

December 21, 2025
4th 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 Church](#)
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 – Mary Frances King
Finance Council President – Teresa Thompson
Cemetery Council President – William Heim – 254- 2942
Men's Club President – John Davis
Rosary Society – Cecilia Neiderer
Gabriel Project – 814-418-1813
DRE – Deacon Bruce Becker

MASS SCHEDULE – Monday – 9:00AM, Tuesday – 6:15PM, Wednesday – Saturday – 9:00AM
Saturday Vigil– 4:00PM, Sunday – 7:30AM & 9:30AM – Holy Day – 5:30 PM

[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 (OCIA) – 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 – 12 Noon followed by Benediction

Rosary Society – First Monday of the Month – 3:00PM in the Church

Men's Club – First Thursday of the Month – 6:30PM in the Activity Center

2025 CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Wednesday, December 24 – 4:00 PM
Thursday, December 25 – 12:00 AM Midnight
Thursday, December 25 – 10:00 AM



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

2026 WEEKLY ENVELOPES & CALENDARS- 2026 Weekly Envelopes & Calendars are in the back of the Church

CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING - Will be on **Monday, December 22nd after 9:00AM Mass** any and all help is greatly appreciated.

OPLATEK (CHRISTMAS WAFERS) - Is available in the Main Vestibule of the Church. Please use an envelope provided for your donation and place in the Candle Money Box or in the Collection Basket.

HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TAUGHT BY FR. ARON MAGHSOUDI - At All Saints Parish in Boswell, Mondays with (2) Tuesday classes from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM (8 weeks) **beginning January 5**. The cost of the class is \$35.00 and **MUST** be turned in with the Registration Form. To Register please visit the diocese website at www.dioceseaj.org/lay-ecclesial-ministry, or a get registration form in the Main Vestibule of the Church, or by contacting Jessica, Office of Adult Enrichment and Lay Ecclesial Ministry at (814) 361-2000 or via email at jgramling@dioceseaj.org. All are welcome! **Please Note that the Registration Deadline for this class is Friday, December 26. No registrations will be accepted after this date.**

OPPORTUNITY: ACTIVITY CENTER HALL AMBASSADORS NEEDED - We're seeking friendly and dependable individuals to join our team of **Activity Center Hall Ambassadors** to support our hall rental program. **What you'll do:** Open and close the Church hall for rental events, Conducting pre- and post-event walkthroughs, Confirm renters have the necessary resources, Remain onsite for the duration of an event. A modest stipend will be provided. If you're interested or would like to learn more, please contact the Church office at 814.539.1632 or sfassisich@atlanticbbn.net Thank you for considering this meaningful way to serve!

ALL SAINTS PARISH POLISH CHRISTMAS CAROLS - All Saints Parish in Boswell (Somerset County) will host their annual of Polish Christmas Carols (known as Koledy or Pastoralki) on Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 2:00 PM at their Church at 325 Quemahoning Street, Boswell. The carols will be sung by the Parish Polish Choir. Following the singing of the hymns there will be Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and refreshments. While the singing of Koledy was once a very common practice in the Polish-American community, in recent times Church choirs that continue the tradition of singing Koledy have become increasingly rare. These hymns help to capture some of the finest sentiments, values, and emotions of the Polish Religious, National, and artistic heritage. Polish Christmas customs are very rich; whether you are Polish or not, please come and experience these time honored hymns celebrating the Birth of Christ. For more information, please call the Parish Office at 814-629-5551.

The Blessed Mother Candle will burn for the month of December for Special Intentions From: Kathy Zierer

BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: “Now this is how the Birth of Jesus Christ came about” (Matthew 1:18).

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the Birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the Evangelist has listed the Genealogy of Jesus, tracing His lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke).

We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their Faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic Law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes.

The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and His role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means “Yahweh saves.” He will be the fulfillment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: “. . . The virgin shall be with child . . . and shall name Him Emmanuel [God with us].”

Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

December 21, 2025 – 4th Sunday of Advent

As our Advent preparations draw to a close and Christmas fast approaches, it is fitting that today's readings demonstrate the intensity of the Father's perfect and passionate love for each of us, culminating in the gift of His own Son, Jesus Christ, on Christmas Day. As we reflect on the enormity of this gift, let us ask ourselves what we can offer in return.

In our Gospel passage from Matthew, we find an unparalleled example of one who embraced the stewardship way of life in St Joseph, as he responds to God's call to him through the message of an angel. St Joseph immediately and humbly obeys the instruction from the angel: “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this Child has been conceived in her. She will bear a Son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.” Open to this extraordinary role, he did as the angel commanded and ‘takes Mary into his home.’

Let us imitate St Joseph, then, as good stewards, giving our very lives to those around us in love and gratitude to God who has given us everything we have, especially His own Son, Jesus Christ. We will no doubt find that the more we give ourselves away, the more our generous Father will fill us with His grace and peace – these are truly the best Christmas Gift we could receive.

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK – Loose – \$96.00; Adults – \$1,345.00; Monthly – \$302.00; Candles – \$110.00; Christmas – \$145.00; Christmas Flowers – \$65.00; Catholic Charities – \$3.00; Immaculate Conception – \$225.00; Thanksgiving – \$3.00; Donation – \$550.00; Online Giving – \$235.00 – Total Collection – \$3,079.00

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

James Edward Adams, Kathryn Barczak, James Bauer, John Bauer, Patricia Bauer, Deacon Bruce Becker, Sally Becker, Galynn Brady, Sister Carol Jean Czynnik, 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.

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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; **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, 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; **Major Colin Harrington**, US Army, Bethesda, MD; **2nd Lt. Ryan Powers**, USMC, Camp Lejeune, NC; **Senior Airman Anthony Rosage**, USAF; Fort Gordon, GA; **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 at Camp Lejeune, NC; **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.

