

**March 15, 2026**  
**4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:sfassisich@atlanticbbn.net)**  
**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** 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 (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

**HOLY WEEK SIGN-UP** – There are sign-up sheets in the Main Vestibule for Holy Week. Please sign-up where you can help out. Thank you!!!

**NO LIGHTING CANDLES** – Please do NOT light any 6-day candles and 4 hour votive candles after Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. No candles should be lit from Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> (Palm Sunday) through Holy Week until after the Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday (April 4<sup>th</sup>).

**BLESSING OF EASTER BASKETS** – Fr. Anthony Francis will be Blessing Easter Baskets at the Activity Center on Barron Avenue on Holy Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at 12:00PM (Noon).

**ANNUAL PARISH PICNIC** – Last weekend we did a survey regarding the location of this upcoming year's Parish Picnic. The results are 7 people voted for ACRP and 15 people voted for the Activity Center.

**ST. FRANCIS FISH FRY** – St. Francis of Assisi Parish will have a Fish Fry on **Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>** at the Activity Center, corner of D Street and Barron Avenue. **A LUNCH SPECIAL** (Fried Fish Sandwich and French Fries, no substitutions) will be offered from **11AM until 1:00PM (EAT IN & TAKE OUT)**. The full menu will be served from 2:00PM – 6:00PM, eat in or take out. Orders for lunch and dinner will be taken from 9:00AM until 1:00PM on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> by calling 814-539-3518. We welcome walk-ins, but strongly suggest that orders be placed in advance. Meals will be served while supplies last. All help is greatly appreciated. **\*\*DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS ARE ACCEPTED!!\*\***



**UPCOMING EVENTS** – The St. Francis Fundraising Committee is currently selling a \$10 ticket to go off on **March 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> off the Pa Lottery Daily Evening Number**. Tickets will help defray expenses for the upcoming **Music Bingo event on April 25<sup>th</sup>!** Tickets are available before and after Masses. Please contact Fran for tickets or information at 814-536-3667. **Save this date!** More information available soon.

**FISH FRY DESSERT TABLE** – The Fish Fry Committee will be having our \$1.00 dessert table. It will not be included in the dinner. We are asking members of the Parish to help in this endeavor by providing baked goods, such as cookies, cakes, pies, etc. which can be purchased individually for the cost of \$1.00. Please bring your donations to the Church Hall on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> or Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

**CHILDREN'S EASTER PARTY** – St. Francis Children's Easter Party will be held on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at St. Francis Activity Center from 1:00 – 3:00 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.

**SEDER MEAL** – Sign-up sheet for the Seder Meal is in the Main Vestibule. It will be held on Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00PM at the Activity Building. We ask that you bring a covered dish. The Church will provide the Paschal Lamb and meat.

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOUP KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS** – We are asking for 6 volunteers for help at the Soup Kitchen on **Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**. There is a sign-up sheet in the Main Vestibule.

**CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK** – Loose – \$87.00; Adults – \$2,202.00; Monthly – \$501.00; Candles – \$72.00; Easter Flowers – \$296.00; Funeral – \$150.00; Online Giving – \$330.00 – Total Collection – \$3,638.00

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

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

**The Holy Family Candle will burn for the month of March for – Special Intentions for Margaret & Pansy Scott.**

## **BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING**

As we did last week, we are reading today from the Gospel of John. In today's Gospel, the healing of the man born blind invites us to focus on the physical and spiritual aspects of sight and light. In the first part of today's Gospel, we hear Jesus' response to a prevalent belief of His time: that misfortune and disability were the result of sin. That belief is why Jesus is asked the question of whose sin caused the man's blindness—his own or his parents'. Jesus does not answer directly, but instead gives the question an entirely different dimension—through this man's disability, God's power will be made manifest. Jesus then heals the man.

The healing is controversial because Jesus heals on the Sabbath. The Pharisees, the religious authorities of Jesus' time, understood that the law of Moses forbade work (including healing) on the Sabbath. They also have trouble believing that Jesus performed a miracle. To determine whether the man was really born blind, the Pharisees question him and his parents. The man challenges the leaders of the synagogue about their assessment of the good that Jesus has done. In turn, they expel the man for questioning their judgment.

The final revelation and moment of enlightenment comes when the man born blind encounters Jesus again. Having heard the news of his expulsion, Jesus seeks out the man born blind and reveals Himself to him as the Son of Man. In this moment, the man born blind shows himself to be a man of faith and worships Jesus. Jesus replies by identifying the irony of the experience of many who encounter Jesus: Those who are blind will now see, and those who think they now see will be found to be blind.

As in last week's Gospel about Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, today's reading has many allusions to Baptism. The washing of the man in the pool of Siloam is a prototype for Christian Baptism. Through the man's encounter with Jesus, the man born blind is healed, his sight is restored, and his conversion to discipleship begins. The man born blind gradually comes to a greater understanding about who Jesus is and what it means to be His disciple, while the Pharisees (those who should see) are the ones who remain blind.

### **March 15, 2026 - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**

Today's readings on this fourth Sunday of Lent are filled with contrasting images – God's vision versus human vision, the light of Christ versus the darkness of sin, spiritual blindness versus spiritual sightedness. Embracing a stewardship way of life can free us from spiritual blindness, allow us to see as God sees, and help us to reflect the light of Christ's love in the way we live our daily lives.

In our Gospel passage from John, Christ says of Himself, "I am the light of the world." This passage recounts a miracle our Lord performs, restoring sight to a man born blind. The man responds to the Pharisees who question him about his healing by declaring to them that Jesus "opened my eyes." These Lenten days are an excellent time for us to ask Jesus to open our eyes, too. Let us ask Him to show us where we may be suffering from spiritual blindness, perhaps even in subtle ways. As we continue on our Lenten journey, let's intensify our efforts in any of these areas where we have become a little blinded so that by Easter, we are truly living as children of the light.

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**CHURCH & BREWERY BUS TOUR - APRIL 25<sup>th</sup>** - All Saints Parish in Boswell will be sponsoring a bus trip to Northeastern PA on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. The stops will include tours of St. Casimir Church Shenandoah (home parish of the framed Soviet prisoner Father Walter Czisek), Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Church in Centralia (the town that is one fire), tours of the Yuengling Brewery (with samples included) and the historic Carbon County Jail (where the Molly Maguires were housed) as well as the historic Eckley Miner's Village. Mass will be celebrated in the historic Immaculate Conception Church in Eckley and a high-quality Italian Meal is included at Matucci's in Mt. Carmel, PA. Pick up locations in Boswell and Central City. For more information or to register for the trip, please call All Saints Office at (814)629-5551. The cost of the trip is \$150 per person. All are welcome!!

**ST. TERESE PIROGHI SALE** - We will be selling our famous fresh potato & cheese piroghis on Friday's during Lent except Good Friday Phone orders will be taken at 814-539-7633 on Mondays from 9-11 Pick up is on Thursday 11-2, and Fridays from 10am- 12pm at the Social Hall. Cost is \$8.50

**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, Elsie Cable, Sister Carol Jean Czzyrnik, Alicia Junghans, Tyler McKinley, Rick McKinley, Rowen Ream, Alexandra Rice, Carly Rice, Doug Rice, Rose Rice, Gary Singel, Joanna Stone, Carol Sobbecky, 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 Guarno, USCG; Master at Arms 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Izeke W. Pinkas, Fallon, NV; Lt. Col. Joshua P. Higgins, US Army; 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, Fort Moore, Savannah, GA.; 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; Tech Sgt. Devon Gilbert, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska; Senior Airman Daniel Christner, USAF, 193<sup>rd</sup> Special Operations Wing; Lt. Col Steven Thomas, USAF, deploying to the Middle East; Major 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; Capt. Kenneth Yacynych, US Army, Fort Hood; SSGT Elliott Mulvehill, USMC, Birmingham, AL.; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Kasey Meredith, USMC, Camp Lejeune, NC; 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 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 - Every Thursday from 3:00pm to 4:00pm we have a prayer vigil in front of the Planned Parenthood office in Johnstown, on Franklin Street. Please join us in prayer to end abortion.**

**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.

