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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



3rd Sunday of Advent
December 14th, 2025

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY - Advent Weekday

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

TUESDAY - Advent Weekday

12:05 PM - Helene Balagusz
(Req. by Claudia Estok & John Hearn)

WEDNESDAY - Advent Weekday

5:30 PM - Barry Mills
(Req. by Joyce Ziance)
Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

THURSDAY - Advent Weekday

12:05 PM - Michael Czerak
(Req. by John, Karen & Jacob Czerak)

6:00 PM - Advent Penance Service

FRIDAY - Advent Weekday

12:05 PM - James Rovan
(Req. by Ezio D. Francesco & Jean Fraser)
Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

SATURDAY - Vigil of 4th Sunday of Advent

4:00 PM - Francis John Beaujon
(Req. by Fran & Charlotte Beaujon)

SUNDAY - 4th Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM - Pro Populo

SANCTUARY CANDLE

Christmas Blessings Frank Mateljan family

Req. by daughter Barbara Vedock



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 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.

EUCARISTIC 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.

\$\$ INCOME \$\$\$
Collection - December 7, 2025

Loose Money.....	\$443.00
Sunday Collection.....	\$3438.00
Immaculate Conception.....	\$822.00
All Saints Day.....	\$5.00
All Souls Day.....	\$5.00
Christmas Flowers.....	\$45.00
Share in the Care.....	\$25.00
Votive Candles.....	\$81.00
St. Peregrine.....	\$48.00
Perquisites - Mikesic Funeral.....	\$100.00
Parking Lot Rent.....	\$370.00
TOTAL:	\$5382.00

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, Larry Oravetz, Anna Petro, Francis Petro, Jean Petroro, Maria Petro-Sanders, Mia Bella Rastall, Stacy Roberts, Sean Rovan, Stephen Sanders, Jennifer Schellhamer, Rose Sigg, Allegra Slick, Father John Slovikovski, Shirley Slovikovski, Ken Turner, Megan Varmecky, Carrie Young

Please join us in remembering members of our parish family who celebrate their birthdays the week of December 15th to December 21st:



Michael Huston
 Irene Chovanec
 Kristen Furman

Susan Wachs
 Ron Cleaver
 Jacqueline Kuswara
 Jacob Corona

Advent Penance Service - Save the Date: Our Annual Advent Penance Service is scheduled for Thursday, **December 18th** at 6:00 PM. Please take this opportunity to receive God's gift of mercy by celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation with us. **We have twelve (12) priests coming that evening!** A reminder that one needs to be in the state of grace to receive the Jubilee year Plenary Indulgence. Regardless, even if we think that we don't need to celebrate the sacrament of Penance (*which is probably an indicator that we do*), think about the tremendous graces that are gained through this wonderful gift that God has given to His Church. Incidentally, I love the sacrament and I avail myself to it on a regular basis.

Final Pilgrimage for the Jubilee 2025 Year - On January 4th, 2026, the last Sunday of the Jubilee Year (which ends officially with the closing of the Holy Door in Rome on January 6th, the feast of the Epiphany), we will be carpooling to Altoona, to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Mass will be celebrated at 11:00AM. We will be leaving from the Visitation parking lot at 9:45 AM.

The reason for this pilgrimage is to view the *Presepio* (*The presepio, derived from the Latin word presepium, meaning manger, has been the defacto symbol of Christmas for Italian families for dozens of generations, and in the South, perhaps as long as a thousand years. This display, however, is much more than a nativity scene for it displays many scenes from traditional Italian life and it quite ornate and beautiful*). Afterward we will be stopping for lunch at Jethro's Restaurant.

Please contact Evelyn Haggerty at 814-243-2570 if you are interested. This mass will allow for a Jubilee Plenary Indulgence if all of the other conditions are met (confession, etc.)

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!!!

Theology on Tap - Young Adult Group (18-39): All young adults (18-39) - regardless of their background - are invited to join us for faith, food, and fellowship. There is no cost to attend. Our next Theology on Tap is Wednesday December 17th at the Boulevard Grill at 6pm with Deacon Candidate Wally Zapotocny speaking on "A Church on Fire!" Fr. Canice McMullen OSB and Fr. David Dodd TOR are already booked for 2026! For more information contact Geoffrey Stumpo at (814) 659-7415 or geoffstumpo@gmail.com.

From Pontiff to Pew:

This week, Pope Leo XIV delivered his *Angelus* message on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The text of the message found below:

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We express our joy because the Father of Heaven wanted her to be "preserved immune from all stain of original sin" (Pius IX, Apostolic Constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*, 8 December 1854), full of innocence and holiness in order to be able to entrust to her, for our salvation, "his only begotten Son ... whom ... the Father loves from his heart" (cf. *ibid.*) The Lord has granted to Mary the extraordinary grace of a completely pure heart, in view of an even greater miracle: the coming of Christ the Savior into the world as man (cf. Lk 1:31-33). The Virgin learned about this, with the wonder typical of the humble, from the greeting of the Angel: "Hail, full of grace: the Lord is with you" (v. 28) and with faith she responded with her "yes": "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (v. 38). Commenting on these words, Saint Augustine says that "Mary believed, and what she believed was fulfilled in her" (Sermon 215, 4). The gift of the fullness of grace, in the young woman of Nazareth, was able to bear fruit because she in her freedom welcomed it, embracing the plan of God. The Lord always acts in this way: he gives us great gifts, but he leaves us free to accept them or not. For this reason, Augustine adds: "We also believe, because that which came to be [in her] can also benefit us" (*ibid.*). And so this feast, which makes us rejoice for the unsullied beauty of the Mother of God, also invites us to believe as she believed, giving our generous assent to the mission to which the Lord calls us. The miracle, which took place at Mary's conception, was renewed for us in Baptism: cleansed from original sin, we have become children of God, his dwelling place and the temple of the Holy Spirit. And just as Mary, by means of a special grace, was able to welcome Jesus in herself and give him to all people, so too "Baptism allows Christ to live in us and allows us to live united with him, to cooperate in the Church, each according to his or her condition, for the transformation of the world" (Francis, *Catechesis*, 11 April 2018).

Dear friends, how great is the gift of the Immaculate Conception, but so also is the gift of Baptism that we have received! The "yes" of the Mother of the Lord is wonderful, but so also can ours be, renewed faithfully each day, with gratitude, humility and perseverance, in prayer and in concrete acts of love, from the most extraordinary gestures to the most mundane and ordinary efforts and acts of service. In this way, Christ can be known, welcomed and loved everywhere and salvation can come to everyone.

Today, let us ask the Father for this, through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, while we pray together the very same words by which she herself first believed.

In this **Wednesday Audience**, Pope Leo continued the Jubilee 2025 Cycle of Catechesis - Jesus Christ our hope; The Resurrection of Christ and the challenges of the contemporary world. The Pasch of Jesus Christ: the final answer to the question of our death. The full text of the Audience follows:

The mystery of death has always raised profound questions in human beings. Indeed, it seems to be the most

natural and at the same time most unnatural event that exists. It is natural, because every living being on earth dies. It is unnatural, because the desire for life and eternity that we all feel for ourselves and for the people we love makes us see death as a sentence, as a "contradiction".

Many ancient peoples developed rites and customs linked to the cult of the dead, to accompany and to recall those who journeyed towards the supreme mystery. Today, however, we see a different trend. Death seems to be a sort of taboo, an event to keep at a distance; something to be spoken of in hushed tones, to avoid disturbing our sensibilities and our tranquility. This is often why we avoid visiting cemeteries, where those who have gone before us rest as they await resurrection.

So what is death? Is it truly the last word on our lives? Only human beings ask themselves this question, because only they know they must die. But being aware of this does not save them from death; on the contrary, in a certain sense it "burdens" them compared to other living creatures. Animals suffer, of course, and they realize that death is near, but they do not know that death is part of their destiny. They do not question the meaning, purpose and outcome of life.

Considering this aspect, one might then think that we are paradoxical, unhappy creatures, not only because we die, but also because we are certain that this event will happen, even though we do not know how or when. We find ourselves aware and at the same time powerless. This is probably where the frequent repressions and existential flights from the question of death originate.

Saint Alphonsus Maria de' Liguori, in his famous work *Apparecchio alla morte* (Preparation for Death), reflects on the pedagogical value of death, emphasizing that it can be a great teacher of life. To know that it exists, and above all to reflect on it, teaches us to choose what we really want to make of our existence. Praying, in order to understand what is beneficial in view of the kingdom of heaven, and letting go of the superfluous that instead binds us to ephemeral things, is the secret to living authentically, in the awareness that our passage on earth prepares us for eternity.

Yet many current anthropological views promise imminent immortality, theorize the prolongation of earthly life through technology. This is the transhuman scenario, which is making its way into the horizon of the challenges of our time. Could death really be defeated by science? But then, could science itself guarantee us that a life without death is also a happy life?

The event of the Resurrection of Christ reveals to us that death is not opposed to life, but rather is a constitutive part of it, as the passage to eternal life. The Pasch of Jesus gives us a foretaste, in this time still full of suffering and trials, of the fullness of what will happen after death.

The Evangelist Luke seems to grasp this harbinger of light in the dark when, at the end of that afternoon when darkness had shrouded Calvary, he writes: "It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning" (Lk 23:54). This light, which anticipates Easter morning, already shines in the darkness of the sky, which still appears overcast and mute. The lights of the Sabbath, for the first and only time, herald the dawn of the day after the Sabbath: the

