

**February 26, 2023**  
*1<sup>st</sup> 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 – [stfrancisich@atanticbhn.net](mailto:stfrancisich@atanticbhn.net)**

**Facebook – [St. Francis of Assisi](https://www.facebook.com/stfrancisofassisi)**

**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 Vigil– 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 participate in 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

**LENT MASS SCHEDULE:** Daily Mass will be celebrated at 9:00AM with the exception of Tuesday when Mass will be celebrated at 6:15 PM. Stations of the Cross will take place each Friday of Lent at 7:00 PM. Divine Mercy along with Lenten Lamentations and Benediction will be held on Sundays of Lent at 3:00 PM.

**MEN'S CLUB** – Will be meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30PM at the Activity Center. New Members are always welcome!!

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

**GOB ICING** - will be made on **Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>** from 7:00 AM-11:00 AM. Gobs will be filled on **Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>** from 8:00 AM until 10:00 AM and from 6:00PM until 8:00PM. All help is welcome and appreciated.

**PASKA BREAD** – We will be making Paska Bread the week of March 27<sup>th</sup>. We will need volunteers to help out! Please contact Fran King at (814)536-3667.

**FISH FRY** – Our next Fish Fry will be on **Friday, March 10 from 2:00PM until 6:00PM** at the Activity Center located at the corner of D Street and Barron Avenue. Takeout orders can be placed on Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> and, Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:00AM until 1:00PM by calling 814-539-3518. We are now offering Dine-In as well. Meals will be served while supplies last! All help will be greatly appreciated.

**DIOCESE SPONSORING MEN'S CONFERENCE** – An inspiring Catholic priest and a nationally recognized author will headline the 2023 Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown men's conference **STRENGTH IN CHRIST – Be Not Afraid**. The conference is scheduled for Saturday, April 29 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at Mount Aloysius College in Cresson. Speakers will be Father Joe Freedy, a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and Gary Zimak, a Catholic evangelist and author who is recognized as the leading speaker on the topic of overcoming anxiety. Bishop Mark will celebrate Mass at 4:00 p.m. The day will also include brief presentations from local parishioners to inspire men to put their faith into action at the parish level. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated, and lunch will be provided. Registration is required by April 14. The cost is \$20 per person; \$10 for college and high school students. Register online at [dioceseaj.org](http://dioceseaj.org) or pick up a registration for in the Main Vestibule of our Church.

**PUBLIC ROSARY TO PRAY FOR MARRIAGE & AMERICA** – Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM at St. Clement Church on Lindberg Ave & Goucher Street. Also on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 Noon at Central Park, Downtown, Johnstown.

**CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK:** Loose – \$312.00; Adults – \$2,254.25; Monthly – \$15.00; Candles \$198.00; Initial Offering – \$5.00; Black & Indian Mission – \$20.00; Mandeville – 85.00; Donation – \$30.00; Online Giving – \$291.00 – Total Collection – \$3,128.25.

## Background on the Gospel Reading

This past Wednesday we celebrated Ash Wednesday, the first day of the Liturgical Season of Lent. In this season, we prepare ourselves to celebrate the high point of our Christian life, Easter. Each year, the readings for Ash Wednesday are the same. They call us to a change of heart and teach us about the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These disciplines are to be part of the Christian life during every season, but during the Season of Lent, we renew our commitment to them.

The meaning behind tracing a cross on our foreheads with ashes (the liturgical sign of Ash Wednesday) is a summary of our Christian life. On one level, the ashes remind us of our origin and our death. (In the words of the prayer said when we receive ashes: “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”) The ashes are also the sign of our victory: the Cross of Christ. In His Death and resurrection, Christ conquered death. Our destiny as Christians is to receive the victory over death that Christ won for us. We acknowledge that victory when we “[t]urn away from sin and [are] faithful to the gospel,” words from the alternative prayer when we are signed with ashes.

Today’s reading is part of the Sermon on the Mount. In the Sermon, Jesus warns His Followers against acting for the sake of appearance. When Jesus’ disciples give alms, pray, and fast, they are to do so in such a way that only God, Who sees the heart and knows what is hidden, will know. Although our Lectionary reading omits the Lord’s Prayer, we can recall that Matthew presents that prayer as a model for the disciples’ prayer (Matthew 6:9-15).

## February 26 1st Sunday of Lent

There is a particular strategy Christian stewards might take to journey toward Easter. The reading from the Book of Genesis, reminds us of our Creator and the loving care and lavish gifts He gave to our ancestors, Adam and Eve. They were placed in a garden to practice stewardship there. God trusted they would cultivate and care for it. (Gn 2:15).

The passage from Matthew shows us by the example of Jesus Himself how we can attain spiritual strength and grow as disciples. He is in the desert, fasting for 40 days and 40 nights. Like Adam and Eve, He is confronted by the evil one. But our Lord triumphs over the lies of the Devil. Jesus confidently and emphatically quotes Scripture from His heart. This Lent, let us embrace this 40-day spiritual reset. Let us prioritize our use of time by committing to prayerful study of the Scriptures and trusting more deeply in the Father’s love. (*Stewardship Reflection*, Catholic Stewardship Consultants, Inc. 2013/01/23)

**PENGUINS TICKET BASKET** – We have chances for 2 tickets to a **Pittsburgh Penguins game on March 14<sup>th</sup>** being chanced off. Chances will be sold after all Masses. Chances are \$2.00 per ticket, 3 for \$5.00. Winner will be drawn on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

**MEN’S CLUB TICKET** – The Men’s Club is selling a \$5.00 ticket that goes off on Mother’s Day (May 14<sup>th</sup>). \$500 cash/\$500 lottery and goes off the 7:00 PM PA Daily Lottery.

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

James Edward Adams, Kathy Barczak, James Bauer, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czynnik, Verne Esposito, James Golby, Alicia Junghans, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Rowen Ream, Alexandra Rice, Carly Rice, Doug Rice, Rose Rice, Betty Scott, Gary Singel, Betty Spisak, Joanna Stone, Carol Sobbecky, 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 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, Major 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; Sgt. Adken Torchia, US Army, Fort Drum, NY;; Capt. Kenneth Yacynych, US Army, Fort Hood; Sgt. Elliott Mulvehill, USMC, Ginowan, Japan.; 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; Jonathan McClain, Warrant Officer, U.S. Army, Fort Drum, NY; Tech Sgt. Daniel Bracken; Senior Airman Jeremy Williams**

*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.