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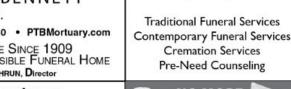
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23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time September 7th, 2025

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY - The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

9:00 AM - Donald Houghton (Reg. by Family)

TUESDAY - Saint Peter Claver, Priest

12:05 PM - Loretta Meyers

(Req. by Family & Friends)

<u>WEDNESDAY</u> - Weekday in Ordinary Time

5:30 PM - Vickie Schmidt

(Reg. by Suzanne & James Yelenik)

Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

THURSDAY - Weekday in Ordinary Time 12:05 PM - Michael & Ethel Fuska

(Rea. by Cathy Fuska)

FRIDAY - Weekday in Ordinary Time
12:05 PM - Grace Elizabeth Akers

Grace Elizabeth Akers
50th Anniversary

(Req. by Akers children)

Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

<u>SATURDAY</u> - Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor Of the Church

4:00 PM - Sue Karmanocky

(Req. by Steve & Cindy McAneny)

5:30 PM - Juanita Canary

(VPM) (Req. by Shirley Machowski)
Rescheduled from 8-9-25

SUNDAY - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

9:00 AM - Pro Populo

SANCTUARY CANDLE

Fr. John – Personal Intention

The daily readings may be found at either USCCB.ORG or with the daily readings listed in the back of the missalette.



1127 McKinley Avenue Johnstown, PA 15905

Rev. John J. Slovikovski, PhD, Pastor Mrs. Maureen Clark, DRE Mrs. Kathleen Bumbernick, 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 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 lifegiving 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. Prebaptismal 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.

<u>EUCHARISTIC ADORATION</u>: Every Wednesday and Friday following Mass.

<u>MEMBERSHIP</u>: 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.

\$\$ INCOME \$\$\$ Collection - August 31, 2025

Loose Money	\$408.00
Sunday Collection	\$2753.00
Assumption	\$30.00
Retired Priests Medical	
Parking Lot Rent	\$70.00

TOTAL: \$3281.00

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, John Bair, 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, Dick Krumenacker, Gaile Krumenacker, Victoria Leflie, Michael Letzo, Joanne Macri, Patricia Mainhart, Marianne Mangiafico, Pat Meagher, Myla Minner, Pauline Molchany, Lori Nixon, Larry Oravetz, Anna Petro, Francis Petro, Jean Petroro, Maria Petro-Sanders, Mia Bella Rastall, Stacy Roberts, Sean Rovan, Stephen Sanders, Jennifer Schellhammer, Rose Sigg, Allegra Slick, Father John Slovikovski, Shirley Slovikovski, Ken Turner, Megan Varmecky, Christi Vavrek, Carrie Young

<u>Please join us in remembering members of our parish family who celebrate their birthdays the week of September 8th to September 14th:</u>



Constance Pupo Gregory Leis Marcie Nickels Richard Dunkle Charlene Torchia Renee Stephens Anthony Penna Alexis Kozak

For the Good of the Vineyard and Our Particular Part of it:

STEELER TICKET LOTTERY - Once again our Church has been blessed, through the generosity of a parishioner, to offer chances to a Steelers game: Steelers vs. the Cleveland Browns at 1:00 PM on Sunday October 12th, 2025 at Acrisure Stadium. Chances cost \$10 each and include seating for 4 persons at the game. Seats are located on the 40-yard line,



ten rows up from the field. Package includes transportation to the game by way of the Steeler bus, and \$200 of mad money. The winners are determined by the PA Lottery 7:00 PM drawing of the Pick 3 on October 3rd. Those who have either the number below or the number above the winning number will receive \$100 each. Tickets continue to be available for purchase in the main vestibule of the Church before or after weekend Masses or by calling the rectory office. We would also appreciate anyone who is willing to take tickets to sell. Thank you for your support of this important fundraiser. This has the opportunity for being the easiest fundraiser of the calendar year – PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING US TO RAISE MUCH NEEDED FUNDS BY PURCHASING AND/OR SELLING A TICKET OR TWO!!

Food Pantry Distribution Dates for 2025 - The distribution dates and times for the St. Andrew/St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry are every second Monday of the month. You can go to the St. Vincent DePaul building at 927 Franklin Street for pick up. The pickup time is from 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM and the next date is as followed: **September 8**

Please be sure to return your boxes!

SERIOUSLY CONSIDER SOME EXTRA TIME WITH THE LORD THIS WEEK. We pray the rosary every



Saturday evening at approximately 3:30 PM prior to Mass as well as every Tuesday at 6:00 PM. On Wednesdays, Mass is celebrated at 5:30 PM followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 6:30 PM. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament also occurs on Friday following the 12:05 PM Mass until 1:30 PM. We also pray the

litany of St. Joseph since Wednesday is dedicated to him as the patron of the Universal Church. Remember the parish intention for the rosary is for Fr. John's health, however, personal intentions for the Rosary and adoration are your own. BOTH OF THESE PRACTICES HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE!! A VISITATION WITH OUR LORD PRESENT IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IS NEARLY A PERFECT FORM OF PRAYER AND CAN HELP Y

FECT FORM OF PRAYER AND CAN HELP YOU TO BELIEVE THAT WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!!!

Jubilee Choir Rehearsal - There will be two Jubilee choir rehearsals for the October 17th Jubilee Basilica mass on Monday, September 15th and Monday, September 29th from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM at Visitation Parish. To anyone who is taking part in this wonderful, once in a lifetime opportunity, please make sure to mark your calendars so that you will be able to attend the practice.

From Pontiff to Pew:

In the **Sunday's Angelus**, Pope Leo XIV reflected on last Sunday's gospel specifically on Jesus' invitation to a meal by one of the leaders of the Pharisees. Inviting others to one's table is a sign of openness of heart, while accepting such an invitation entails having the humility to be open to others and their world. These gestures that bring people together help foster a culture of encounter. Encounter is not always easy. The encounter takes place because Jesus makes himself genuinely present; as a good guest, he acts with respect and sincerity, avoiding merely polite formalities that preclude authentic encounter. He saw people sitting in the places of honor, something that also happens today, not in families but on occasions when people consider it important to "be noticed", whereby a moment for being together ends up as a competition. Sisters and brothers, when we sit together at the table of the Eucharist on the Lord's Day, we too should be willing to let Jesus speak. He becomes our guest and he can tell us how he sees us. It is very important that we see ourselves through his eyes: to see how frequently we reduce life to a competition, how anxious we become to obtain some sort of recognition, and how pointlessly we compare ourselves to others. Stopping to reflect, letting ourselves be taken aback by a word that challenges our hearts' priorities, is to experience freedom, the freedom to which Jesus calls us. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of "humility" in describing perfect freedom (cf. Lk 14:11). Humility is really freedom from ourselves. It is born when the Kingdom of God and its righteousness become our real concern and we allow ourselves to lift up our eyes and look ahead: not down at our feet, but at what lies ahead! Those who exalt themselves generally think that nothing is more interesting than themselves; yet deep down, they are quite insecure. Whereas those who know that they are precious in God's eyes, who know they are God's children, have greater things to be worried about; they possess a sublime dignity all their own. Once we learn to take the last places, rather than striving for the first, that dignity will appear, and we will come to the fore simply and effortlessly. The pope prayed that the Church will always be a school of humility for everyone, a home where all are welcome, a place where rivalries are set aside and where Jesus still speaks to us and teaches us to imitate his own humility and freedom.

It is also important to notice that after the Angelus, Pope Leo was in solidarity with the people of the United States after the terrible tragedy that occurred last week: He stated: "Our prayers for the victims of the tragic shooting during a school Mass in the American State of Minnesota include the countless children killed and injured every day around the world. Let us plead God to stop the pandemic of arms, large and small, which infects our world. May our Mother Mary, the Queen of Peace, help us to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Is 2:4)."

In Pope Leo's **Wednesday Audience**, he continued his catechesis on the Passion of Christ. At the heart of the account of the Passion, in the most luminous and at the same time darkest moment of Jesus' life, the Gospel of John gives us two words that contain an immense mystery: "I thirst" (19:28), and immediately afterwards: "It is finished" (19:30). These are his last words, but they are filled with a whole lifetime, revealing the meaning of the entire existence of the Son of God. On the cross, Jesus does not appear as a victorious hero, but as a supplicant for love. He does not proclaim, condemn or defend himself. He humbly asks for what he, alone, cannot give to himself in any way. The thirst of the Crucified Lord is not only the physiological need of a tortured

body. It is also, and above all, the expression of a profound desire: that of love, of relationship, of communion. It is the silent cry of a God who, having wished to share everything of our human condition, also lets himself be overcome by this thirst. A God who is not ashamed to beg for a sip, because in that gesture he tells us that love, in order to be true, must also learn to ask and not only to give.

I thirst, says Jesus, and in this way he manifests his humanity and also ours. None of us can be self-sufficient. No-one can save themselves. Life is "fulfilled" not when we are strong, but when we learn how to receive. It is precisely at that moment, after receiving from unknown hands a sponge soaked in vinegar, that Jesus proclaims: It is finished. Love has made itself needy, and precisely for this reason it has accomplished its work.

This is the Christian paradox: God saves not by doing, but by letting himself do. Not by defeating evil with force, but by accepting the weakness of love to the very end. On the cross, Jesus teaches us that man does not realize himself in power, but in trustful openness to others, even when they are hostile and enemies. Salvation is not found in autonomy, but in humbly recognizing one's own need and in being able to express it freely.

The fulfilment of our humanity in God's plan is not an act of strength, but a gesture of trust. Jesus does not save with a dramatic twist, but by asking for something that he cannot give himself. And it is here that the door to true hope opens: if even the Son of God chose not to be self-sufficient, then our thirst too – for love, for meaning, for justice – is a sign not of failure, but of truth.

This truth, seemingly so simple, is difficult to accept. We live in a time that rewards self-sufficiency, efficiency, performance. And yet the Gospel shows us that the measure of our humanity is not given by what we can achieve, but by our ability to let ourselves be loved and, when necessary, even helped.

Jesus saves us by showing us that asking is not unworthy, but liberating. It is the way out of the hiddenness of sin, so as to re-enter the space of communion. Ever since the beginning, sin has begotten shame. But forgiveness – real forgiveness – is born when we can face up to our need and no longer fear rejection.

Jesus' thirst on the cross is therefore ours too. It is the cry of a wounded humanity that seeks living water. And this thirst does not lead us away from God, but rather unites us with him. If we have the courage to acknowledge it, we can discover that even our fragility is a bridge towards heaven. It is precisely in asking – not in possessing – that a way of freedom opens up, because we cease to pretend to be self-sufficient.

In fraternity, in the simple life, in the art of asking without shame and offering without ulterior motives, a joy is born that the world does not know. A joy that restores us to the original truth of our being: we are creatures made to give and receive love.

Dear brothers and sisters, in Christ's thirst we can recognize all of our own thirst. And to learn that there is nothing more human, nothing more divine, than being able to say: I need. Let us not be afraid to ask, especially when it seems to us that we do not deserve. Let us not be ashamed to reach out our hand. It is right there, in that humble gesture, that salvation hides.