



First Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023

St. John the Evangelist Church 309 Lotz Avenue, Altoona, PA 814-942-5503

December Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

For Persons with Disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.



MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY - 8:30 AM TUESDAY - 8:30 AM

WEDNESDAY - 6:00 PM

THURSDAY - 8:30 AM

THURSDAY- VIGIL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - 6:00PM

**FRIDAY- FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION -
8:30 AM & 6:00PM**

SATURDAY - 4:00 PM

SUNDAY - 8:00 AM & 11:00 AM

NEXT WEEK'S APPOINTMENTS

LECTORS

Thurs. December 7- 6:00 PM - Jim Campbell, Bob Olson
Fri. December 8 - 6:00 PM - Susanna Tomlinson, Camille Krug
Sat. December 9- 4:00 PM - James Krug, Maria Spayd
Sun. December 10- 8:00 AM - Darlene Scarpaci, Susan Podoletz
Sun. December 10- 11:00 AM - Dave Auerbeck, Patrick Schurr

ALTAR SERVERS

Thurs. December 7- 6:00 PM - NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED
Fri. December 8-6:00 PM - Evie Koch, Estella Koch
Sat. December 9- 4:00 PM - Lexi Tatar, Iris Tatar
Sun. December 10- 8:00 AM - Emily Miller, Nicholas Helsley
Sun. December 10- 11:00 AM - Bob Olson, Colin Schurr

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Thurs. December 7- 6:00 PM - Walter Bloom, Cecelia Bloom
Fri. December 8 - 6:00 PM - Barbara Bundy, Bob Olson
Sat. December 9- 4:00 PM - Connie Baker, NOT FILLED
Sun. December 10 - 8:00 AM - Diane Turcovsky, Daniel Turcovsky
Sun. December 10- 11:00 AM - Walter Bloom, Cecelia Bloom,
Dolores Capriotti, Kenneth Gorman, NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED

MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY

Thurs. December 7- 6:00 PM - Connie Baker, Darlene Scarpaci,
Diane Turcovsky, Daniel Turcovsky
Fri. December 8 - 6:00 PM - Mike O'Neill, Diane Turcovsky,
Daniel Turcovsky, NOT FILLED
Sat. December 9- 4:00 PM - Betsy Lloyd, Larry VanSickel,
Paula VanSickel, NOT FILLED
Sun. December 10- 8:00 AM - Jane Becker, John Becker,
Ginny Reeder, NOT FILLED
Sun. December 10- 11:00 AM - Marilyn Bevan, Mary Grace Horton,
Peg Madden, Patrick Podoletz

SACRISTAN

Thurs. December 7- 6:00 PM - Dolores Capriotti
Fri. December 8 - 6:00 PM - Marilyn Bevan
Sat. December 9- 4:00 PM - Mary King, Ray King
Sun. December 10- 8:00 AM - Darlene Scarpaci
Sun. December 10- 11:00 AM - Barbara Bundy

SCRIP

Sat. December 9- 4:00 PM - Lori Baker, Marge Rudolph
Sat. December 10 - 8:00 AM - Erika Yasolsky, Heather Yasolsky
Sun. December 10 - 11:00 AM - Jane Byrne, Carolyn English

A Few Words from the Pastor:

WEEK 9 OF OUR SACRED STORY RETREAT: Our retreat is based upon the trust we have in the Grace of Christ, given for our conversion of life. This week we are to ask for the grace to remember God's special blessings, to enrich our relationships with our significant others, to deepen in our spiritual life of prayer and penance, to have a positive impact on our parish community, to experience financial security so that we might be more generous with others, and to forgive that person whom we've had the most difficulty forgiving. This is a lot for one week, but it is the opening up of our life for a deeper relationship with Christ. The words of St. Ambrose given below, can inspire us!!!

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE – An important part of every retreat is the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. A personal confession to a priest requires humility and honesty. We cannot grow spiritually without this sacrament, for it invites us to encounter our sinfulness and to experience the healing of Christ, our Divine Physician. Our parish communal Penance Service will be celebrated this Sunday, December 3rd, at 4:00 PM. Please join us.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, DECEMBER 8TH - please note that the Immaculate Conception, patronal feast of the United States, is a holy day of obligation. Our Vigil Mass will be celebrated on Thursday evening at 6:00PM and Masses on the feast day itself will be celebrated at 8:30 AM and 6:00 PM. Please join us!

EUROPEAN PILGRIMAGE – June 3 – 16, 2024: I will be leading pilgrimage to some of the most sacred sites in Europe. We will be travelling first to Rome, and then on to Lisbon, Fatima, Lourdes and Paris. There are still a few seats available, and I would welcome the pleasure of your company! Brochures are available in the Gathering Space. The cost for double occupancy is \$6,690 per person. Please call if you have any questions!

ADVENT CALENDARS: This Advent season we will again make available Advent Calendars. They are available in the Gathering Space for \$3 dollars.

AN IMPORTANT COLLECTION COMING UP! The annual collection that supports nearly 25,000 elderly religious sisters, brothers and religious order priests in the United States will take place in participating dioceses next weekend. The collection, coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), distributes financial assistance for retirement needs to eligible religious institutes. Be generous when the time comes!

THIS WEEK'S SACRED STORY: SAINT AMBROSE, whose feast we celebrate on December 7th, was born around 340 AD to a Roman Christian family, and is one of the four original doctors of the Church. While Bishop of Milan, he brought into the Christian Faith Saint Augustine, the wayward son of Saint Monica. Because of the great influence which Ambrose had upon Augustine, Monica loved Ambrose "as an angel of God who uprooted her son from his former ways and led him to his convictions of Christ." Ambrose is noted for his spiritual wisdom::

"Let your door stand open to receive Christ, unlock your soul to Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind, and then you will see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the joy of grace. Throw wide the gate of your heart, stand before the sun of the everlasting light..."

"No one heals himself by wounding another."

SAVE THE DATES!

Children's Liturgy: Sunday, December 3rd at the 11am Mass

Advent Penance Service: Sunday, December 3rd at 4pm

Immaculate Conception: Vigil Thursday, December 7th at 6pm/Feast of the Immaculate Conception Friday, December 8th at 8:30am & 6pm

Breakfast with Santa: Sunday, December 10th at 9am to 11am in the Gym/Father Bailey Hall

Choir Cantata - Ceremony of Candles: Sunday, December 17th at 3pm at St. John's Church

#IGIVECATHOLIC UPDATE: A BIG thank you to everyone who supported our #IGIVECATHOLIC campaign over the last few weeks! Between online and envelope donations we have collected over \$3,100 so far! Although online donations are no longer available, we can still accept envelope donations. Envelopes are available in the Gathering Space. Stay tuned for updates as we make the upgrades to our kitchen and electrical projects!

Schedule for the Week of December 3rd

Sunday, December 3 - First Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM - Mass for *Deceased members of the Ergler & Burchfield families* requested by Ed & Debbie Ergler

11:00 AM - Mass for *Barbara Neral* requested by Deacon Gene Neral

Monday, December 4 - Advent Weekday

8:30 AM - Mass for *Margaret Dzimiera* requested by Michele & Lance DeFrancisco

Tuesday, December 5 - Advent Weekday

8:30 AM—Mass for *Margareta H. Goch*

Wednesday, December 6 - Advent Weekday

6:00 PM - Mass for *Fr. Wilbur Thomas* requested by Becky, Heather & Nick Reed

Thursday, December 7 - St. Ambrose

8:30 AM - Mass for *Clarence & Eileen Becker* requested by the Becker family

6:00 PM - Mass for *People of the Parish*

Friday, December 8 - Immaculate Conception

8:30 AM - Mass for *Bradley Johnson* requested by Marian Monios

6:00 PM - Mass for *Joseph Bucarelli* requested by the Fromknecht family

Saturday, December 9— Vigil of Second Sunday of Advent

4:00 PM - Mass for *People of the Parish*

Sunday, December 10 - Second Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM - Mass for *Ida Prosperi* requested by John Prosperi

11:00 AM - Mass for *Joseph & Rose Novak* requested by Judy & Chuck Stephens

LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULING: For January 6 – May 26, 2024 It's time to schedule for Winter-Spring 2024. If you have internet access please enter your NOT available dates in your profile in Ministry Scheduler Pro. Here is the direct link to that website –

www.rotundasoftware.com/ministry/teammates

There is also a link from our parish website (WWW.STJOHNSALTOONA.ORG) and a link in the email reminder you will receive soon. There are cards available in the gathering space for those who do not have access to the internet. If you are not able to update your profile online or visit the church to fill out a card, you may give me a call on a weekday evening between 7 PM and 10 PM or on the weekends at 814-932-2223. Please update your profile online or call me or fill out a card and return it by midnight on Sunday, December 17th. Family members can fill out one card front and back. Thank you for your service to our faith community throughout the year!

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: Memorial donations for Christmas flowers should be submitted online or by using the envelope provided in your packet. All requests should be received in the office by Monday, December 18th, to be acknowledged in the December 24th bulletin.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: Today we begin the beautiful and holy season of Advent. With all that we have going on this time of year, it's no wonder that Advent doesn't always seem to get the attention it deserves. But if we will commit to living this season well, we will experience a deeper conversion to Christ and find real transformation in our lives as Christian stewards. Why? Advent calls us not only to look back in grateful contemplation of Christ's first coming, but it also calls us to look forward in preparation for His Second Coming. Advent is a time to reset and regroup, to repent over any misplaced priorities, to turn our minds and hearts back to God while we still have time. Our lives are a gift. This holy season is a gift. Let us awaken if we have grown weary or complacent, and recommit to living the stewardship way of life. Love came down to us as a Baby. And He is coming again. Be watchful!

November 18/19

Envelopes	\$ 3,423.00
Loose Offerings	\$ 618.00
Children's Envelopes	\$ 8.10
Parish Development	\$ 125.00
Catholic Charities	\$ 255.00
All Souls Day	\$ 20.00
Thanksgiving	\$ 95.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 50.00
IGiveCatholic	\$ 975.00
Online Giving	\$ 1,448.75
Total Offertory	\$ 7,017.85

ANGEL TREE 2023: Thank you for your generous response to our Angel Tree requests. **Please return your wrapped gift, with the tag attached, to the Gathering Space by December 10th.** We will take the gifts to Catholic Charities, where families will pick them up. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA COSTUMES: We are looking for used, solid colored sheets or light blankets that could be used to make simple costumes for the Christmas Cantata scheduled on December 17th at 3pm. If you have any of these items to donate, please bring them to the Parish Office or leave them by the piano for Patti.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA: Please join us Sunday, December 10th from 9am-11am in Fr. Bailey Hall (School Gym) for breakfast, games, crafts, and photos with Santa. Please bring your own device to take pictures. Everyone is welcome! All parishioners are encouraged to stop over for breakfast. Santa will be checking his list to see who is naughty and who is nice, so stop over to make sure you are on the nice list and grab a bite to eat!

ST JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

Please call Ginny Reeder (695-7671) or email her at giny.reeder@gmail.com to add or remove someone from the prayer list. PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING and their caregivers and give thanks for those who have recovered. *Lord we ask for your blessings and care for these and all people in need:*

**All Garvey Manor Residents • Britta Albright
Charles Bassett • Idy Caporuscio • Michelle Cooney
Mary Lee DeStefano • Kathy Ganz
Devon McCarter Graham • Marlene Hartman
Kay Laratonda • Connor McLaughlin • Kathy Mittermeier
Patricia Olson • Ryan Raybuck • Anne Showalter
Reed Stellabotte • Tim Temofonte • Mary Truesdale
Lois Werfel • John E. Wolfe • Dorothy Yingling**

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT: Experiencing a loss of any kind is difficult and lonely. Our bereavement programs are designed to acknowledge the pain and the loss, while offering positive ideas for coping. Consider joining us for any or all of the following:

Bereavement Gatherings are held monthly in the St. Michael Convent Building (the house between the church and the school). For more information contact Debbi Chapman at 912-713-5412. Upcoming dates are:

Wednesday, December 11 at 9:30 AM

Wednesday, January 10 at 9:30 AM

Tuesday, January 23 at 6:30 PM

Journey Through Loss is a seven-week program for those who have lost a loved one through death. The next session begins on Wednesday, January 10. We will meet weekly from 6:30-8:00 PM at the St. Michael Convent Building in Hollidaysburg. For more information contact Mary Petrak at 814-502-6076.

ADVENT GROUPS: St. John's will be having small sharing groups on the Eucharist during the four weeks of the Advent season. Readings and questions will be provided for the facilitators and participants. Anyone interested in being a facilitator/leader, please sign up in the form provided on the kiosk. If you are interested in participating in an Advent group, please sign up on the forms in the Gathering Space center table. Each sheet has the leader and group time listed so you can choose the group that fits your schedule best. You can also contact Jane Becker at 814-414-9836 for further information or questions.

FRANCISCAN LIVING NATIVITY: This year commemorates the 800th anniversary of St. Francis creating a Living Nativity Scene in the small Italian village of Greccio, to bring Bethlehem close to those who would never have the chance to be in the birthplace of Jesus Christ. Join us on the campus of St. Bernardine Monastery (768 Monastery Road, Hollidaysburg) on Sunday, Dec. 17th at 4:00 PM to be part of our own children's Living Nativity in the valley of the Allegheny Mountains. There will be a Nativity service followed by refreshments and a chance for a visit and photo with Santa! The Friar's Nook Gift Shop will also be open from 4:30 PM – 7:00 PM.

FAITH FORMATION NEWS

December 3rd-Class 9:15am-10:45am & Children's Liturgy at 11am Mass

December 10th-No Class/Breakfast with Santa 9-11am

December 17th-9:15am– 10:45am Family Advent Event (A parent and student should attend)

December 24th/31st-No Class-Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

If you would like more information or have questions, please contact Diane Ryan at 814-942-5503 or email stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION: Beginning in January the schedule for Adult Faith Formation will follow the Faith Formation Calendar for grades K-8, so that parents are able to attend. We will meet on Sunday mornings from 9:15 to 10:45 on January 7 and 21.

In January we will begin A Walk Through the Mass, a five-session series by Edward Sri. Dr. Sri helps us to understand the historical and biblical roots of the words, prayers, actions, and gestures contained within the Mass. Registration is not necessary. Please join us for food, faith, and fellowship. For more information contact Mary Petrak at 814 502 6076 or mfpetrak@hotmail.com.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION: The 2024 Marriage Preparation Series has released their upcoming schedule. Local sessions will be offered January 6 & 20 at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament and at St. John's April 15, 22, 29. Please contact the office for more information or take a pamphlet from the kiosk.

BLAZIN' ANGELS: Blazin' Angels is a multi-parish young adult group for people ages 18-39 years old. Please feel free to reach out to Amber Yasolsky or Cherié Langenbacher via email at blazinangels.yagroup@gmail.com for more information. The next meeting will be held on December 10th at 6pm over at St. John the Evangelist's Parish Center.

PASTORAL STAFF

Monsignor Michael Becker - mbecker253@aol.com

Deacon Gene Neral - gene@lifeinfocus.net

Patricia Jimenez - Director of Music

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Stephanie Baker-Business Manager

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Diane Ryan - Faith Formation Coordinator/Secretary

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