



First Sunday of Lent

February 22, 2026

St. John the Evangelist Church

309 Lotz Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602 814-942-5503

PASTORAL STAFF

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MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY - 8:30 AM 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

February Prayer Intention of Pope Leo

For Children with Incurable Diseases
 Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.



NEXT WEEK'S APPOINTMENTS

LECTORS

Sat. Feb. 28-4:00 PM - Laverne Kovacs, Maria Spayd
 Sun. Mar. 1-8:00 AM - Norma Foose, Bill Foose
 Sun. Mar. 1-11:00 AM - Iris Tatar, Bob Olson

ALTAR SERVERS

Sat. Feb. 28-4:00 PM - Abigail Hovance, Sadie Swope
 Sun. Mar. 1-8:00 AM - NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED
 Sun. Mar. 1-11:00 AM - Madison Kantoski, Lexi Tatar

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sat. Feb. 28-4:00 PM - NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED
 Sun. Mar. 1-8:00 AM - Mike Greslick, Jennifer Helsley
 Sun. Mar. 1-11:00 AM - Marilyn Bevan, Barbara Bundy,
 Ken Gorman, Susanna Tomlinson, NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED

MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY

Sat. Feb. 28-4:00 PM - Connie Baker, Dennis Moughemer,
 Karen Moughemer, Jeremy Truscello
 Sun. Mar. 1-8:00 AM - Ray Kennedy, Ginny Reeder, Ed Stoltz,
 Mary Truesdale
 Sun. Mar. 1-11:00 AM - Walter Bloom, Dolores Capriotti,
 Parick Podoletz, NOT FILLED

SACRISTAN

Sat. Feb. 28-4:00 PM - Mary & Ray King
 Sun. Mar. 1-8:00 AM - Ashley Greslick
 Sun. Mar. 1-11:00 AM - Dolores Capriotti

SCRIP

Sat. Feb. 28-4:00 PM - Julie Beiswenger, Becky Merilli
 Sun. Mar. 1-8:00 AM - Erika Yasolsky, Heather Yasolsky
 Sun. Mar. 1-11:00 AM - Lori Baker, Carolyn English

A Few Words from the Pastor:

SAVE THE DATES! We will be having a Parish Mission on March 22nd, 23rd & 24th, featuring Catholic speaker Paul Koleske. Paul is a contemporary Catholic Christian Inspirational Speaker, Musician, Composer & Recording Artist from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The theme of the mission is *"Igniting the Light of Christ Within You."*

A SUMMER TOUR! I am organizing a 10 day tour this summer to experience the highlights of Britain, Ireland and Scotland. The estimated cost for a twin room is **\$3,850** per person, with an additional \$1,200 for airfare. This trip is scheduled from July 10 – 19, with departure from Dulles International Airport. For more details, go to the website for the [Britain and Ireland Highlights Tour | Grand European Travel](https://www.getours.com/tours/britain-ireland-highlights). <https://www.getours.com/tours/britain-ireland-highlights>. Please give me a call if you are interested!

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY: On Wednesday at 6:45 PM in the parish center (following our evening Mass), we gather to reflect on the Sunday readings. Our sessions last about an hour. Please join us!

ADULT ED IN LENT – Our Sunday morning sessions will continue through the Lenten Season, as we will complete our discussions of the Creed and turn toward the deeper reflections on the Passion of the Lord.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS - To encourage greater participation for Stations, and to promote a greater love for the Holy Eucharist, our Friday evening devotions will begin at 5:00 with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, with Stations of the Cross beginning at 5:30. Stations will conclude with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Please consider joining us!

FASTING AND ABSTINENCE: Remember that the Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence from meat. Throughout the season of Lent, however, DAILY FASTING can strengthen our will, remind us of the hungers of the human family, and certainly can put us in mind of our hunger for God. Remember that Jesus fasted 40 days and 40 nights in the desert. Our fasting is closely related to our care for the poor: when I fast, another person must eat in my place!

OPERATION RICE BOWL - we are participating again this year in Operation Rice Bowl, which is a good companion to our Lenten prayer and fasting. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the three pillars of the spiritual life.

POPE LEO'S LENTEN MESSAGE! Titled, "Listening and Fasting: Lent as a Time of Conversion," the papal message asked Catholics to come together as a community to listen to the word of God and to the vulnerable. The pope also invited the faithful to engage in a *"very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbor.* Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgment, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves." Instead, he asks that we strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace."

SAVE THE DATES!

Adoration/Stations of the Cross: Friday, February 27th Adoration at 5pm followed by Stations of the Cross at 5:30pm

Lent Communal Penance Service: Sunday, March 15th at 4pm

Spring Fling Brunch & Easter Egg Hunt: Sunday, March 22nd after the 11am Mass in Fr. Bailey Hall

Paul Koleske Parish Mission: Sunday, March 22nd-Tuesday, March 24th-More details to come!

Confirmation 2026: Sunday, April 19th at 2pm at St. John's-All are welcome to attend!

CMD 2026 ANNOUNCEMENT WEEKEND: The 2026 Catholic Ministries Drive begins throughout our diocese this weekend. This year's theme, Sent To Serve, reminds us that, by virtue of our baptism, each of us has been Sent To Serve, entrusted with gifts that are meant to be shared for the good of others. Saint Peter teaches us, "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). Our Catholic Ministries Drive supports 9 ministries throughout our diocese, which all fall into one of our three main focuses of evangelization, serving those in need, or formation of our priests and deacons. Please reflect on Bishop Mark's invitation when it arrives in your mail, and prayerfully consider supporting our diocesan ministries. You may return your pledge card and donation through the mail, make your payment online, or return your pledge card and donation to your parish through the offertory. All contributions received beyond our parish goal of \$37,300 will be used to fund parish projects such as Heating & Cooling and Tree Removal. Thank you for supporting the Catholic Ministries Drive and our diocese's vital ministries.

Schedule for the Week of February 22nd

Sunday, Feb. 22 - First Sunday of Lent

8:00 AM - Mass for *People of the Parish*

11:00 AM - Mass for *Tom Semelsberger* requested by
Fran Semelsberger

Monday, Feb. 23 - Lenten Weekday

8:30 AM - Mass for *Bob Bundy* requested by
Barbara Bundy

Tuesday, Feb. 24 - Lenten Weekday

8:30 AM - Mass for *Thanksgiving Mass for Mimi Crevecoeur* requested by Mimi Crevecoeur

Wednesday, Feb. 25 - Lenten Weekday

5:30 PM - Confessions

6:00 PM - Mass for *George & Genie Semko* requested by
Karen Mazzarella

Thursday, Feb. 26 - Lenten Weekday

8:30 AM - Mass for *Vincenza Mento* requested by
Bob & Ginny Reeder

Friday, Feb. 27 - Lenten Weekday

8:30 AM - Communion Service

Saturday, Feb. 28 - Vigil of Second Sunday of Lent

3:15 PM - Confessions

4:00 PM - Mass for *Ronald Costa* requested by
Michelle Costa

Sunday, March 1 - Second Sunday of Lent

8:00 AM - Mass for *Andrew Jr. & Florence Dancha*
requested by Vicki Faretta

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

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS: Please email any upcoming bulletin announcements to Diane Ryan at stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net or call the Parish Office at 814-942-5503. Bulletin announcements need to be submitted by Wednesday to be included in the following weekend's bulletin.

THANK YOU! A big thank you to everyone who made soup, donated bread and helped with setting up, serving and cleaning up for the Ash Wednesday Soup Supper. Our Faith Formation students also did a great job serving our parishioners. We collected \$539 for Haiti in donations and appreciate everyone's generosity. Thank you to everyone for attending and helping make this a successful event!

THANK YOU! The St. Vincent DePaul Conference would like to thank our parishioners for supporting the Care Package Program again this year. We filled 116 boxes for those in need! Your support is much appreciated!

LENT SCHEDULE FOR ST. JOHN'S:

Adoration and Stations of the Cross: Fridays during Lent with Adoration beginning at 5:00pm and Stations beginning at 5:30pm

Lent Penance Service: Sunday, March 15th at 4:00pm

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: As we begin the beautiful and challenging season of Lent, our readings this week remind us why we need these 40 days so much. They also suggest a particular strategy we Christian stewards might take as we make the journey towards Easter, so that we arrive there as better disciples – more focused on Christ and His mission for us.

Our Gospel passage, from Matthew, shows us by the example of Jesus Himself one way that we can attain spiritual strength and grow to become more effective disciples and stewards. In this passage we find our Lord in the desert, fasting for 40 days and 40 nights. Like Adam and Eve, He is confronted by the evil one. But unlike our fallen parents, our Lord triumphs over the devil's lies and sends him slithering away. How did He do it? By knowing the Scriptures and by proclaiming them confidently, and by His perfect trust in the Father.

This Lent, let's embrace this 40-day spiritual reset. Let's commit to prayerfully studying the Scriptures. This could take the form of a daily family Gospel reflection, a few moments with the Psalms at the beginning of a lunch break, "fasting" from social media, or any other countless ways. As faithful stewards, we are called to prioritize our use of time to seek a relationship with our loving God. Let's get to know Him better by studying His word this Lent.

February 7th/8th

Envelopes	\$	5,349.00
Loose Offerings	\$	5,443.00
Heating & Cooling	\$	320.00
Catholic Education	\$	25.00
Ash Wednesday	\$	30.00
Online Giving	\$	2,779.90
Total Offertory	\$	13,946.90

2026 Catholic Ministries Drive Goal: \$37,300

2025 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS are available upon request. Please call the Parish Office at 814-942-5503 to request your contribution statement to be mailed or picked up in the Parish Office. A contribution statement will not be mailed to you unless you call the office to request it. Thank you for your generous support!

ENDING HUNGER WITH CRS RICE BOWL: This Lent, our community will participate in CRS Rice Bowl—connecting our prayers, fasting and almsgiving to encounter God through our global family. We'll meet, pray for and learn from families in Ghana, Guatemala and Timor-Leste who are rising above the challenges of hunger and malnutrition. Pick up your rice bowl in the Gathering Space. Then, visit crsricebowl.org/join to share your Lenten prayer intentions.

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. **Prayer list will be cleared in June.** **Contact Ginny or the office to have names added or kept on the 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 • Wilbur J. Arend
Stephanie Baker • Barbara • Deb Bloom • Walt Bloom
Idy Caporuscio • Cheryl Dennis • Ed Drexler
Lois Dullinger • Charles Elder • Carol Field • Donald Free
Donna Fornwalt • Mark Hastings • Melissa Horne
Michael Horton • Tim Jimenez • Ray King
Rosanne Krawick • Sally Langham • Mary Lauterbach
Elsie MacCullagh • Dave Madden • Janet McNulty
Adena Delozier Mertz • Marian Monios • Mary Ann
Barb Nagle • Mary O Fleming • Richard Olson
Pat Rauch • Bette Richards • Dan Roberts
Darlene Scarpaci • Anne Showalter
Cathy Stapelfeld • Donna Taddy • Tammy
Tim Temofonte • Rose Wargo • Lois Werfel
Heather Yasolsky

HOME WITH THE LORD: Your prayers are requested for the repose of the souls of:
Suzanne Caldwell
Mary Lee Destefano, sister-in-law of Loretta Olson
John Patz
Marian Monios
May they rest in the peace and joy of the Lord.

ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL REGISTRATION: St. Patrick School in Newry is now accepting registrations for students entering Pre-K through 8th grade for the 2026-27 school year. Our Catholic education combines faith and learning, with a low-student-to-teacher ratio, with dedicated faculty providing personalized attention to every child. Contact the school office at 814-695-3819 to learn more and schedule a private tour. We look forward to welcoming your family!

GABRIEL PROJECT: The Altoona Gabriel Project now has 14 churches that have joined our ministry. We have over 60 moms and babies using our services. We are currently in need of high chairs, diapers size 4, 5 & 6, strollers, pack & plays and bassinets. Monetary donations are also appreciated for purchase of some of the larger items. Thank you for your continued generosity in helping those who are in need. The Gabriel project number is 814-440-1021.

MOTHER THERESA MINISTRY: If you know of a parishioner not currently on our list that is in a nursing facility, hospital or homebound that would like to receive Communion at home, a visit or cards please text or call Mary Susick at 814-207-0185.

FAITH FORMATION NEWS

February 22nd-Class

March 1st-No Class

March 8th-Class

March 15th-No Class-Confirmation Mentor Meeting after 11am Mass in the gym

March 22nd-Class

March 22nd-Easter Egg Hunt/Spring Fling Brunch after 11am Mass in Gym

March 29th-No Class-Palm Sunday

April 5th-No Class-Easter Sunday

April 12th-Class

All public school students entering kindergarten through 11th grade should be registered with the Faith Formation Program.

All catholic school students entering 2nd grade and 9th-11th grade should be registered with the Faith Formation Program to prepare for Sacraments.

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

MARRIAGE PREP 2026: The Marriage Preparation Schedule for 2026 is available at www.dioceseaj.org under Ministries and then Marriage Preparation. Brochures with dates and additional information are available on the kiosk in the Gathering Space. Contact the Family Life Office at 814-317-2643 for questions.

SCRIP: We just received a check for \$5,000 from our Scrip profits at St. John's! Want to help us increase that profit even more? Consider buying Scrip cards for your gas, groceries, restaurants, home improvement projects and more! Make buying and using Scrip a habit. Shopping with gift cards is something you can make part of your routine. Buy a new eGift card every time you grab lunch from your favorite spot. And add money to your reloadable gas gift card every time you fill up your tank. Soon, you'll always remember to use gift cards—without even thinking about it. And you will be helping the church each time!

FISH FRY: The Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament will have their Annual Lenten Fish Fry Lunch all Fridays during Lent, except Good Friday. Cost is \$12 for a fish sandwich, mac & cheese and coleslaw. Drive thru Cathedral Alley Door Pick up from 10:30am-1pm. Orders of 10 or more will be delivered if you call ahead at 814-944-4603.

FISH FRY: Our Lady of Lourdes Famous Fish Fry Serving every Friday during Lent including Good Friday Take out begins 3:30pm Eat in begins 4:30pm Cost \$16 Hand breaded/Fried Haddock or our delicious Baked Haddock Homemade Mac & Cheese or French Fries Pick 2- Stewed Tomatoes, Coleslaw, or Applesauce Dessert, Lemonade & Coffee included