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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

Church of the Visitation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Rectory Phone: 536-6110
E-Mail: visitationjtown@dioceseaj.org
Website: www.visitationbvmchurch.com
Fax: 536-3709

1127 McKinley Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905

Rev. John J. Slovikovski, PhD, Pastor
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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 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.

Eucharistic Adoration: Every Wednesday and Friday following Mass.

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.

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 28th, 2025

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY - Saints. Michael, Gabriel, and Rafael, Archangels

12:05 PM - Joseph Lecci
(Req. by Jen0 Lecci)

TUESDAY - Saint Jerome, Priest and Doctor of the Church

12:05 PM - James Rovon
(Req. by Chuck & Pat Sura)
Rescheduled from 9-26-25

WEDNESDAY - Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church

5:30 PM - Anna Marie Pfeil
(Req. by Kim & John George)
Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

THURSDAY - The Holy Guardian Angels

12:05 PM - Dr. Larry Rutledge
(Req. by wife Barbara)

FRIDAY - Weekday in Ordinary Time

12:05 PM - Helene Balagusz
(Req. by Ron Cleaver)

SATURDAY - Saint Francis of Assisi

4:00 PM - Charles Turner
(Req. by Family)

SUNDAY - 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 AM - Pro Populo

SANCTUARY CANDLE
In Memory of Charles Turner
Req. by Rose Turner

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

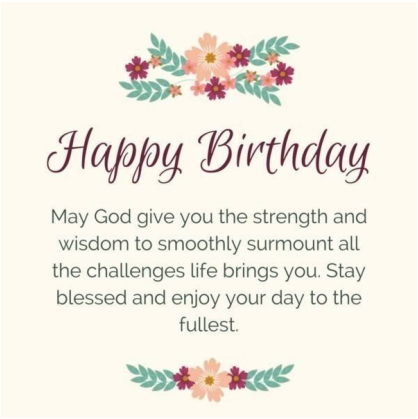
\$\$\$ INCOME \$\$\$	
<u>Collection - September 21, 2025</u>	
Loose Money.....	\$231.00
Sunday Collection.....	\$2868.00
Assumption.....	\$10.00
Catholic University.....	\$10.00
Votive Candles.....	\$101.00
St. Peregrine.....	\$67.00

TOTAL: \$3287.00

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 Rován, Stephen Sanders, Jennifer Schellhammer, Rose Sigg, Allegra Slick, Father John Slovikovski, Shirley Slovikovski, Ken Turner, Megan Varnecky, Christi Vavrek, Carrie Young

Please join us in remembering members of our parish family who celebrate their birthdays the week of September 29th to October 5th:



Judy Horner
Brett Huston
Roseanne Wenderoth
Rosemarie Nagle

Robert Slivinsky
Melissa Davidson
Pamela Hauman

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!!**

I HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY PLEASED TO SEE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATING IN THE WEDNESDAY EVENING MASS AND ADORATION INCREASE NOTABLY!

And so I continue to implore you to *SERIOUSLY*** CONSIDER SOME EXTRA TIME WITH THE LORD THIS WEEK.** We always pray the rosary 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 YOU TO BELIEVE THAT WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!!!**

A REMINDER TO ALL GOING ON THE JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE TRIP THAT PAYMENT IS DUE ASAP! Please call the rectory with any questions.

Jubilee Choir Rehearsal - The final Jubilee choir rehearsal for the October 17th Jubilee Basilica mass will be on 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.

Blessing of Pets: Sunday, October 5th following the 9:00AM Mass.

From Pontiff to Pew:

In Pope Leo XIV’s **Angelus Meditation** from last Sunday, he reflected upon the story in which we see a steward summoned by the rich man for “an accounting” of his management. Here we are presented with an image that conveys something important: we are not the masters of our lives or of the goods we enjoy; everything has been given to us as a gift by the Lord, who has entrusted this to our care, our freedom, and our responsibility. One day we will be called to give an account of how we have managed ourselves, our possessions and the earth’s resources – before both God and humankind, before society, and especially before those who will come after us. The steward in this parable had, up to this point, sought only his own profit. When the day comes for him to give an account and the position is taken away from him, he has to consider what to do to secure his future. In this difficult situation, he realizes that the accumulation of material goods is not the highest value, for the riches of this world are passing. Then he has a brilliant idea: he calls the debtors and “cuts” their debts, renouncing the portion that would have gone to him. In this way, he loses material wealth but gains friends who will be ready to help and support him. Taking his cue from the story, Jesus exhorts us: “Make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes” (v. 9). Indeed, the steward in the parable, even while managing the dishonest wealth of this world, succeeds in finding a way to make friends, leaving behind the solitude of his own selfishness. How much more, then, must we, who are disciples living in the light of the Gospel, use the goods of this world and our very lives with a view to the true wealth, which is friendship with the Lord and with our brothers and sisters.

Pope Leo’s reflection on the parable invites us to ask ourselves: how are we managing the material goods, the resources of the earth and our very lives that God has entrusted to us? We can follow the way of selfishness, placing wealth above all else and thinking only of ourselves. But this isolates us from others and spreads the poison of competition, which often fuels conflict. Instead, we can recognize everything we have as a gift from God, to be managed and used as an instrument for sharing – to create networks of friendship and solidarity, to work for the common good, and to build a world that is more just, equitable and fraternal. Let us pray to the Virgin Mary, that she may intercede for us and help us manage well, with justice and responsibility, what the Lord has entrusted to us.

In his **Wednesday Audience**, Pope Leo continued to reflect upon the mystery of Holy Saturday. The mystery of Holy Saturday is so rich theologically, that the last 3 popes (John Paul II, Benedict, and Francis) have all gone to great lengths to probe its depths. Theologians have also given great attention to this mystery one of the foremost being the famous Swiss theologian Hans Urs Von Balthazar. Even I , in my humble theological pursuits, have published an article on the mystery of Holy Saturday. With this in mind, I feel that it is important to share with you Leo XIV’s thought verbatim. Ergo, his remarks are found below in their entirety.

Today, again, we will look at the mystery of Holy Saturday. It is the day of the Paschal Mystery in which everything



seems immobile and silent, while in reality an invisible action of salvation is being fulfilled: Christ descends into the realm of the dead to bring the news of the Resurrection to all those who were in the darkness and in the shadow of death.

This event, which the liturgy and tradition have handed down to us, represents the most profound and radical gesture of God’s love for humanity. Indeed, it is not enough to say or to believe that Jesus died for us: it is necessary to recognize that the fidelity of his love sought us out where we ourselves were lost, where only the power of a light capable of penetrating the realm of darkness can reach. The underworld, in the biblical conception, is not so much a place as an existential condition: that condition in which life is depleted, and pain, solitude, guilt and separation from God and others reign. Christ reaches us even in this abyss, passing through the gates of this realm of darkness. He enters, so to speak, in the very house of death, to empty it, to free its inhabitants, taking them by the hand one by one. It is the humility of a God who does not stop in front of our sin, who is not afraid when faced with the human being’s extreme rejection.

The apostle Peter, in the brief passage from his first Letter that we have just heard, tells us that Jesus, made alive in the Holy Spirit, went to take the news of salvation even “to the spirits in prison” (1Pt 3:19). It is one of the most moving images, which is expressed not in the canonical Gospels, but in an apocryphal text entitled the Gospel of Nicodemus. According to this tradition, the Son of God entered the deepest darkness to reach even the last of his brothers and sisters, to bring his light down there too. In this gesture there is all the strength and tenderness of the Paschal message: death is never the last word.

This descent of Christ does not relate only to the past, but touches the life of every one of us. The underworld is not only the condition of the dead, but also of those who live death as a result of evil and sin. It is also the daily hell of loneliness, shame, abandonment, and the struggle of life. Christ enters into all these dark realities to bear witness to the love of the Father. Not to judge, but to set free. Not to blame, but to save. He does so quietly, on tiptoe, like one who enters a hospital room to offer comfort and help.

The Fathers of the Church, in pages of extraordinary beauty, described this moment as a meeting: that between Christ and Adam. An encounter that is the symbol of all the possible encounters between God and man. The Lord descends where man has hidden out of fear, and calls him by name, takes him by the hand, raises him up, and brings him back to the light. He does so with full authority, but also with infinite gentleness, like a father with the son who fears that he is no longer loved. In the eastern icons of the Resurrection, Christ is depicted breaking down the doors of the underworld, stretching out his arms and grasping Adam and Eve by the wrists. He does not save only himself; he does not return to life alone, but carries all of humanity with him. This is the true glory of the Risen One: it is the power of love, it is solidarity with a God who does not want to save himself without us, but only with us. A God who does not rise again unless he embraces our miseries and lifts us up to a new life.

Holy Saturday, then, is the day in which heaven visits earth most deeply. It is the time in which every corner **(continued on insert)**