

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Parish Family

10th & Mahantongo Sts., Pottsville, Pa. 17901 • www.saintjohnpottsville.org

December 28, 2025 • The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

*The child
grew and
became strong,
filled with
wisdom; and
the favor
of God
was upon him.*

Luke 2:40

THE HOLY FAMILY OF
Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Holy Family with the Infant John the Baptist Offering Fruit
by Simone Cantarini, between 1632-1648

© Diocesan

Pastor..... *Rev. Kevin J. Bobbin*
Deacon.....*Robert A. Reiley*

Parish Council President *John Crane*
E-mail.....*johncrane1@mac.com*
Choir Director/Organist*David Derbes*
CCD Coordinator..... *Tina Seiger*
Rectory (570) 622-5470
Rectory Fax (570) 622-4589
E-mail.....*stjbparish@comcast.net*
Nativity BVM High School (570) 622-8110
Assumption BVM Elementary..... (570) 622-0106
St. Joseph Center..... (570) 622-4638

Cemetery Information..... (570) 622-5470

C.C.D.

All children preparing to receive any sacrament must be in a Religious Education Program for two consecutive years immediately prior to receiving a Sacrament. The child must also be a practicing Catholic.

Certificates of Eligibility

Certificates to act as sponsors, Godparents, etc. will only be issued to parishioners who are formally registered with the church and attend Mass on a regular basis.

Bulletin Deadline

Monday prior to publication

New Parishioners

Please call the rectory for an appointment to register.

Sick Calls

Please notify the parish office.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturdays..... 4:15 to 4:45 p.m..
 Sundays 7:45 to 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 to 10:15 a.m..
 or by appointment

Sacrament of Marriage

Please call the Rectory one year in advance.

Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated on Sundays at 11:30 a.m.
 Baptismal Preparation for Parents must precede the Baptism.
 Please contact Father Bobbin for an appointment.

Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator

Wendy S. Krisak, M.A., N.C.C., L.P.C. (800) 791-9209

Diocesan Secretary for Youth Protection & Catholic Human Services

Pamela J. Russo, M.S.W., M.S.
 Secretary, Youth Protection and Catholic Human Services
 P.O. Box F, Allentown, PA 18105-1538
 610-871-5200 ext. 2204
prusso@allentowndiocese.org

Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service

1-800-276-1562 www.ReportBishopAbuse.org

Diocese of Allentown Website

www.allentowndiocese.org



Eucharistic Adoration

We offer opportunities to spend time in prayer with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament ...

- ◆ A holy hour in the **chapel every Monday evening** (unless announced otherwise) from **5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.** This is a simple holy hour without any formal prayer or Benediction. It is not necessary to come for the entire hour. Just stop by as you desire.
- ◆ A holy hour in the **main church on the eve of First Friday** from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. This will be a formal holy hour ending with Benediction. Father will be available for Confessions.

Communion for the Homebound

If you or a family member, friend, or neighbor who is a member of St. John is confined to home, a nursing home or assisted living facility because of illness, age, or disability and would like to receive Holy Communion on a monthly basis, please call the rectory. We traditionally visit the sick and homebound on or around the first Friday of the month. Please help us meet the spiritual needs of our homebound parishioners.



Pray

We remember in prayer those who are ill or recently deceased. We commend to our Divine Lord all of our aged people and those **residing in nursing homes.**

For our Sick: *Sherri Post, Tom Jefferson, Doug Broughton, Kathy Vicic, Joanne Kitsock, Jane Baker, Brenda Helt, Beth Ann Clark*

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 27

5:00 p.m. Charles Bowers
(M/M Ralph Carestia)

Sunday, December 28

8:15 a.m. Joan Garland
(Garland & Kurtek Family)

Sunday, December 28

10:30 a.m. Laurita Buehler
(Joyce Gerace)

Monday, December 29—NO MASS

Tuesday, December 30—NO MASS

Solemnity of Mary

Wednesday, December 31

5:00 p.m. St. John's Parish Family

Thursday, January 1

10:00 a.m. Bill Pugh
(Robert & Margaret Daniels)

Friday, January 2—NO MASS

Saturday, January 3

5:00 p.m. Tony Kochol
(Mary Porter)

Sunday, January 4

8:15 a.m. Jerry Hudock, 2nd Anniv.
(Diane Hudock & Children)

Sunday, January 4

10:30 a.m. John Gerace
(Paul & Bernie Gombola)

Message from Father Bobbin

Dear Parishioners,

As we come to the end of 2025, we also come to the end of the Church's Jubilee Year of Hope. As I said in the homily a few weeks ago, we do not leave *hope* behind when we reach 2026. Christians are people of hope. Even though we spent Advent anticipating the coming of Jesus on Christmas, and we now celebrate His presence in our lives this Christmas season, we are still waiting and anticipating. We await the ultimate "Christmas" of heaven. We await complete union with Jesus. We await total peace, joy, and fulfillment, the end of all troubles and suffering, the end of sin and evil, and for everything to be set right.

So as we cross into a new calendar year, we continue to journey through this present life with hope for the future that awaits us. To *hope* for something is not merely to *wish* for something. We know the thing we're hoping for (heaven) is real and it will happen. But to hope for this does not mean we can be passive and expect the thing we hope for to just happen automatically. Our hope must be "backed up" by striving to live a life of discipleship and ongoing conversion. Then, in spite of our struggles, setbacks, and failings, our hope will give us the confidence that our Lord will get us to the goal of our lives, that we have nothing to fear.

In Christ,
Fr. Bobbin

Fr. Bobbin's Scripture Study

... will be offered Thursday evenings 6:30-7:30 on Feb. 12, 19, 26, March 12, 19, 26, April 9, 23, and May 7, 14. Join us in person in Longinus Hall or at home on Zoom (*Please email Father for the Zoom link: kbobbin@allentowndiocese.org).

Fr. Bobbin's Scripture study attempts to give an overview and background for the books of Sacred Scripture to be of help with personal reading and study, Bible study groups, and getting more out of hearing the Word proclaimed at Mass. All are welcome.

2026 Calendars

Church calendars for the New Year are available at the church exits. Please feel free to take one, but please make sure they are not wasted. We wish to thank the James E. Humphrey Funeral Home for taking care of this expense.

Next Week's Readings

Epiphany of the Lord
(January 3/4)

Reading I: Isaiah 60:1-6

Reading II: Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Prayer for Vocations

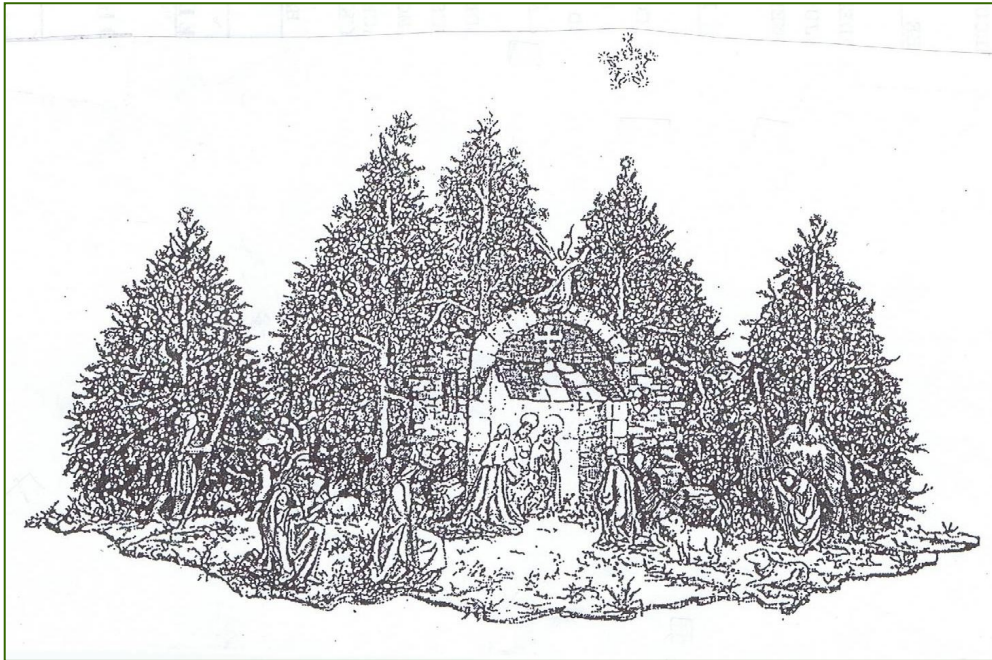
Heavenly Father, Lord of the harvest, call forth vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life from our diocese and our families. Inspire men to imitate Christ, the Eternal High Priest, in sacrificial service to your Church. Move the hearts of men and women to offer themselves wholly to You in poverty, chastity and obedience. Send them as laborers for Your harvest. Inspire the faithful to support them with prayers and sacrifice. Raise up holy families who foster openness to your call. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Upcoming Events

January

4	9:00 a.m.	CCD Class	Chapel/LH
4	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School/Children's Liturgy	L.H.
4	6:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class	L.H.
11	9:00 a.m.	CCD Class	Chapel/L.H.
11	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School/Children's Liturgy	L.H.
25	TBD	CCD Class—All Grades	Providence Place

L.H. = Longinus Hall F.R. = Rectory R.B. = Russell Building



St. John's Crèche

This sketch by the late Dr. David Marshall depicts St. John's Crèche. It was made of hand-carved wood in the 1870's and shipped to Pottsville from Southern Germany. It is a beautiful and priceless treasure of our parish.

Mary, Holy Mother of God ... January 1st



Let us strive to be pure and holy like our Heavenly Mother. All mothers want their children to inherit or acquire their good qualities. Our Heavenly Mother is no exception. With Joseph, she succeeded in training the Child Jesus, so that He grew in holiness and in "favor before God and man." Hence, our best way of celebrating this feast and honoring our Heavenly Mother would be to promise her that we will practice her virtues of Faith, obedience, purity and humble service. In this way, we will be trying to become the saintly sons and daughters of our Heavenly Mother, the Holy Mother of God.

**Beloved, we are God's children now;
what we shall be has not yet been revealed.**

— 1 John 3:2a

**LET THE PEACE OF
CHRIST
CONTROL YOUR HEARTS**

— FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY —

Candles

BVM

1&2. Special Intention

St. Joseph

1. For Ferdinand Lago
by Neil & Frances Manus
2. IMO Joanne Whalen
by Matthew Whalen

Sanctuary

IMO John Whalen
by Matthew Whalen

Guardian Angels

1. IMO Mark Mickey
by Frances Brahler Mickey
2. IMO Nancy Brahler Newton
by Frances Brahler Mickey
3. IMO Elizabeth Brahler
by Frances Brahler Mickey
4. IMO Joseph Brahler
by Frances Brahler Mickey

Liturgical Min. Schedule

Epiphany of the Lord

January 3 — 5:00 p.m. Mass

Reader: Lucilla Kochol

EM: Dan & Hermine Murphy

Server: Colin McGinley
Gabriel Scheidel

Cantor: Dave Derbes

January 4 — 8:15 a.m. Mass

Reader: Heidi Gorski

EM: Mike Ambrose, Joe Palmieri

Servers: Sophia Palmieri
Luke Lieberman

Cantor: Vincent Prestileo

January 4—10:30 a.m. Mass

Reader: Jennifer Daubert

EM: Gerry Schwartz
Justina Majestic

Servers: Cooper Felty
Jackson Daubert

Cantor: Dave Derbes

Weekend Sacristan: R.J. Post

The Reason for the Season of Christmas

"The Word became Flesh and made His dwelling among us, and we have seen His glory: The glory of an only Son coming from the Father, filled with enduring love." (John 1:14)

The word Christmas was derived from the Old English Cristes Maesse or "Mass of Christmas." Over the centuries it has become a comprehensive word including both the religious traditions and the secular traditions. In North America, the early immigrants brought their different Christmas traditions. The Germans brought the Christmas tree, the Irish contributed the lights in windows of homes, Catholic immigrants brought Midnight Mass and everyone had their own Christmas carols.

Whenever we recall the Nativity story, we are inspired by the birth of Jesus in such poor and difficult surroundings. We see the young couple, far from home, expecting a baby. We see crowds coming into town to register for the census. We see innkeepers and merchants busy with the influx of people. Amidst all the hubbub and the excitement, a child is born.

Poor shepherds were the first to hear about the birth of Jesus. An angel told them that a child was born and was to be found in a lowly manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. The shepherds hurried over to Bethlehem to see the Baby. Perhaps they brought some of the simple food they had to share. Later, Magi from the East travelled a great distance in search of the Child. They too, brought gifts to the "newborn king" – the one born in such a humble setting.

Finding Christ was not a difficult thing to do. Those sincerely searching for Him were guided along the way. Jesus made it very clear where He could be found. Among the poor, the needy, and the outcasts is where he lived His life. He fed the people who came to listen to Him teach. He healed those who suffered. While Jesus lived on earth, anyone looking for Jesus knew where He could be found.

This Christmas, if you are looking for Jesus, you know where He can be found. He is no longer a Baby in a manger. That Child is the Jesus who grew up and lived among the lowly and the humble. He worked and prayed with sinners and with those who needed healing and instruction. He told people, "Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me." If you are looking for Christ this Christmas, you know where to go.

Nativity Happenings

Members of the Interact Club collected winter clothing during the month of November. Members of the club also collected diapers and all items were donated to Catholic Charities. The Interact Club sponsored a Red Cross Blood Drive on November 3rd. We met our goal and collected 35 units of blood. The Club will sponsor this event again in the Spring. The next event will be the writing of Christmas cards to local nursing homes and the student in Pre-K through 2nd grade in our partner schools

Nativity is currently accepting inquiries for enrollment for the 2026-2027 school year. Individual meetings, school tours and shadow days are being scheduled for possible enrollment. Please contact Mrs. Jennifer Daubert in the Development Office with any enrollment questions.

Open House & Registration for the 2026-2027 school year at Nativity is scheduled for Sunday, January 25, 2026 from 1 to 3 pm at the school. Faculty, staff, administration and coaches will be available to answer questions. Tours will be given and tuition assistance drawings will be available for those who register. Please contact Mrs. Jennifer Daubert @ 570-622-1810 with any questions.

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

O God of new beginnings and wonderful surprises, thank you for the gift of a new year.

May it be a time of grace for us, a time to grow in faith and love, a time to renew our commitment to following Your Son, Jesus.

May it be a year of blessing, a time to cherish our family and friends.

May it be a time to renew our efforts at work, as we embrace our faith more fully.

Walk with us, please, in every day and every hour of this New Year, that the light of Christ might shine through us, in spite of our weaknesses and failings.

Above all, may we remember this year that we are pilgrims on the sacred path to You.

Amen.

The Holy Family

Let us imitate the Holy Family in our Christian families, and our family will be a cell and a prefiguration of the heavenly family. Say a prayer dedicating your family to the Holy Family. Also pray for all families and for our country to uphold the sanctity of the marriage bond which is under attack.

Family Matters

Holy Family of the Year.

We pray this week for the intercession of our Holy Family — Jesus, Mary and Joseph, to intercede for all families. Whether we struggle as family or not, we ask to see Jesus' presence in our families' everyday lives.

New Year's Day. This New Year offers your family a new beginning. Consider making a family commitment (AKA resolution). Make it simple, for all to be able to do. Put it on the refrigerator door. Pray for the grace to follow through.

Summer Festival Pot Luck Stand —YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

As far off as it seems, we are already gathering plans for our Summer Festival! After holiday sales are the perfect place to grab great prizes for our Potluck Stand! It is so important for our Potluck Stand's success to start early, we will need lots of donated prizes! A tote will be placed in the back of church in January, or please tryout our super easy Amazon wish list which will send prizes to us directly! We also are in need of gift cards of any denomination to any of your favorite places, shops and restaurants! They can be placed in the collection baskets in a labeled envelope for Potluck. Any committee member can assist you or please call Shanna Deibert (570)617-4769.

We are in need of some volunteers to help organize and run our Potluck stand, we have guidance and help to assist you, just need some extra hands!

Our **first meeting** for Summer Festival 2026 is **Thursday January 22nd at 7:30pm in Longinus Hall** (weather permitting) We need you!!!! We of course welcome anyone to join our festival planning committee always, however, we also need thoughts, opinions, suggestions and concerns of our parish family! You do not need to be a committee member to help us improve our Summer Festival! We want to hear ideas, and also things you think could be better, please feel free to let us know. Any committee member can relay this information or you can call or text Shanna Deibert.

Our **Summer Festival dates** are **July 17 & 18** please mark your calendars! We are so excited to kick off planning such a huge event for our church and hopefully make it our best year yet! Thank you again for your support!

Summer Festival Committee ... Michelle Ambrose, Ed Brahler, Sandy Clauser, Michelle Darhun, Shanna Deibert, Chrissy Eagan, Sandy Frinzi, Rik Jochems, Maria Mason, Joe Palmieri, Ray Petrilla, Jason Prestileo, Donna Pugh, Rick Smith.

Flowers in Church

Generally speaking, flowers are donations. The parish decorates the church for the Christmas and Easter seasons (partly thanks to your donations). The rest of the year, we welcome donations of flowers.

Flowers are **not** appropriate during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. Flowers **are** appropriate on:

- Sundays in Ordinary Time
- Sundays in the Easter Season (after the original Easter flowers have died)
- Holy Days—such as—Ascension Thursday, Assumption (August 15), All Saints Day (November 1), Immaculate Conception (December 8)

If you would ever like to donate flowers (perhaps in memory of a loved one), please call the rectory 570-622-5470 ext. 3.

Diocesan Events

Closing Celebration of the Jubilee Year of Hope. All are invited to attend the closing celebration for the Jubilee Year of Hope on Sunday, December 28, the Feast of the Holy Family, the same feast on which we began the Jubilee Year of Hope one year ago. The celebration will take place at the Cathedral Church of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown. At 2:00 PM there will be a choral presentation of *Vivaldi's Gloria* by the Cathedral Choir, beautifully interspersed with a Narrative Tour of the Cathedral Church, offering insights into the sacred art and architecture of the Cathedral in light of our diocesan history and mission. The Sacrament of Penance will also be available from 2-3pm. The closing Mass will be at 3pm, celebrated by Bishop Schlert.

Mustard Seedlings

Beginning in 2026, we invite all moms from the newly pregnant to pre-k parenting stage to join us in Longinus Hall for fellowship and faith formation. Our first meeting is Thursday January 8, 9:30am-11:00am. We will provide activities for kids and coffee for the moms! Email mgreenlundcontent@gmail.com for the full 2026 schedule or if you have questions.

Toys and Crafts supplies needed!

A ministry for new mothers is coming to our parish in 2026, and we need help making the startup successful! If you have used or new toys for children age 0-5, please donate them to the drop off location at Farlow's Deli down the road. Or, scan the QR code to access the ministry's Amazon Registry featuring needed craft supplies.



Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

December 28, 2025

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 | Col 3:12-21 | Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

In his Angelus address on the Feast of the Holy Family in 2001, St. John Paul II shared this with those gathered: “If we aspire to a deeper understanding of Jesus’ life and mission, we must draw close to the mystery of the Holy Family of Nazareth to observe and listen.” Following in the footsteps of the Holy Family in today’s Scripture, we find ourselves in quiet Bethlehem, just after the departure of the Magi. The angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, this time with a warning: “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.” They trust in God and their response is immediate. It is easy for us to imagine the Holy Family as different from ourselves — holier and more spiritual. Certainly, that’s true. They were holy but they were also fully human, which means that what they attained is possible for each of us. Let us try to imitate them in this holiness.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

It’s easy to glamorize the life of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, but in reality, the cross was with them long before the crucifixion. From the moment of the Annunciation, there would be trials, temptations, and sufferings. But each time, they respond with immediate obedience and deep trust. In doing so, they give us all a perfect example of what the Christian life should look like: a life motivated by love and always listening for the voice of God, ready to respond in an instant. As we accompany others on this journey of faith, we also must listen deeply to them in order to help them in discerning the Spirit’s movement in their lives. As we hone the spiritual muscle of attentive listening, we grow in our ability to respond to God and to God’s action in our lives, and to help others do the same.

REFLECT

Most of us will never hear from an angel in the middle of the night telling us to walk hundreds of miles with our baby in tow. But every single one of us will be — has been — called. Let us pray to the Holy Family for an increase in the virtues of obedience and trust, so that we can respond to God’s call in our lives.

