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# Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Rectory Phone: 536-6110  
E-Mail: [visitationjtown@dioceseaj.org](mailto:visitationjtown@dioceseaj.org)  
Website: [www.visitationbvmchurch.com](http://www.visitationbvmchurch.com)  
Fax: 536-3709

Third Sunday of Advent,  
December 15th, 2024

## MASS SCHEDULE

**MONDAY** - Advent Weekday  
**Private Mass**  
Dr. Larry Rutledge  
(Req. by wife Barbara)

**TUESDAY** - Advent Weekday  
**12:05 PM** - Msgr. Peter Tay  
(Req. by Jen0 Lecci and Family)  
**\*Rescheduled from 12-10-24\***

**WEDNESDAY** - Advent Weekday  
**12:05 PM** - Barry Mills  
(Req. by Pat Balagusz)

**THURSDAY** - Advent Weekday  
**No Mass**

**FRIDAY** - Advent Weekday  
**Private Mass**  
John J. Slovikovski Sr.  
(Req. by David & Alexis Kozak)

**SATURDAY** - Vigil of 4th Sunday of Advent  
**4:00 PM** - Pro Populo

**SUNDAY** - 4th Sunday of Advent  
**9:00 AM** - Dr. Frank T. Carney  
(Req. by Kathy Carney)

MASSES ON TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY  
WILL BE CELEBRATED IN CHURCH DURING ADVENT

**SANCTUARY CANDLE**  
Living and Deceased Members  
of Visitation Parish

The daily readings; may be found at either [USCCB.ORG](http://USCCB.ORG)  
or under the headings of daily readings listed in back of  
the missalette.

1127 McKinley Avenue  
Johnstown, PA 15905

Rev. John J. Slovikovski, PhD, Pastor  
Mrs. Maureen Clark, DRE  
Mrs. Kathleen Bumbnick, DMM  
Mr. David Kozak, Chairperson, PC  
Ms. Catherine Bennett, Secretary  
Mr. Joseph Martella, Vice-Chairperson, PC  
Mr. Steve Myers, Chairperson, FC  
Ms. Chris Houghton, Maintenance

**Rectory Office Hours: Monday through  
Friday, 9:00AM - 3:00PM**

**IN LOVING MEMORY:** The Sanctuary Lamp is  
available for your intentions by calling the  
parish office. Please attempt to request your in-  
tentions as early as possible. A \$10 donation is  
suggested.

**SACRAMENT OF PENANCE:** Beginning in Advent,  
Confessions will be heard from 6:30 until 7:00 PM  
on Wednesday Evenings. DURING THE JUBILEE  
YEAR, CONFESSIONS WILL BE HEARD FROM 3:00  
PM until 3:40 PM THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY  
MONTH. Confession may ALWAYS be arranged  
with Fr. John personally by calling the rectory  
office. Please avail yourselves to this life-giving  
sacrament!

**SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE:** Scheduled no less  
than **nine months** prior to the date of mar-  
riage. Four preparation sessions with the pas-  
tor, as well as all diocesan requirements, must  
be met. **All Catholic candidates for Marriage  
must be registered, practicing members of a  
parish at least 6 months prior to scheduling the  
wedding. There are NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**INFANT BAPTISM:** Baptisms are generally cele-  
brated during one of the Sunday Liturgies. Pre-  
baptismal instructions must be completed by  
the parents at least 3 weeks prior to the celebra-  
tion of the sacrament. Catholic godparents  
must obtain a letter of eligibility from their pas-  
tors four weeks in advance. Baptisms are never  
celebrated during the Season of Lent. **ANoint-  
ING OF THE SICK:** Celebrated after any Sunday  
Mass as requested and as a parish during the  
Easter Season.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Forms are located on the back  
page of the bulletin (or on the parish website) to  
be filled out and sent to the parish. Registrations  
are also welcome by phone.

## VISITATION PARISH MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
Check One: ☐ New Registration ☐ Change of Address ☐ Moving Out of Parish ☐ Want Envelopes  
**Please drop Membership Form into the offertory basket or mail to Rectory. 814-536-6110**



\$\$\$ INCOME \$\$\$  
 Collection - December 8, 2024

Loose Money.....	\$314.00
Sunday Collection.....	\$2500.00
Immaculate Conception.....	\$780.00
Christmas Flowers.....	\$40.00
Share in the Care.....	\$39.00
Votive Candles.....	\$90.00
St. Peregrine.....	\$20.00
Apartment Rent - Dec.....	\$625.00
Parking Lot Rent.....	\$35.00
Ordinary Donations.....	\$25.00

TOTAL:        \$4468.00

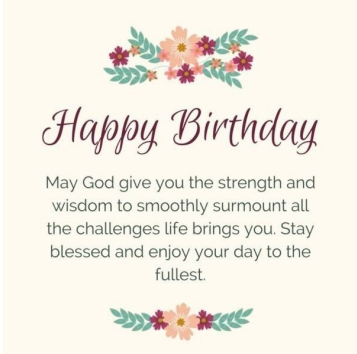
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Let us continue to pray for the members of our parish community who serve in the military, as well as for the sick, elderly and homebound members of our parish especially:

*Anonymous Petitioners, Pat Balagusz, Ralph Blair, David Clark, Ronald Cleaver, Dolores Danner, Francis Dietz, Dorothy Fisher, Barbara Fox, Paul Harnish, Catherine Heinlein, Mary Carol Hill and children, Donna Johnson, Baby Gianna Kniss, Karen Kohan, Betsy Konar, Marylee Konicky, Madeleine Krueger, Gaile Krumenacker, Victoria Leflie, Michael Letzo, Joanne Macri, Patricia Mainhart, Marianne Mangiafico, Pat Meagher, Myla Minner, Pauline Molchany, Larry Oravetz, Anna Petro, Francis Petro, Jean Petroro, Anna Marie Pfeil, Maria Petro-Sanders, Mia Bella Rastall, Stacy Roberts, Sean Rován, Leonard Russell, Stephen Sanders, Jennifer Schellhammer, Rose Sigg, Allegra Slick, Father John Slovickowski, Shirley Slovickovski, Megan Varmecky, Christi Vavrek, Carrie Young*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Please join us in remembering members of our parish family who celebrate their birthdays the week of December 16th to December 22nd:**



Irene Chovanec	Ron Cleaver
Kristen Furman	Jacqueline Kuswara
Jacob Corona	Aaron Skovensky

For the Good of the Vineyard and Our Particular Part of It  
 \*\*\*\*\*

The 2025 Yearly Calendars of Prizes are now available! Beginning this weekend and through the end of December, we will be selling them in the main vestibule of the Church. This is our last yearly fundraiser and IT IS ESSENTIAL TO DO WELL IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN OUR FINANCIAL STABILITY. Please consider purchasing at least one for yourself, perhaps others as gifts (Christmas, birthday, etc.) It would also be helpful if you would consider taking and (some) additional calendar (s) to sell. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH THIS LAST IMPORTANT FUNDRAISER FOR 2024).

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Home Visits with the Eucharist** - If you or someone you know cannot come to Church and would like to receive the Eucharist, please either fill out the form on the parish website or call the parish office and give your name to the secretary. We will be certain that you or your friend or loved one will receive the Lord regularly as you rightly deserve.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Come and See:** Do you know someone who is interested in becoming a member of the Catholic Faith? Were you or someone you know baptized in the Catholic faith and never Confirmed? We would like to provide an opportunity to anyone who would answer yes to these questions to “come and see” the possibilities and possibly become a part of the Christian Initiation process and become full members of the Catholic family. If you are interested, **we will be holding a third set of inquiry sessions on the Weekend of December 21st and 22nd following each Sunday Mass (4:00 PM Sat. / 9:00AM Sun.)**. We will gather for light refreshments in the rectory meeting room (next door to the Church) so that you can speak with me and meet members of our Christian Initiation Team. There is absolutely no commitment. Just “Come and See.”

\*\*\*\*\*  
**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.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Polish Christmas Carols** - All Saints Parish in Boswell will host their annual singing of Polish Christmas Carols on Sunday, January 5th, at 2:00 PM at the church (325 Quemahoning Street, Boswell). The hymns will be sung by their Polish choir. Following the singing of hymns by the parish Polish choir, there will be benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and refreshments. For more information, please call the parish office at 814-629-5551.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**OUR ANNUAL PARISH ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE WILL BE HELD THIS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18th at 6:00PM. There will be 8 priest available for confession. Please come and celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord and the Jubilee Year 2025.**

From Pope Francis to the Pew:

This week, in his *Sunday Angelus* message, Pope Francis reflected upon the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Gospel’s proclamation of the Annunciation (cf. Lk 26-38), when Mary’s “yes” to the Archangel Gabriel permitted the Incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus. It is a scene that inspires the greatest wonder and emotion because God, the Most High, the Omnipotent, by means of the Angel converses with a young girl from Nazareth, asking for her collaboration for His plan of salvation. He points out the scene of the creation of Adam, painted by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, where the finger of the heavenly Father touches the finger of the man - thus here too the human and the divine encounter each other, at the beginning of our Redemption, they meet with a wonderful delicacy, in the blessed instant in which the Virgin Mary utters her “yes”. She is a woman in a small peripheral village and is called for ever to the center of history: on her answer depends the fate of humanity, which can smile and hope again, because its destiny has been placed in good hands. She will be the one to bear the Savior, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Mary, then, as the Archangel Gabriel greets her, is “full of grace” (Lk 1:28), the Immaculate, entirely at the service of the Word of God, always with the Lord, to whom she entrusts herself completely. In her, there is nothing that resists His will, nothing that opposes truth and charity. Here is her blessedness, which all generations will sing. Let us also rejoice because the Immaculate has given us Jesus, who is our salvation!

The Holy Father asks us: “contemplating this saving mystery, can ask ourselves: in our time, ravaged by wars and bent on the effort to possess and dominate, where do we place our hope? In strength, in money, in powerful friends? Or in God's infinite mercy? And in the face of the shiny false models circulating in the media and on the internet, where do we look for my happiness? Where is the treasure of my heart? Is it in the fact that God loves me freely, that His love always goes before me, and is ready to forgive me when I return repentant to Him? In that filial hope in God’s love? Or am I deluding myself in trying to assert my ego and my will at all costs?” He concludes, “as the opening of the Holy Door of the Jubilee approaches, let us open the doors of the heart and the mind to the Lord. He is born of Mary Immaculate: let us implore the intercession of Mary. And I will give you a piece of advice. Today it is a good day to decide to make a good Confession. If you cannot go today, this week, until next Sunday, open your heart and the Lord will forgive everything, everything, everything. And so, in Mary’s hands, we will be happier.”

This week in his **Wednesday Audience**, Pope Francis considers the Spirit as the source of the Church’s hope for the Lord’s return in glory and the fulfilment of his saving plan at the end of time. The New Testament ends with the Spirit and the Bride, the Church, crying out in ardent expectation, “Come, Lord Jesus” (cf. Rev 22:17.20). The Church’s tradition likewise invokes the Spirit with the ancient prayer, “Come, Holy Spirit”, asking that he confirm our trust in Christ’s promises and strengthen us in fidelity to our mission of bearing witness to the hope offered by the Gospel. The Holy Spirit is the ever-gushing source of Christian hope. Saint Paul left us these precious words, this is what Paul says: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rm 15:13). If the Church is a boat, the Holy Spirit is the sail that propels it and lets it advance on the sea of history, today as in the past! Hope is not an empty word, or a vague desire of ours that things may turn out for the best; hope is a certainty, because it

is founded on God’s fidelity to His promises. And this is why it is called a theological virtue: because it is infused by God and has God as its guarantor. It is not a passive virtue, which merely waits for things to happen. It is a supremely active virtue that helps make them happen. The Christian cannot be satisfied with having hope; he or she must also radiate hope, be a Sower of hope. It is the most beautiful gift that the Church can give to all of humanity, especially at times in which everything seems to be dragging down the sails. The Pope quotes the apostle Peter who exhorted the first Christians with these words: “Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope”. But he added a recommendation: “But do it with gentleness and reverence” (1 Pt 3:15-16). And this is because it is not so much the strength of the arguments that will convince people, but rather the love that we know how to put in them. This is the first and most effective form of evangelization. And it is open to everyone! Francis ends his reflections on the Church and the Holy spirit, praying that we may always abound in hope by virtue of the Holy Spirit!

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**Advent Adult Education Series:** Don’t forget that During this Advent Season, Fr. John will be offering an adult education series on Monday afternoons from 2:00PM until 3:15 PM (December 16th and 23rd) entitled: **The Birth of Jesus in the Gospels: Prayer and Study. IF YOU MISSED THE FIRST TWO WEEKS, DON’T WORRY – YOU CAN CATCH UP THIS WEEK. WE WOULD LOVE FOR YOU TO JOIN US!**

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**WELCOMING NEW AND FORMER MEMBERS TO OUR SUNDAY LITURGIES:** This Advent we hope to increase our identity as a welcoming parish by inviting parishioners who have not been with us for a while especially since COVID to come home to pray with us again AND if we know of anyone who is searching for a parish to join our family. A family is only as strong as is its weakest member, **BE A STRONG AMBASSADOR FOR OUR PARISH BY INVITING SOMEONE TO PRAY WITH US ON A REGULAR BASIS. Remember, the future life of our community is in YOUR hands.**

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