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Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Rev. John J. Slovikovski, PhD, Pastor
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**Rectory Office Hours: Monday through
Friday, 9:00AM - 3:00PM**

The Epiphany of the Lord January 5th, 2025

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY - Christmas Weekday
12:05 PM - Gary Witkosky
(Req. by Helene & Pat Balagusz)
Rescheduled from 12-30-24

TUESDAY - Christmas Weekday
12:05 PM - Esperanza "Cha Cha" Bair
(Req. by Colleen Brady)

WEDNESDAY - Christmas Weekday
5:30 PM - Helene Balagusz
(Req. by Chuck & Terrie Arnone)
***Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
after Mass until 6:30 PM***

THURSDAY - Christmas Weekday
Private Mass
Vickie Schmidt
(Req. by Joe & Susan Varga)

FRIDAY - Christmas Weekday
12:05 PM - Helyne Faizi
(Req. by sister, Nicolett)
Rescheduled from 12-31-24

SATURDAY - Vigil of the Epiphany of the Lord
4:00 PM - Pro Populo

5:30 PM (VPM) - Loretta Meyers
(Req. by Family & Friends)

SUNDAY - The Epiphany of the Lord
9:00 AM - Rev. James H. Conrad & Fr. Eugene Jacobs
(Req. by Ron Cleaver)

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

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: Confessions are 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 marriage. Four preparation sessions with the pastor, 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 celebrated during one of the Sunday Liturgies. Pre-baptismal instructions must be completed by the parents at least 3 weeks prior to the celebration of the sacrament. Catholic godparents must obtain a letter of eligibility from their pastors four weeks in advance. Baptisms are never celebrated during the Season of Lent. **ANOINTING 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.

SANCTUARY CANDLE
For Fr. John's Personal (Special) Intention
**Parishioners are asked to join
Fr John in this intention this week if you have
some "free: prayer time**

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 22 & 29 2024

Loose Money.....	\$720.00
Sunday Collection.....	\$4709.00
Immaculate Conception.....	\$5.00
Christmas Flowers.....	\$215.00
Catholic Charities.....	\$10.00
Initial Offering.....	\$463.00
Sanctuary Candle.....	\$340.00
St. Peregrine.....	\$34.00
Parking Lot Rent.....	\$160.00

TOTAL:	\$6622.00
Christmas	TOTAL: \$7193.00

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, 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 Slovikovski, Shirley Slovikovski, Megan Varnecky, Christi Vavrek, Carrie Young

Please join us in remembering members of our parish family who celebrate their birthdays the week of January 6th to January 12th:



Robert Barger	Robert Borosky
David Conrad	Francis Daly
John Fontana	Eddie Corona

The 2025 Yearly Calendars of Prizes are now available in the rectory office. 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 (birthday, etc.) It would also be helpful if you would consider taking an (some) additional calendar (s) to sell. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED HELP WITH THIS LAST IMPORTANT FUNDRAISER FOR 2024 calendar year).



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. Please call as soon as possible since we would like to have you included in the list for First Friday visits.

Healing Mass - Holy Spirit Ministry will hold a special Healing Mass on Tuesday, January 21st, 2025 at 7:00 PM at St. Michael Church in Hollidaysburg. This powerful nigh of hope and healing is for all who are suffering physically, emotionally and spiritually. Fr. David Dodd, TOR will be the main celebrant. Praise and worship will precede the Mass at 6:30 PM and prayer ministry will follow the Mass. If you are suffering physically ,or from an addiction, or hurting or struggling in any way, come and experience the healing power of Jesus and be set free.

Italian –American Culture and the Festa - All Saints Parish in Somerset County will be hosting a presentation about Italian culture on Sunday, January 19th at 2:00 PM. The focus of the talk will be the Italian festa. Honoring a saint is often expressed in a festival, or festa, that includes devotions, a procession, and unique traditions. Dr. Stephanie Longo will be the presenter. Dr. Longo has authored several award winning books on Italian-American history and is an expert on the lived experience and history of Italians in America, The talk begins at 2:00 PM at All Saints Parish Hall, 505 Center Street in Boswell and includes authentic Italian refreshments at no cost. For more information or to register, please contact the Boswell parish office at (814) 629-5551.

We are continuing our “Come and See” inquiry period through the end of the Christmas season. If you or anyone you know is interested in either joining our Catholic family or completing their initiation into the faith by celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation as an adult, please come and join us in the rectory meeting room, after the Saturday evening or Sunday morning Mass for light refreshments and to meet Fr. John and the Christian Initiation team. If you know someone and need some advice on how to approach them about coming to investigate our faith, please feel free to join us as well. All are welcome and there is absolutely no commitment. Just “Come and See.”

January, the first full month of the Jubilee Year, is dedicated to praying for the right to an Education. Let us pray for all people, especially migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected. Amen.

From Pope Francis to the Pew:

In his Sunday Angelus message, Pope Francis reflects on the Gospel that tells of when Jesus, at the age of twelve, at the end of the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem, went missing from Mary and Joseph, who found Him afterwards in the Temple conversing with the teachers. The Evangelist Luke reveals the state of mind of Mary who asks Jesus, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.” And Jesus replies, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” It is an almost commonplace experience of a family that alternates between calm moments and dramatic ones. It appears to be the story of a family crisis, a crisis of our times, of a difficult teenager and two parents who are unable to understand him. Francis asks: Do you know why the Family of Nazareth is a model? Because it is a family that converses, that listens, that talks. Dialogue is an important element for a family! A family that does not communicate cannot be a happy family. It is good when a mother does not start with a rebuke, but with a question. Mary does not accuse and does not judge, but tries to understand how to accept this Son who is so different by listening. Despite this effort, the Gospel says that Mary and Joseph “did not understand what He said to them,” showing that in the family it is more important to listen than to understand. Listening is giving importance to the other, recognizing his or her right to exist and think autonomously. Children need this. Think carefully parents: listen to your children, who need this! Mealtimes are a special moment for dialogue in the family. It is good to stay together around the table and to speak. This can solve many problems, and above all unite the generations: children who speak with their parents, grandchildren who speak with their grandparents... Never remain closed in on yourself or, even worse, with your head turned to your mobile phone. This will not do, never. Talk, listen to each other, this is the dialogue that is good for you and that makes you grow! The Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is holy. And yet we have seen that even Jesus’ parents did not always understand Him. The pope notes that we can reflect on this, and let us not be surprised if at times it happens that we do not understand each other. When it happens, let us ask ourselves: have we listened to each other? Do we confront problems by listening to each other or do we close up in silence, at times in resentment and pride? Do we take a little time to converse? What we can learn from the Holy Family today is mutual listening. Let us entrust ourselves to the Virgin Mary and ask for our families the gift of listening.

POPE FRANCIS 58th WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE: On Christmas Eve, the opening of the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St Peter marked the start of the 2025 Jubilee Year Pilgrims of Hope. The Jubilee is meant to usher in God’s mercy, anchored in hope and evidenced in service. Now, as we begin a new calendar year, on 1 January we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, and World Day of Peace. In his message for the 58th World Day of Peace, Pope Francis reflects on the hope and justice at the heart of the Jubilee Year. The year's message is titled Forgive us our trespasses: grant us your peace and the Holy Father begins by recalling that, in the Jewish tradition, the Jubilee was a special year in which God's justice was restored in every aspect of life. He writes: “In our day too, the Jubilee is an event that inspires us to seek to establish the liberating justice of God in our world.” **World Day of Peace Message, 2025 #3** (cont. →)

In considering the challenges we face, the Pope highlights the inhuman treatment of migrants, environmental decay, the confusion created by disinformation, the refusal to dialogue, and the immense resources spent on war. These challenges require not “sporadic acts of philanthropy” but change on a personal, cultural, and structural level “in order to confront the present state of injustice and inequality.” The message reminds us that we are all debtors to God. Drawing on the words of St Basil of Caesarea, the Holy Father stresses that everything we claim as our own is, in fact, a gift from God. The earth's resources belong to all humanity, “not just a privileged few.” To set us on a renewed journey of hope during the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis offers three concrete proposals.

- 1. Debt cancellation:** Pope Francis renews the appeal launched by Pope Saint John Paul II on the occasion during the Jubilee Year 2000 to consider “reducing substantially, if not cancelling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations”. (#11) He highlights the "ecological debt" owed by richer countries, arguing the call for debt cancellation is "an appeal for solidarity, but above all for justice." (#8)
- 2. Commitment to respect the dignity of human life:** The Pope calls for a commitment to the dignity of human life at all stages, advocating for the **abolition of the death penalty** and the promotion of a culture of life that values each person.
- 3. A new global fund:** The Holy Father urges diverting funds from armaments to a global fund which could end hunger, foster sustainable development and combat climate change.

The letter finishes with this prayer:
*Forgive us our trespasses, Lord,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 In this cycle of forgiveness, grant us your peace,
 the peace that you alone can give
 to those who let themselves be disarmed in heart,
 to those who choose in hope to forgive the debts of their brothers and sisters,
 to those who are unafraid to confess their debt to you,
 and to those who do not close their ears to the cry of the poor.*

JUBILEE NEWS

-The Pilgrim’s Passport: To be on pilgrimage during a Jubilee Year is a special time to gain special graces called plenary indulgences. As many people cannot travel to Rome, the Pope has named Holy Door Churches (In the US—the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in DC has been named) Every bishop has been given permission to name holy sites in his diocese as travel sites. **The Pilgrims Passport** booklet available in the main vestibule of the Church includes the 13 Holy Site Churches named by Bishop Mark. All special prayers are included. A special incentive for individuals and families to win two overnight gift packages and special gift cards are part of the “Pilgrims Passport.” QR codes are printed in the booklet for easy access to directions, Mass and Confession schedules. All of the information is in the inside cover. The booklets will be stamped at the Holy Site Churches as part of the gift opportunity. Pilgrims Passports will be available in the vestibule all year Visitation is a Holy Site. The Passport may be used until 9/8/2025 .