of our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ, who announce by our lives, as John did, the coming of the Lord.

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The Prophet Isaiah continues the theme of journey towards the Holy Mountain, the Kingdom of God. It is a Kingdom of peace, justice, and harmony among all God's creatures. St. Paul encourages us to focus, "Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God." The idea of welcoming others as Christ welcomes us is the essence of Christian hospitality and is vital to stewardship living. This kind of hospitality involves seeing people as God sees them and being ready to invite others into our lives whenever and however God asks; it is an attitude we take with us wherever we go.

As we "straighten the paths" of our own hearts and minds, we become more hospitable people, better stewards of God's grace and mercy, far more open and ready to invite others into our lives, homes, and parish. We climb farther up God's Holy Mountain and attract others to join us on the path toward holiness. This is preparation fitting for our merciful Savior. (*Stewardship Reflection*, Catholic Stewardship Consultants, Inc. 2022/11/01)

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 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 Rovano 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?

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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).

Eucharistic



Adoration

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.