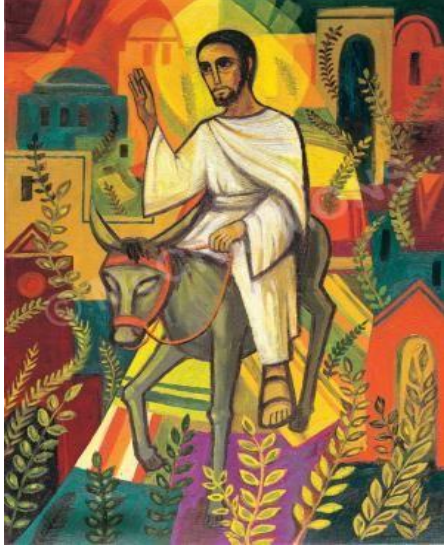


**March 29, 2026**  
**Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord**  
**THE FAITH COMMUNITY OF**  
**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

*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

## 2026 HOLY WEEK LITURGIES

Monday, March 30		Morning Mass	
9:00 AM			
Monday, March 30	CHRISM MASS AT CATHEDRAL IN ALTOONA	11:00 AM	
Tuesday, March 31		Evening Mass	6:15 PM
Wednesday, April 1		Morning Mass	9:00 AM
April 2	Holy Thursday	Seder Meal	5:00 PM
		Mass of the Lord's Supper	7:00 PM
April 3	Good Friday	Tenebrae	9:00 AM
		Celebration of the Lord's Passion	3:00 PM
		Stations of the Cross	7:00 PM
April 4	Holy Saturday	Tenebrae	9:00 AM
		Easter Vigil	8:00 PM
April 5	Easter Sunday	Mass of the Lord's Resurrection	7:30 AM
			9:30 AM

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSED** – On Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> the Parish Office will be closing at 12 Noon. And Parish office will be closed on Monday, April 21<sup>st</sup> for Easter Monday.

**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).

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

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS – IN THE SHADOWS** – On Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00PM at St. Clement Church – Join us for a unique and deeply moving prayer experience as we walk the final steps of Jesus' journey to Calvary. "In the Shadows" is a dramatic presentation of the Stations of the Cross that uses light and shadow to reflect on the Passion of our Lord. As we gather in the evening stillness of Good Friday, this contemplative service invites us to step out of the noise of the world and into the profound mystery of Christ's sacrifice. Come and keep watch with us during this sacred hour.

**FINANCE COUNCIL OPPORTUNITY** – We are seeking dedicated individuals with education or experience in financial management, business, administration, law, or property management to serve on our Parish Finance Council. This is a meaningful leadership opportunity that supports the long-term stewardship and mission of our Parish community. Finance Council members play a vital role in reviewing and approving the annual parish budget, monitoring income, expenditures, overall financial health, and offering guidance on construction and renovation projects. If you have skills in any of these areas, we would love to hear from you. Please contact the Parish Office at 814-539-1632 or Finance Council President, Teresa Thompson at 814-659-6798.

**CONTRIBUTIONS LAST WEEK** – Loose – \$96.00; Adults – \$3,587.20; Monthly – \$55.00; Candles – \$59.00; Easter Flowers – \$35.00; St. Vincent De Paul – \$10.00; Online Giving – \$295.00 – Total Collection – \$4,137.20

**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**

Today we begin Holy Week, the days during which we journey with Jesus on His way of the Cross and anticipate His Resurrection on Easter. Today's Liturgy begins with the procession with palms to remind us of Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem.

The events of Jesus' Passion are proclaimed in their entirety in today's Liturgy of the Word. Those events will be proclaimed again when we celebrate the liturgies of the Triduum—Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Good Friday of the Lord's Passion, and the Easter Vigil. In communities that celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation with catechumens, these liturgies take on special importance because they invite the catechumens and the community to enter together into the central mysteries of our Faith. These days are indeed profound and holy.

In Cycle A, we read the Passion of Jesus as found in the Gospel of Matthew on Palm, or Passion Sunday. (On Good Friday, we will read the Passion of Jesus from the Gospel of John). The story of Jesus' Passion and Death in Matthew's Gospel focuses particularly on the obedience of Jesus to the will of His Father. As Jesus sends His Disciples to prepare for Passover, He indicates that the events to come are the will of the Father (Matthew 26:18). In Jesus' prayer in the garden, He prays three times to the Father to take away the cup of suffering, but each time, Jesus concludes by affirming His obedience to the Father's will (Matthew 26:39-44). Even Matthew's description of Jesus' Death shows Jesus' obedience to the Father.

Another theme of Matthew's Gospel is to show Jesus as the fulfillment of Scripture. Throughout the Passion narrative, Matthew cites and alludes to Scripture to show that the events of Jesus' Passion and Death are in accordance with all that was foretold. And if the events were foretold, then God is in control. In addition, Matthew is particularly concerned that the reader does not miss the fact that Jesus is the Suffering Servant of the Old Testament.

Jesus acts in obedience to the Father even in death, so that sins may be forgiven. Matthew makes this clear in the story of the Lord's Supper. As Jesus blesses the chalice, He says: ". . . for this is My Blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:28)

While the Gospels of Matthew and Mark have many parallels in their narrative of the Passion, there are a few details worth noting that are unique to Matthew. Only Matthew indicates the price paid to Judas for betraying Jesus. The story of Judas's death is also found only in Matthew, as is the detail that Pilate's wife received a warning in a dream and that Pilate washed his hands of Jesus' Death. Finally, Matthew's Gospel alone mentions the earthquakes and other phenomena that happened after Jesus' Death.

Matthew places the responsibility for Jesus' Death on the Sanhedrin, the chief priests and elders who were responsible for the Temple. However, the animosity that those Jewish leaders and the Jewish people demonstrate toward Jesus is not to be interpreted in ways that blame the Jewish people for Jesus' Death. Throughout Matthew's Gospel, the narrative reflects the tension that probably existed between the early Christian community and their Jewish contemporaries. At the Second Vatican Council, the Council Fathers made clear that all sinners share responsibility for the suffering and death of Jesus and that it is wrong to place blame for Jesus' Passion on the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus or on Jewish people today.

There are many vantage points from which to engage in Jesus' Passion. In the characters of Matthew's Gospel, we find reflections of ourselves and the many ways in which we sometimes respond to Jesus. Sometimes we are like Judas, who betrays Jesus and comes to regret it. We are sometimes like Peter, who denies Him, or like the Disciples, who fell asleep during Jesus' darkest hour but then act rashly and violently at His arrest. Sometimes we are like Simon, who is pressed into service to help Jesus carry His Cross. Sometimes we are like the leaders who fear Jesus or like Pontius Pilate, who washed his hands of the whole affair. Jesus dies so that our sins will be forgiven.

The events of Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection are called the Paschal Mystery. No amount of study will exhaust or explain the depth of love that Jesus showed in offering this sacrifice for us. After we have examined and studied the stories we have received about these events, we are left with one final task—to meditate on these events and on the forgiveness that Jesus' obedience won for us.

**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, 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 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; **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 11:00am to 12pm**

**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.

