

December 1, 2024
1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT
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
Office Hours – 9:00 AM to 2:45 PM – Mon. thru Thurs.
Parish Council President – Gary Woodruff – 248-1776
Finance Council President – Robert Bimeal
Cemetery Council President – William Heim – 254- 2942
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
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[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 ROSARY SOCIETY & NO PARISH COUNCIL MEETING FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER!

JOE BARTKO FOOD DRIVE – A HUGE THANK YOU, To all who donated to the Joe Bartko Food Drive for St. Vincent DePaul. It was a HUGE SUCCESS!! We donated 736 LBS of FOOD and \$404.00!!! I CAN'T THANK YOU ALL ENOUGH FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

2025 WEEKLY ENVELOPES & CALENDARS– 2025 Weekly Envelopes are in the back of the Church and Calendars and in front of the Altar!

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.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, CHRISTMAS & NEW YEARS – There is a sign-up sheet in the Main Vestibule for Immaculate Conception, Christmas & New Years. Please sign-up as soon as possible so we are able to make sure all Masses are covered.

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. Gifts should be wrapped with the ornament and returned to the Church or Parish Office no later than Sunday, December 15, 2024.

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 15, 2024.



A FESTIVAL OF LESSON AND CAROLS - will be presented on **Sunday, December 15th at 3:00PM**. Plan on joining us as we prepare for the birth of the Christ Child.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL GROUP - Why should we continue the work of St. Vincent DePaul? It may not be obvious but there are individuals that require physical, financial, or spiritual assistance. The St. Vincent DePaul Conference and volunteers will assist these individuals in need. There are poor boxes in the St. John Gualbert and St. Patrick vestibules to accept donations. Please donate what you can to further the efforts of the St. Vincent DePaul conference. If you would like to become involved with this vocation, please attend any of our meetings which are held monthly, on the first Saturday at 9:00 AM, and the third Thursday at 6:00 PM, in the St. John Activities Center (St. Joseph Room). If you are questioned or are aware of anyone in our community who needs physical, financial, or spiritual assistance, please provide the St. Vincent DePaul contact number: (814)421-4344. Members of the St. John Conference will be available on the phone on Mondays and Fridays to provide information and assistance. For Tuesday through Thursday, please reach out to the Human Needs office at (814)535-8521.

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK - Loose - \$123.00; Adults - \$2,206.25; Monthly - \$15.00; Candles - \$182.00; All Saints - \$10.00; All Souls - \$10.00; Thanksgiving - \$65.00; Christmas - \$200.00; Online Giving - \$227.50 - Total Collection - \$3,038.75.

The Sanctuary Candle will burn for the month of December for: Special Intentions for two Dear Friends.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER - St. Francis Parish Office will follow the Johnstown School District's and/or Bishop McCort's schedule. If there is a 2 hour delay, the Parish Office will open 2 hours late (11:00 AM), and all meetings/ activities will take place. If school is closed or has a virtual/remote learning day the Parish Office will be closed and all meetings/activities will be cancelled. If there is an unscheduled early dismissal the Parish Office will close early and all meetings/activities will be cancelled. **Please note, scheduled Mass WILL BE celebrated regardless.**

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, which is also the first Sunday of the new Liturgical Year. The Advent season includes the four Sundays that precede Christmas. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord. In this Season, we recall two central elements of our faith: the final coming of the Lord in glory and the Incarnation of the Lord in the Birth of Jesus. The key themes of the Advent Season are watchful waiting, preparation, and justice.

In this new Liturgical Year, the Gospel of Luke will be the primary Gospel proclaimed (Lectionary Cycle C). Today's Gospel is taken from the last chapter before the passion narrative in which Jesus is Teaching in the Temple. We hear Jesus speak to His Disciples about the need for vigilance and prayer as they wait for the coming of the Son of Man in glory. This passage marks the conclusion of a lengthy dialogue in which Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, warns about the persecution and tribulations to follow, and identifies the signs that will signal the coming of the Son of Man in glory.

The community for whom Luke wrote his Gospel may have believed that they were already experiencing some of the events Jesus described. Most scholars believe that Luke's Gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. At the time, many Christians interpreted this event as an indication that Jesus' second coming was near.

Though Jesus predicts a time of destruction and fear, Jesus indicates that others will be frightened; Jesus' Disciples are not to fear, but are to stand tall. Yet Jesus does not promise deliverance from anxiety or tribulations. He encourages His Disciples to pray for strength. The early Christian communities did not find consolation in the promise of a utopia, nor should we. Instead, we find in our Christian Faith the means by which we witness to God's unfailing love for us in all circumstances.

Jesus' predictions about the end times may sound dire, but in the next paragraph Luke tells us that people woke early to listen to Jesus' Teaching in the Temple area. In His person and in His message, those who heard Jesus found strength and consolation. Like the first Christians, we may encounter events and circumstances that could lead us to despair. Through prayer, however, we find strength and consolation in Jesus' words and in His continuing presence with us to endure all things and to witness to the action of God in our world.

Dec 1, 2024 - 1st Sunday of Advent

We have arrived at the powerful season of Advent, a season to prepare with awe and gratitude for the Feast of the Incarnation of Jesus, born to us as Savior and Brother. A season to prepare for His return at the end of time. It is also a moment to remind ourselves that our individual judgement day is coming too – the moment when we will be called to give an account for all the love God has shown us and the gifts He has given us during our lifetime.

'God reveals His perfect and infinite love for us most visibly in His Son, Jesus Christ. A steward makes God's love visible by imitating Jesus ... Stewardship is the response of the disciple to God's unconditional love for us. Stewards bask in the wonder and awe of God's love', from *The Pillars of Parish Stewardship*. In other words, Advent is a steward's season!

Get ready Christian stewards! He's coming! Let us prepare with awe and wonder.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

James Edward Adams, Kathryn Barczak, James Bauer, Deacon Bruce Becker, Sally Becker, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czyrnik, Clara Dudash, Verne Esposito, 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 2nd Class Izeke W. Pinkas, Fallon, NV; Lt. Col. Joshua P. Higgins, US Army; Lt. Col. Melinda Rován 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.; 1st Lt. Kasey Meredith, USMC, Camp Lejeune, NC; 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.

