

***The Holy Family of  
Jesus, Mary and Joseph  
December 31, 2023***

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

**PASTORAL STAFF**

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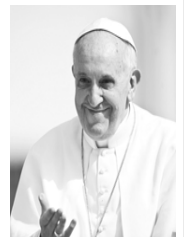
**MASS SCHEDULE**

**MONDAY - 10:00 AM SOLEMNITY OF MARY**  
**TUESDAY - 8:30 AM WEDNESDAY - 6:00 PM**  
**THURSDAY - 8:30 AM FRIDAY - 8:30 AM**  
**SATURDAY - 4:00 PM**  
**SUNDAY - 8:00 AM & 11:00 AM**

**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.



**NEXT WEEK'S APPOINTMENTS**

**LECTORS**

Sat. January 6- 4:00 PM - Iris Tatar, Maria Spayd  
Sun. January 7- 8:00 AM - Darlene Scarpaci, Ginny Reeder  
Sun. January 7- 11:00 AM - Bob Olson, Susan Podoletz

**ALTAR SERVERS**

Sat. January 6- 4:00 PM - Chloe Truscello, Jeremy Truscello  
Sun. January 7- 8:00 AM - Emily Miller, Nicholas Helsley  
Sun. January 7- 11:00 AM - Aidan Schurr, Colin Schurr

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

Sat. January 6- 4:00 PM - Connie Baker, NOT FILLED  
Sun. January 7- 8:00 AM - Diane Turcovsky, Daniel Turcovsky  
Sun. January 7- 11:00 AM - Lou Ann Clark, Cecelia Bloom,  
Walter Bloom, Kenneth Gorman, Susanna Tomlinson,  
Barbara Bundy

**MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY**

Sat. January 6- 4:00 PM - Betsy Lloyd, Paula VanSickel, Larry VanSickel,  
NOT FILLED  
Sun. January 7- 8:00 AM - Carolyn English, Mike O'Neill, Ed Stoltz,  
Mary Truesdale  
Sun. January 7- 11:00 AM - Marilyn Bevan, Wendy Campbell,  
Dolores Capriotti, Peg Madden

**SACRISTAN**

Sat. January 6- 4:00 PM - Jane Byrne  
Sun. January 7- 8:00 AM - Darlene Scarpaci  
Sun. January 7- 11:00 AM - Dolores Capriotti

**SCRIP**

Sat. January 6- 4:00 PM - Julie Beiswenger, Becky Merilli  
Sat. January 7- 8:00 AM - Chris Palazzi, Marge Rudolph  
Sun. January 7- 11:00 AM - Patrick Podoletz, Gary Johnson

## A Few Words from the Pastor:

**SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD** – Mass for this feast of Mary will be offered at 10:00 that morning on New Years Day! What better way to begin the New Year than by placing our parish family under Mary's protection!

**ALPHA AT ST. JOHN'S** - ALPHA will again be coming to our parish in January. Alpha is a series of sessions which explore the Christian faith. Each talk looks at a different question and is designed to create conversation. No two Alpha's look the same, but generally it has three key experiences in common: food, a talk and conversation. Please join us!

**WEEK 13 OF OUR SACRED STORY RETREAT:** *As the New Year begins, it might be good to recommit ourselves to the daily fifteen-minute quiet time. I will petition the Lord for the grace to keep sacred my times of prayer and strive to pray in a place that is technology-free, a quiet place apart. Make this your most important New Year's resolution.*

**SACRED STORIES: TWO AMERICAN SAINTS** – This week the Church in the USA celebrates TWO of its own: Saint John Neumann (1811-1860) and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821). Elizabeth Ann Seton was born to Episcopal parents in New York city, and later converted to Catholicism. **Mother Seton** was a strong proponent of Catholic education and is noted for founding the Parochial School System in America. She is the first native-born American to be canonized. The Sisters of Charity which she founded have had a long and storied history of service to our own diocese. **Saint John Neumann** was born in what is now the Czech Republic. After studying in Prague, he came to New York at 25 and was ordained a priest. He did missionary work in New York until he was 29, when he joined the Redemptorists and became its first member to profess vows in the United States. He continued missionary work in Maryland, Virginia and Ohio, where he became popular with the Germans. There are parishes in our own diocese where he visited and presided at Mass. He was well-known for his holiness and learning, spiritual writing and preaching. He became the first American bishop to be canonized, and is buried in St. Peter the Apostle Church in Philadelphia, where he served as its fourth bishop from 1852 until his death in 1860.

**THE YEAR OF MARK** – Our readings for Sunday Mass are given in a three-year cycle: **Year A** draws from the Gospel of Matthew, **year B** from the Gospel of Mark, and **year C**, the Gospel of Luke. At the beginning of the recent Advent season, we have begun Year B, with the Sunday gospels now predominantly coming from the Gospel of Mark. I am now preparing a Bible Study on Mark's Gospel which will help us appreciate this earliest and shortest of the Gospels. Stay tuned!

**NO ROOM IN THE INN: THE HOMELESS IN ALTOONA -- WE CAN HELP!** – Efforts to respond to the need for our city's homeless has led to the creation of A Warming Center, led by Altoona Fire Chief Adam Free. Chief Free is requesting that area churches provide teams of volunteers to staff the new warming center at Overflow Church that will be open nightly for 20 guests from 9:00 PM until 7:00 AM beginning January 8 and ending March 31. One team of four volunteers (two male and two female) is needed each night. Churches may help us meet this critical need by sending a team of volunteers weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. If you would be interested in offering your assistance, please contact the parish office.

### SAVE THE DATES!

**Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God Mass:** Monday, January 1st at 10:00am

**Alpha:** Thursday, January 11th at 6:00pm classes begin

**Sunday of the Word of God:** Sunday, January 21st -Bring your Bible to the weekend masses to be blessed

**MARCH FOR LIFE:** Once again, Citizens Concerned for Human Life is planning a bus trip to the March for Life on January 19, 2024, in Washington. We would respectfully request the opportunity to conduct a fundraiser seeking donations to assist us with the expenses of this trip and our other expenses throughout the year the weekend of January 7, 2024 or January 14, 2024. Our buses will be leaving for the March from St. Therese's Church in Altoona at 7:00 A.M. and we will be leaving Washington by 4:00 P.M. we hope to be back in Altoona around 8:30 P.M. We will also have pick ups at St. Mary's in Hollidaysburg at 7:30 A.M. and Walmart in East Freedom at 7:45 A.M. We ask the participants to pack a lunch and on the way back from the March we will stop at the Golden Carrol in either Frederick or Hagerstown for dinner. The March is always prayerful and peaceful, and our cost is \$10.00 for students and \$15.00 for adults. For reservations, please contact Patricia Forr or Marita Forr at (814) 946.0681 or Roxanne Blazovitch at (814) 696.8008.

## Schedule for the Week of December 31st

### Sunday, December 31 - Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

8:00 AM - Mass for *Grandparents of Michael & Ashley*

*Greslick* requested by Michael & Ashley Greslick

11:00 AM - Mass for *People of the Parish*

### Monday, January 1 - Solemnity of Mary

10:00 AM - Mass for *Mary Catherine Majestic* requested by Barbara Bundy

### Tuesday, January 2 - Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen

8:30 AM—Mass for *Kathy Wagner* requested by Michele & Lance DeFrancisco

### Wednesday, January 3 - Christmas Weekday

6:00 PM - Mass for *Barbara Neral* requested by Deacon Gene Neral

### Thursday, January 4 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

8:30 AM - Mass for *Sister Mary Ann Palko* requested by Barbara Bundy

### Friday, January 5 - St. John Neumann

8:30 AM - Mass for *Helen Baca* requested by family

### Saturday, January 6— Vigil of The Epiphany of the Lord

4:00 PM - Mass for *William David Rossman* requested by David & Bonnie Loth

### Sunday, January 7 - The Epiphany of the Lord

8:00 AM - Mass for *Marion Tessitore* requested by Bob & Ginny Reeder

11:00 AM - Mass for *People of the Parish*

### **ST ROSE OF LIMA SVDP CONFERENCE – CARE PACKAGE**

**PROGRAM 2024** -With the assistance of the parishioners from St Rose of Lima, St John the Evangelist and St Patrick, the St Rose SVDP Conference will once again be running its Care Package program for our seniors, the homeless in our community, new or expectant moms, and single parents. Our Conference helps make the lives a little bit easier for these groups of individuals and families by supplying Care Packages for their use. These packages contain items that each group would find useful, such as toiletries, blankets, gloves, hats, jig saw puzzles, scented candles, healthy snacks, diapers, baby wipes, parenting books, coffee mugs, bath bombs, activity books, etc. Each donor is also asked to include items to help boost the mental health of the recipient, such as a handwritten note of encouragement, a rosary, prayer card, gift card, etc. Also, new this year, our SVDP Conference is asking that you include in your package(s) a prayer card that our Conference will be supplying. The cards will be attached to the flyers that list suggested items for each group. The collection period will run from January 21<sup>st</sup> through March 11<sup>th</sup>. The care packages will be delivered to these needy individuals and families with the help of Family Services and WIC. The members of the St Rose SVDP Conference would like to take this time to thank all those who help make programs like this one possible and the lives of the needy a bit easier. God Bless You All!

**STEWARDSHIP CORNER:** Today we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. They are a model for all families! And just as the Holy Family is holy, our families too are called to be holy. This may seem like a daunting task at times! Yet, as Christian stewards we know that this holiness is achievable by living as disciples of Christ. Our Gospel today says a great deal about trust and surrender to our Lord – two trademark words of a steward. As the Holy Family brought the infant Jesus to the temple, they encountered two key individuals, Simeon and Anna. Upon seeing the Infant, both praised the Lord, rejoiced in the coming of their Savior and prophesized about what was to come. It says, “the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him.” We can imagine that two parents would be taken aback by these words! Yet, through all of this, the Holy Family surrendered their lives to God and had unwavering faith and trust in His plan. Thankfully, they did, because the fulfillment of this plan meant the salvation for man. Believe it or not, God has a plan for our lives too. Oftentimes, we get in the way of what He has in store for us. Although our plan might be ‘good’, God’s plan is great and will fulfill our hearts more than we could ever have imagined. Like the Holy Family, we just need to trust, surrender and be attentive to God’s voice. As we celebrate this Christmas season with joy and gladness for our Savior, let us deepen our commitment to Him through the love and service we give our family members, and the trust and surrender we place in God to take care of us each day.

### **December 16/17**

Envelopes	\$ 3,465.00
Loose Offerings	\$ 526.05
Parish Development	\$ 175.00
Christmas Offering	\$ 50.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 132.00
Retirement Fund	\$ 20.00
Online Giving	\$ 1,513.75
<b>Total Offertory</b>	<b>\$ 5,881.80</b>

**2023 Catholic Ministries Drive Goal - \$41, 761**

**January 1, 2023-November 30, 2023**

**Total Gifts/Pledges - \$38,897**

**FAMILIES AND THE GOSPEL:** A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar The gospel today shows Mary and Joseph weren’t ‘perfect’ parents. If you have ever been ‘amazed’ and ‘astonished’ at what came out of your child’s mouth, then you are in good company. If there were times you ‘didn’t understand’ your children or felt ‘anxious’ about their behavior so did Mary and Joseph. Parenting is tough but it is also the stuff of holiness.

### ST JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

Please call Ginny Reeder (695-7671) or email her at [giny.reeder@gmail.com](mailto: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  
Bill Arend • Charles Bassett • Idy Caporuscio  
Eleanor Christine • 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  
Anne Zelnosky**

HOME WITH THE LORD: Your prayers are requested for the repose of the souls of:

**Joanne Byrne**, sister of Joan Price  
**Kathy Ann Cecchine**, sister of Jane Strasser & Andy Miller  
**Bob Long**, father of Melissa Ringkamp, brother of Connie McManuels & Dee Schmerbeck

May they rest in the peace and joy of the Lord.

**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, 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.

### FAITH FORMATION NEWS

**December 31st-No Class-Happy New Year!**

**January 7th-Class 9:15am-10:45am**

**January 7th-10th Grade Spring Session -ALL 10th Grade Students must attend 9:15am-10:45am followed by the 10th Grade Rite of Commitment at 11AM Mass**

**January 14th-No Class**

**January 21st-Class 9:15am-10:45am**

**January 21st-9th Grade Spring Session-ALL 9th Grade Students must attend 9:15am-10:45am followed by the 9th Grade Rite of Blessing at 11am Mass**

**January 28th-No Class**

*If you would like more information or have questions, please contact Diane Ryan at 814-942-5503 or email [stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net](mailto: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](mailto:mfpetrak@hotmail.com).

**BLAZIN' ANGELS:** Join us on January 7th for a night of fellowship at St. John the Evangelist's Parish Center from 6-9pm. Anyone ages 18-39 are welcome to join. If you are interested in attending or interested in learning more please let Cherié Langenbacher and Amber Yasolsky know by emailing us at [blazinangels.yagroup@gmail.com](mailto:blazinangels.yagroup@gmail.com).

**HEALING MASS:** Holy Spirit Ministry will hold a special Healing Mass on Tuesday, January 9th at 7pm at St. Michael Church, Hollidaysburg. This powerful night of hope and healing is for all who are suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Fr. Brad Baldwin TOR will be the main celebrant. Praise and worship will precede the Mass at 6:30pm and prayer ministry will follow the Mass. All are welcome!

**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.

**BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Please email any upcoming bulletin announcements to Diane Ryan at [stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net](mailto:stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net) or call the Parish Center at 814-942-5503.

Alpha Course at St. John The Evangelist Church,  
Altoona - Thursday Evenings, Starting January 11th

**Got questions  
about life**

Why am I here  
is there more to life

Alpha

Dinner at 6:00 PM

Video at 6:40 PM

Small group Faith Sharing at 7:15 PM

Closing at 8:15 PM

Register online

[www.stjohnsaltoona.org](http://www.stjohnsaltoona.org)

Registration Deadline: Sunday, December 31st