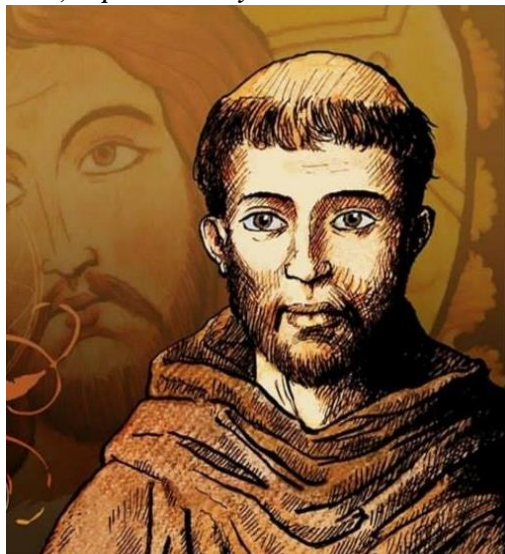


March 17, 2024
5th Sunday of Lent
THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

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@atlanticbbn.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 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

NO LIGHTING CANDLES – Please do NOT light any 6-day candles and 4 hour votive candles after Sunday, March 17th. No candles should be lit from Sunday March 24th (Palm Sunday) through Holy Week until after the Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday (March 30th).

ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED FOR EASTER – We are in need of 1 Altar Server on March 28th, Holy Thursday and March 31st, Easter Sunday at 9:30 AM Mass. Please sign-up in the Main Vestibule.

RICE BOWLS – Please return your Rice Bowls in the collection basket as soon as possible!

MEAT/CASH RAFFLE –MARCH 23rd – ST. FRANCIS ACTIVITY CENTER – Tickets are \$10 and includes Kielbasa, Hot Dogs, Kraut, Macaroni Salad, Baked Beans and Coffee & Soda. Beer bracelets will be available for \$5.00. **\$100 given away every hour, \$250 at 9:00 PM.** Qualifiers, 50/50 & Paddle Wheel Tickets! Doors open at 5:00PM and will run from 6:00PM – 9:00PM. Tickets will be for sale before and after all weekend Masses. Reserve a table for \$10.00(Max of 8 people at a table) **Ham, Kielbasa, Bacon & Cheese will be raffled off!!!**

NO CCD CLASS – There will be **NO CCD CLASS on Sunday, March 24th and March 31st for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday!**

CONFIRMATION CLASS – 9th Grade Confirmation Class will meet on Sunday, March 17th at 12 Noon at the Parish Rectory Office. Confirmation Class for 10th Grade is CANCELLED this weekend. The next class for 9th and 10th Grade will be on Sunday April 21st.

CHILDREN’S EASTER PARTY – Will be held on Sunday, March 24th at St. Francis Activity Center from 2:00 – 4:00 PM. Please sign-up in the Main Vestibule on the sign-up sheet. If anyone is willing to volunteer and/or donate cookies & juice boxes, please contact Heather at (814)243-0715.

THANK YOU – To St. Francis of Assisi Fundraising Committee and all who volunteered to make our Lenten Fish Fries a success! May God Bless you for sharing your time and talents!

SEDER MEAL – Sign-up sheet for the Seder Meal is in the Main Vestibule. It will be held on March 28th at 5:00PM at the Activity Building. We ask that you bring a covered dish. The Church will provide the Paschal Lamb and meat.

SIGHT & SOUND ~ “DANIEL” – St. Francis will be taking a Bus Trip to Sight & Sound to see “Daniel” on Tuesday, August 6th, show time is 3:00 PM. More info will come in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact Fran King at (814)536-3667.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP (18-39) THEOLOGY ON TAP - Our February Theology on Tap was our largest yet with 40+ coming to hear Fr. Ananias O.S.B. We also volunteered with our member’s special needs group on Saint Patrick’s Day. Over our first year we have grown to over 85 young adults strong with new members joining monthly. Fr. Curtis Kiddy C.P. (Passionist Priest and Retreat Director at Saint Paul of the Cross Retreat Center in Pittsburgh) is our March 27th speaker on “The Passion of Jesus in Lent and Life” at the Boulevard Grill from 6-8pm. All faiths aged 18-39 are welcome to join us for faith and fellowship! We take monthly freewill offerings but are seeking sponsors to defer our excess buffet and speaker costs to avoid charging a set fee. For more information contact Geoffrey Stumpo at (814) 659-7415 or geoffstumpo@gmail.com.

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK: Loose – \$86.00; Adults – \$1,887.85; Monthly – \$310.00; Candles – \$395.04; Holy Thursday – \$15.00; Good Friday – \$20.00; Easter – \$20.00; Easter Flowers – \$56.00; Online Giving - \$258.50 – Total Collection - \$3,048.39.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today's Gospel reading is taken from the Gospel of John. We are reading much further into John's Gospel than we have for the past two weeks. Chapter 12 of John's Gospel is a preparation for the beginning of the passion narrative to follow. Jesus has just raised Lazarus from the dead—an important sign in John's Gospel, which inspired many people to believe in Jesus. This event also marks the turning point in Jesus' conflict with the Jewish authorities. John's Gospel tells us that the Sanhedrin met after this event and made plans to kill Jesus. In the 12th chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus is anointed at Bethany and enters Jerusalem in triumph. We again see evidence of the significance of the raising of Lazarus to this event; John reports that the crowds also gathered to see Lazarus.

Following his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus predicted His suffering, death, and Resurrection and prepared His Disciples to believe in the salvation that His Death would accomplish. Using the metaphor of the grain of wheat, Jesus presented the idea that His Dying would be beneficial. He also taught that those who would be His Disciples must follow His example of sacrifice. This theme will be repeated in John's account of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of His Disciples as an example of how they must serve one another.

The final section of today's Gospel might be read as John's parallel to the agony in the garden. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John does not record Jesus' anguished prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane before His arrest. Although comparable words are found in today's reading, Jesus gives a confident response to the question He raises when asking God to save Him from His impending Death. After announcing His conviction that it is for this purpose that He came, a voice from heaven speaks, as if in answer to Jesus' prayer. This voice, like the one heard at Jesus' baptism and at Jesus' Transfiguration—events reported in the Synoptic Gospels but not in John's Gospel—affirms that God welcomes the sacrifice that Jesus will make on behalf of others. In John's Gospel, Jesus teaches that this voice was sent for the sake of those who would believe in Him.

In today's Gospel, we also hear Jesus speak about the cosmic framework against which we are to understand His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Through His Death and Resurrection, Jesus conquered Satan, the ruler of this world. In this way the world is judged, but the judgment is not condemnation. Instead, through Jesus' dying and rising, salvation is brought to the world.

March 17, 2024 – 5th Sunday of Lent

As we are nearing the end of our Lenten journey, our readings today remind us of the goodness that our God has to offer us.

Jesus states in the Gospel, "whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life." God should have our entire heart, not just a portion of it. When we regularly practice the discipline of detachment by offering small, daily sacrifices to the Lord, we are also better preparing our hearts for the ultimate happiness in Eternal Life.

As our Lenten journey soon concludes, let us strive to more faithfully live out our covenant with God by actively living as disciples of Christ. And may we consider the ways in which we might continue the practice of self-denial by offering small, daily sacrifices to the Lord.

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 Czarnik, 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 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 Rovon 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**, **Major Aaron Donahey**, US Army, Poland.; **Petty Officer 1st Class Heather L. Dovala**, Great Lakes, IL.; **Sgt. Jarod Pisarchik**, Army National Guard; **LCDR Kara Yingling**, San Diego; **LCDR Shannon Yingling**; **Tech Sgt. Devon Gilbert**, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska; **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; **Sgt. Adken Torchia**, US Army, Fort Drum, NY;; **Capt. Kenneth Yacynych**, US Army, Fort Hood; **SSgt Elliott Mulvehill**, USMC, Birmingham, AL.; **Kasey Meredith**, O.C.S., USMC, Quantico, VA; **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; **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 Thursday, at 11:00AM 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.

