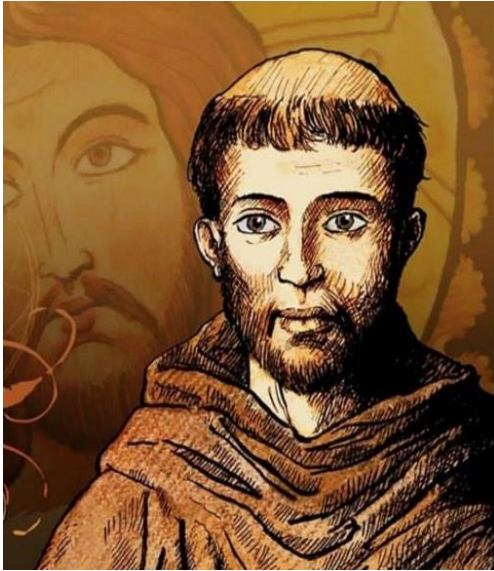


**March 19, 2023**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**  
**THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF**  
**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

*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 – [sfassisich@atanticbbn.net](mailto:sfassisich@atanticbbn.net)**  
**Facebook – [St. Francis of Assisi](https://www.facebook.com/St.FrancisofAssisi)**  
**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 at 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

**CHILDREN'S EASTER PARTY** – Children's Easter Party will be on **Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>** in our Activity Building at 1:00PM. Sign-up sheet is in the Main Vestibule. Please sign-up by March 26<sup>th</sup>. If anyone is willing to volunteer and/or donate desserts, please contact Heather at (814)243-0715.

**SEDER MEAL** – Sign-up sheet for the Seder Meal is in the Main Vestibule. It will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup> at 5:00PM at the Activity Building. We ask that you bring a covered dish. The Church will provide the meat.

**FISH FRY** – Our next and **last Fish Fry for Lent** will be on **Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> and, Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 9:00AM until 1:00PM by calling 814-539-3518. We will also have Gobs for sell! We are now offering Dine-In as well. Meals will be served while supplies last! All help will be greatly appreciated!

**MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK & EASTER** – If you are able and willing to assist at the Liturgies for Holy Week (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil & Easter Sunday) please use the sign-up sheets that are located in the Main Vestibule.

**NO LIGHTING CANDLES** – Please do NOT light any 6 day candles and 4 hour votive candles after Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>. No candles should be lit from Sunday April 2<sup>nd</sup> (Palm Sunday) through Holy Week until after the Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday (April 8<sup>th</sup>).

**CATHOLIC MINISTRY DRIVE KICKOFF** – The annual CMD supports 14 ministries through which people in our Diocese are accompanied on their faith journey. There are so many gifted and generous laypersons in our Diocese who share their time and talent to support our Catholic Ministries. This year, more so than others, our world, our nation, our communities, our Parishes, and our families need tangible expressions of hope. Please reflect on Bishop Mark's invitation when it arrives this week and return your pledge card either through the mail or in next weekend's offertory. The year 2023 is a time for everyone to reflect on how we can best serve our Church. Our Parish's target for this year is **\$17,556**. Please help up to reach our goal and more!! **ALMSGIVING IS A SPECIAL TRAIT OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY!!**

**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. Register online at [dioceseaj.org](http://dioceseaj.org) or pick up a registration form in the Main Vestibule of our Church.

**PITTSBURGH PENGUINS BASKET WINNER** – Is Terry Bunn!!!! Congratulations and thank you to all who supported the Cash Bash!!

**CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK:** Loose – \$182.00; Adults – \$1,900.25; Monthly – \$850.00; Candles \$132.75; Easter Flowers – \$475.00; Black & Indian Mission – \$10.00; Catholic Relief – \$5.00; Online Giving - \$191.00 – Total Collection - \$3,746.00

## **Background on the Gospel Reading**

As we did last week, we are reading today from the Gospel of John. In today's Gospel, the healing of the man born blind invites us to focus on the physical and spiritual aspects of sight and light. In the first part of today's Gospel, we hear Jesus' response to a prevalent belief of His time: that misfortune and disability were the result of sin. That belief is why Jesus is asked the question of whose sin caused the man's blindness—his own or his parents'. Jesus does not answer directly, but instead gives the question an entirely different dimension—through this man's disability, God's power will be made manifest. Jesus then heals the man.

The healing is controversial because Jesus heals on the Sabbath. The Pharisees, the Religious Authorities of Jesus' Time, understood that the Law of Moses forbade work (including healing) on the Sabbath. They also have trouble believing that Jesus performed a miracle. To determine whether the man was really born blind, the Pharisees question him and his parents. The man challenges the leaders of the synagogue about their assessment of the good that Jesus has done. In turn, they expel the man for questioning their judgment.

The final revelation and moment of enlightenment comes when the man born blind encounters Jesus again. Having heard the news of his expulsion, Jesus seeks out the man born blind and reveals Himself to him as the Son of Man. In this moment, the man born blind shows himself to be a man of faith and worships Jesus. Jesus replies by identifying the irony of the experience of many who encounter Jesus: Those who are blind will now see, and those who think they now see will be found to be blind.

As in last week's Gospel about Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, today's reading has many allusions to Baptism. The washing of the man in the pool of Siloam is a prototype for Christian Baptism. Through the man's encounter with Jesus, the man born blind is healed, his sight is restored, and his conversion to discipleship begins. The man born blind gradually comes to a greater understanding about who Jesus is and what it means to be His disciple, while the Pharisees (those who should see) are the ones who remain blind.

## **March 19 — 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**

The curing of the Blind Man gave hope to the community that they were deserving of God's love no matter what their circumstance. Reflect on the words of Pope Francis this week, "To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love, is to open up a horizon of hope; it is to let a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds; it is to bring warmth of hope!" (Pope Francis, March 19, 2013) May I be the light in the darkness of this world by generously sharing my time, my talents, and all of my resources, in the name of Jesus.

**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.

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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 1<sup>st</sup> 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?

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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. **NO FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION IN APRIL!**