

December 15, 2024
3rd 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.stfrancisofassisijtown.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

[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

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

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

PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED – CHRISTMAS EVE, CHRISTMAS DAY, NEW YEAR’S EVE & NEW YEAR’S DAY.

CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING – Will be on Monday, December 23rd after 9:30AM Mass, all help is greatly appreciated!

2025 WEEKLY ENVELOPES & CALENDARS– 2025 Weekly Envelopes & Calendars are in the back of the Church.

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.

SAVE THE DATE – MUSIC BINGO on **FEBRUARY 8, 2025**. Tickets will be available before weekend Masses beginning December 21 and 22nd. You also can call Fran King at 814-536-3667.

SAVE THE DATE – SIGHT & SOUND BUS TRIP to see Noah on August 5, 2025. More info and ticket prices to come in the near future!

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

UNIQUE ETHNIC BUS TOUR – Queen of Angels Parish in Central City will host a bus pilgrimage on Saturday, January 11th to visit the Nationality Rooms at the University of Pittsburgh, as well as two historic ethnic parishes. The Nationality Rooms, uniquely adorned with accurate architecture and furnishings from thirty-one different nationalities, are a true treasure of Western Pennsylvania. Following the tour, Mass will be celebrated at the “Polish Cathedral of Pittsburgh,” Immaculate Heart of Mary Church after which there will be a tour of historic St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church in Pittsburgh’s Greenfield neighborhood. The cost per person is \$70 and includes dinner. Bus pic-up locations are in Central City, Boswell, & Latrobe. To register please call (814)754-5224.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP (18-39) – Our next Theology on Tap is December 18th at 6pm at the Boulevard Grill with Deacon Rick Messina speaking on The Holy Family and Catholic Family Life. Our group is also Christmas Caroling at Hilltop Heights Health & Rehab Center on December 21st at 1pm. All young adults aged 18-39 are welcome to join us for faith, food, and fellowship! Thank you for your support and please continue spreading the word to young adults! For more information contact Geoffrey Stumpo at (814) 659-7415 or geoffstumpo@gmail.com.

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

Background on the Gospel Reading

This Sunday's Gospel continues last week's focus on John the Baptist and his role in preparing the way for Christ. Recall that last week's reading described John's appearance in the desert and established his connection with the prophetic tradition of Israel. If we were to read Luke's Gospel continuously, we would learn about John the Baptist challenging the crowds who came to him and calling upon them to show evidence of their repentance. John tells his listeners that they cannot rely on their lineage as Israelites because children of Abraham can be raised up from stones. Repentance, rather, must be observable in one's actions. Here, Luke is continuing to set up two important themes of his Gospel message: the Christian faith is expressed in one's actions, and the call to salvation is extended to everyone, Jews and Gentiles.

In today's Gospel reading, the crowds ask John the Baptist for specifics. What evidence of repentance is required? John replies by naming concrete actions: crowds should share their food and cloaks; tax collectors should be just; soldiers should act fairly. The concern for justice is a hallmark of Luke's Gospel.

When the crowd begins to wonder if John the Baptist might be the Messiah, John interprets his baptism and makes it clear that his ministry is in preparation for the Messiah. John the Baptist knows his place and role in God's plan of salvation. By encouraging the crowd to act similarly in accordance with their stations in life, John's teaching suggests that each person has a role to play in God's salvation. It is the great mystery of our salvation that God permits and even asks for human cooperation in his divine plans.

The third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is a Latin word that means "rejoice." This name is taken from the entrance antiphon for Sunday's Mass, which is also echoed in today's second reading from the Paul's letter to the Philippians. Some people mark this Sunday by lighting a pink candle instead of a purple one on their Advent wreath. It is a reminder that the Advent season is a season of joy because our salvation is already at hand.

Dec 15, 2024 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

'Rejoice in the Lord always, I shall say it again, rejoice!'

We have arrived at Gaudete Sunday (Gaudete is the Latin word for 'rejoice') on this Third Week of Advent, and the Scriptures takes on a joyful tone as we continue our preparations for the feast of our Savior's birth and ultimately for His Second Coming.

As the great feast of Christmas draws near, let us rejoice in Christ's extravagant love. Let's avail ourselves of the peace He longs to give us. And let's look carefully at our lives to make sure we are indeed making of them a gift fitting for Him. When we get this 'gift' right, all the other gifts and to-do's on our Christmas list will fall into their proper place.

MEN'S CLUB CHRISTMAS LOTTERY TICKET – The Men's Club is selling a "Christmas Special" Lottery Ticket goes off the January 1st evening PICK 3 Number. Tickets are \$5.00 each and there are 2 numbers on each ticket. The winning prize is \$400 CASH & \$600 in Scratch off tickets!! For tickets, please contact Phil Scott at (814)525-7090 or John Davis at (814)341-9461.

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK – Loose – \$192.00; Adults – \$1,612.95; Monthly – \$460.00; Candles – \$155.00; All Souls – \$30.00; Thanksgiving – \$50.00; Christmas – \$30.00; Christmas Flowers – \$121.00; Immaculate Conception – \$590.00; Retired Priest Medical – \$432.00; Donation – \$30.00; Online Giving – \$317.50 – Total Collection – \$4,020.45.

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 Czarnik, 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 Rovam 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, Fort Moore, Savannah, GA.; 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.

