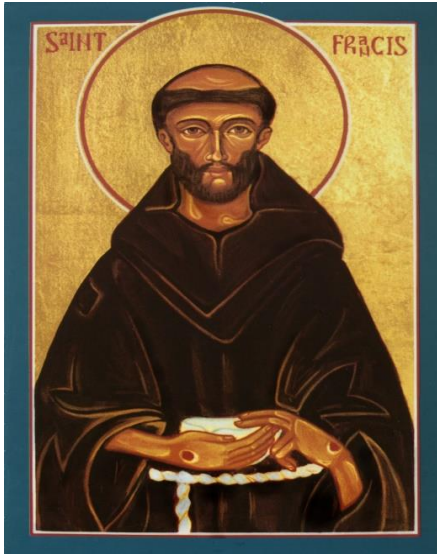


**January 21, 2024**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF**  
**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

*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@atlanticbnn.net](mailto:sfassisich@atlanticbnn.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 – Robert Bimeal**  
**Cemetery Council President – William Heim – 254- 2942**  
**Director of Religious Education – Deacon Bruce Becker**  
**Men's Club President – Philip Scott**  
**Rosary Society – Cecilia Neiderer**  
**Gabriel Project – 814-418-1813**

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

**Alternative to Abortion – Precious Life Inc. (814)269-4391; Domestic Violence Hotline – Victim Services (814)288-4961;**  
**Suicide Prevention Hotline – (814)535-8531 or 1-877-268-9463; St. Vincent DePaul (814)535-8521**

**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

**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS** – The Family and Friends of +**Richard Bender Sr.** who was laid to rest last week. Welcoming God receive from our hands the Loved Ones we return to You.

**PUBLIC ROSARY** - To Pray for The Unborn on January 20<sup>th</sup> 12:00 NOON at ST. JOHN GUALBERT CATHEDRAL, Downtown Johnstown St. Ann Shrine.

**ST. FRANCIS MEN'S CLUB NEW YEAR'S TICKET WINNER** – Is Xavian McClafferty ticket with number 980 on January 1<sup>st</sup>. CONGRATULATIONS!!!

**THEOLOGY ON TAP - Young Adult Group (18-39):** Theology on Tap returns January 31<sup>st</sup> from 6-8pm at The Boulevard Grill (165 Southmont Boulevard). In December we had our first service project Christmas Caroling at a Westmont retirement community. The event was a success with the retirement community singing along to every song! Our January guest speaker is Remil Teny - Education Director of the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation. Young adults of all faiths aged 18-39 are welcome to join us for faith, fellowship, and free food with a cash bar! Thank you to Saint John Gualbert Cathedral for providing January's food. For more information contact Geoffrey Stumpo at (814) 659-7415 or [geoffstumpo@gmail.com](mailto:geoffstumpo@gmail.com).

**PITTSBURGH PENGUINS TICKETS** - Two Pittsburgh Penguin tickets being chanced off on February 4<sup>th</sup> the home game on Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. Chances 3 for \$5.00. Chances will be sold before and after Masses.

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI YOUTH EVENT – HAS BEEN POSTPONED DUE TO AN EMERGENCY SITUATION. A new date and time will be announced at a later date.**

**CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK:** Loose – \$88.00; Adults – \$1,907.30; Monthly – \$380.00; Candles – \$131.00; St. Vincent DePaul – \$50.00; Initial Offering – \$45.00; Solemnity of Mary – \$55.00; Donation – 25.00; Online Giving - \$278.50 – Total Collection - \$2,959.80.

### **January 21, 2024 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Our readings today call us to be decisive in our faith. God calls us as stewards to repent and renew our commitment to Him each day. In our First Reading, God instructs the prophet Jonah to travel through the city of Nineveh and warns the people that the city would be destroyed due to their evil ways. When the people of Nineveh heard this, they declared a fast in repentance. The Lord saw this and had compassion for them. Every moment is an opportunity to either grow closer to God or further away from Him.

Our Gospel today shares Mark's account of Jesus calling His first disciples. In his account, Jesus approaches Simon and Andrew, and later, James and John. These four men were fishermen, casting their nets. Jesus states, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." In both instances, the men immediately abandoned what was before them and followed Christ. As we settle into this New Year, let us ponder the ways we can repent and renew our commitment to God. Let us ask ourselves, what are we casting our nets for? And are we willing to leave it behind for something much greater? If not now, when?

## **Background on the Gospel Reading**

Today we begin a continuous reading of Mark's Gospel that will carry us through this segment of the liturgical season of Ordinary Time. Remember that in Cycle B of the Lectionary, most of the Gospel readings are taken from the Gospel according to Mark.

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a narrative about Jesus' Birth. Instead, Mark begins by reporting on the preaching of John the Baptist. John is described as the "voice in the wilderness" sent to prepare the way of the Lord. Immediately after describing the work of John the Baptist, Mark reports on Jesus' Baptism and His temptation in the desert. Jesus' Public Ministry begins after the arrest of John the Baptist. Mark wants his readers to understand the important connection between the end of the ministry of John the Baptist and the beginning of Jesus' own ministry.

As we learn at the beginning of today's Gospel reading, Jesus preaches the Kingdom of God in continuity with the preaching of John the Baptist. Like John the Baptist, Jesus' pronouncement of the Kingdom is a call to repentance. Yet Jesus' Preaching is greater than John's. Jesus begins the time of fulfillment; the Kingdom of God is already here. This will be demonstrated again and again, both in Jesus' Words and in the actions that follow. Jesus' healings and forgiveness of sins are signs of the Kingdom of God that He announces in His Teaching.

In contrast to last week's Gospel, in Mark's Gospel Jesus takes the initiative in calling His First Disciples. As mentioned last week, it was more typical of first-century rabbinical schools for students to seek out rabbis, asking to be their disciples. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus breaks with this tradition and invites His Disciples to learn from Him. Jesus is said to have first called four fishermen—Simon, Andrew, James, and John. Simon and Andrew are brothers. Jesus promises that He will make them "fishers of men." James and John are also brothers. Mark does not report Jesus' Words of invitation to them, but he does report that they left their fishing immediately; their father, Zebedee, was left behind in the boat.

Mark's Gospel is told with a great sense of urgency and immediacy. Jesus is a Person of action, and events occur in rapid succession. We see this in today's Gospel. Time is of the essence; the fishermen immediately put aside their livelihood to become Jesus' Disciples. The Kingdom of God is here and now. The time of fulfillment is at hand. How might our lives be different if we more fully shared this sense of the immediacy of God's Kingdom?

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

James Edward Adams, Kathryn Barczak, James Bauer, Sally Becker, Richard Bender, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czynnik, Clara Dudash, Verne Esposito, James Golby, Alicia Junghans, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Rowen Ream, Alexandra Rice, Carly Rice, Doug Rice, Rose Rice, Gary Singel, Betty Spisak, Joanna Stone, Carol Sobecky, Leona Sutt, Joe Torchia, David Watson, Sheila Weppner, Mark Wojno, Nancy Wojno, Faryn Wolff, Barbara Yesh.

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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 Guarno, 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, Poland.; 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; 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; 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.**

**PRAYER FOR OUR NATION –** God our Father, Giver of Life, we entrust the United States of America to Your loving Care. You are the rock on which this nation was founded. You alone are the true source of our cherished rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Reclaim this land for Your Glory and dwell among Your People. Send us Your Spirit to touch the hearts of our nation’s leaders. Open their minds to the great worth of human life and the responsibilities that accompany human freedom. Remind Your people that true happiness is rooted in seeking and doing Your will. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, Patroness of our land, grant us the courage to reject the “culture of death.” Lead us into a new millennium of life. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

