

March 22, 2026
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
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

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 22nd. No candles should be lit from Sunday, March 29th (Palm Sunday) through Holy Week until after the Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday (April 4th).



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

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

UPCOMING EVENTS – The St. Francis Fundraising Committee is currently selling a \$10 ticket to go off on **March 27th & 28th off the Pa Lottery Daily Evening Number**. Tickets will help defray expenses for the upcoming **Music Bingo event on April 25th!** 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.

CHILDREN'S EASTER PARTY – St. Francis Children's Easter Party will be held on Sunday, March 29th 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 2nd at 5:00PM at the Activity Building. We ask that you bring a covered dish. The Church will provide the Paschal Lamb and meat.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP (18-39) – March is our 3-year anniversary. With over 210 participants to date and new members still joining monthly, we are excited to welcome Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla as our March 25th speaker at the Boulevard Grill at 6pm. He is an Eastern Catholic Archbishop who has already spent a few months with Pope Leo in Rome and will be speaking on Eastern and Western Catholicism, Pope Leo, and Eastern Franciscan Spirituality. All young adults (18-39) are invited! There is no cost to attend. For more information contact Geoffrey Stumpo at (814) 659-7415 or geoffstumpo@gmail.com.

CHURCH & BREWERY BUS TOUR – APRIL 25th – All Saints Parish in Boswell will be sponsoring a bus trip to Northeastern PA on Saturday, April 25th. 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!!

CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK – Loose – \$194.00; Adults – \$2,229.50; Monthly – \$220.00; Candles – \$98.00; Easter Flowers – \$132.00; St. Vincent De Paul – \$3.00; Catholic Relief – \$10.00; Mandeville – \$20.00; Donation – \$25.00; Online Giving - \$245.00 – Total Collection - \$3,176.50

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

Our Gospel on this day, the fifth Sunday of Lent, is again taken from the Gospel according to John. The reading from John continues the break from Cycle A's focus on the Gospel of Matthew. Today's Gospel reading recounts another sign, or miracle, found in John's Gospel, the raising of Lazarus. As our catechumens move closer to the celebration of their Baptisms at the Triduum, today's reading invites us to reflect upon what it means to call Jesus the Resurrection and the Life.

The context for the story of the raising of Lazarus is the Jewish leaders' growing animosity toward Jesus. Jesus has been in Jerusalem, taking part in the feast of the Dedication, which we have come to know as Hanukkah. The people have been pressing Him to declare plainly whether He is the Messiah. Jesus tells them to look to His works, which testify to His coming from God. Many do not believe Jesus, however, and some try to stone Him for blasphemy.

Into this scene of confrontation, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, send word to Jesus that His friend is ill. Jesus is said to love Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but He delays His journey for two days. The delay heightens the drama and shows Jesus' obedience to God, Who is to be glorified through Lazarus's resurrection. When Jesus finally declares that He will journey to Bethany, His Disciples fear for His life. Thomas declares that he and the other disciples should prepare to die with Jesus.

The scene described at Bethany is a sad one. Martha meets Jesus weeping and saying that if Jesus had been there, Lazarus would not have died. Yet she remains confident that God will do whatever Jesus asks. Martha affirms her belief that there will be a Resurrection of the dead in the last days. Then Martha's sister, Mary, comes to Jesus with the same confidence, saying that Jesus could have cured Lazarus. Jesus asks to be brought to Lazarus's tomb where He prays and calls Lazarus out from the tomb. At this sign, many come to believe in Jesus, but others take word of the miracle to the Jewish authorities, who begin their plans for Jesus' Death.

Set against the backdrop of Jesus' impending death, many elements of the raising of Lazarus foreshadow the Good News of Jesus' own Resurrection. Jesus, facing the conflict with the Jewish authorities, acts in complete obedience to God. In raising Lazarus, Jesus shows His power over death so that when Jesus dies, those who believe in Him might remember that and take hope. Just as Jesus calls for the stone to be rolled away from Lazarus's tomb, so too will the Disciples find the stone rolled away from Jesus' tomb.

With our catechumens preparing for their Baptism at Easter, the Gospel today calls us to reflect on Baptism as a dying and rising with Jesus. In Baptism we die to sin's power over us, rising as children of God. In Baptism we join ourselves with Christ, who conquered death once and for all so that we who believe in Him may have Eternal Life. With Martha and Mary, we are called to profess our belief that Jesus is indeed the Resurrection and the Life.

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At this point in our Lenten journey, it is tempting to grow weary of the spiritual disciplines we have taken on. Today's readings inspire us to remain faithful, in grateful response to a God Who loves us so much. What's more, these readings give us wonderful guidance on just how to make this grateful response.

The disciplines of Lent and the disciplines of a stewardship way of life are wonderful gifts that free us from too great an attachment to 'the flesh.' The sacrifices we make in a particular way during this holy season, and every day when we truly embrace a stewardship way of life, are not meant to restrict our freedom and joy. Quite the contrary – they are tools to help us find the real freedom and joy that only come when we make room in our lives for God. In fact, the more we allow God to take over every aspect of our lives, the freer and more joyful we become.

As we journey ever closer to the powerful days of Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, let us intensify our Lenten resolutions and our stewardship way of life. Let us invite the Holy Spirit to take over more and more of our lives. By Easter, we will be freer to rejoice in Him and truly pleasing to God.

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 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 Guarno, USCG; **Master at Arms 2nd 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 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; **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 – Every Thursday from 11:00am to 12:00 Noon, 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.

