

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Parish Family

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

December 19, 2021 • Fourth Sunday of Advent



Advent

~ a time for preparation ~

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 18

5:00 p.m. John & Margaret Kasinecz
(John & Barbara Powers)

Sunday, December 19

8:15 a.m. Sharon Lonergan
(Ed & Gerry Schwartz)

Sunday, December 19

10:30 a.m. Sninski Family
(Zambo Family)

Monday, December 20

6:30 p.m. James & Emma Burns
(Joe & Ann Burns)

Tuesday, December 21

9:00 a.m. George Hahner Sr.
(Scott Hahner)

Wednesday, December 22

9:00 a.m. Robert Lotz
(Rita Lotz)

Thursday, December 23

9:00 a.m. St. John's Parish Family

Friday, December 24

4:00 p.m. St. John's Parish Family
6:00 p.m. St. John's Parish Family
10:00 p.m. St. John's Parish Family

Saturday, December 25

10:00 a.m. St. John's Parish Family

Sunday, December 26

8:15 a.m. Bill & Marie Flynn

Sunday, December 26

10:30 a.m. Noel Glunz
(Pat, Amy, Missy Scheetz)

Message from Father Bobbin

Dear Parishioners,

On this last Sunday before Christmas, I would like to take the opportunity once again to say thank you. In particular, I would like to acknowledge all of you who serve in liturgical ministries:

Our lectors, who proclaim God's Word with care and dignity.

Our extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, who reverently assist in bringing us Jesus' presence in Holy Communion.

Our altar servers, who stepped up to assist at Mass again after the pandemic.

Dave Derbes, our cantors, choir members, and musicians, who give their time and talents to provide the music that is a key part of our worship.

Our ushers, who not only take care of necessary tasks at Mass, but help create a welcoming environment.

Our sacristans, who are a great help to me in making sure everything is prepared for Mass and properly cared for afterwards.

Our volunteer church cleaning crew and all of our helpers behind the scenes, who do numerous small jobs, often on their own initiative, to maintain and improve our church.

I've probably forgotten a category, but know that I am grateful to all of you for your commitment, sacrifices, flexibility, and most of all, for the witness of your faith in the example you set. Finally, a special thanks to my fellow member of the clergy, Deacon Larry, for his ministry at St. John, for being a huge help to me since I arrived, and for the privilege of serving with him every weekend.

*In Christ,
Fr. Bobbin*



Year of Real
PRESENCE
CENTERED IN THE HOLY EUCHARIST

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

Patricia Thomas • Sheri Post

Young Adults. We pray for the young adults of our parish who are often overlooked. May they increase in their faith and may the Holy Spirit continue to provide guidance in life's journey.

Advent is a time of
Hopeful longing, Joyful expectation,
Prayerful penance and Spiritual
Preparation.

Upcoming Events

December

19	10:30 a.m.	Little Children's Sunday Preschool	L.H.
19	11:30 a.m.	Community Meeting	L.H.
20	7:00 p.m.	Eucharistic Holy Hour	Chapel
24	4:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass	Church
24	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass	Church
24	10:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass	Church
25	10:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass	Church
31	5:15 p.m.	Solemnity of Mary - Mass	Church

January

1	10:00 a.m.	Solemnity of Mary - Mass	Church
2	8:15 a.m.	Epiphany of the Lord - Mass	Church
2	10:30 a.m.	Epiphany of the Lord - Mass	Church

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

Tues. 7:15 p.m. Weekly Men's Group Zoom
Meeting ID: 824-780-6433 Password: Mary

Retirement Fund for Religious

A sister writes, "Our Prayers belong most of all to the generous benefactors whose donations have made this financial assistance possible." Thank you for supporting last week's Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Visit retiredreligious.org to learn how your gift supports elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

Donations to Local Faith Based Ministries

We are collecting items for the following local Faith Based Ministries during this Advent Season: Jewel, Servants to All, Schuylkill Hope Center for Victims of Domestic Violence (formerly SWIC).

Jewel—requested scarves, hats, gloves, socks, devotionals, journals, lotion.

Servants to All — requested pop top cans of food (example: tuna packets, sausages, spaghetti, ravioli, etc), bottled water, snack bags of chips, candy, cookies, fully cooked soups with pop top lids (no condensed soups), hats, scarves, and gloves.

Schuylkill Hope Center for Victims of Domestic Violence — requested bed pillows, twin sheets, blankets, paper towels, silverware.

Containers will be available in the rear of church. **DO NOT WRAP ANY ITEMS.**

The collection of items will take place until December 19.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Christmas Wafers "Oplatki"

For centuries on Christmas Eve, families in Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic and Slovakia have practiced a beautiful tradition. It is the breaking and sharing of the Oplatek – Christmas Wafer. Oplatek taken from the Latin word oblatum, meaning Sacred Bread, has been the symbol of Christianity and Jesus Christ our bread of life since the Last Supper. The host or hostess leads in a special prayer and distributes an oplatek to the participants. Each person breaks off a piece of the other's oplatek and continues until they have exchanged good wishes and blessings with everyone.

Oplatki are available at the Rectory.



Candles

BVM

1. IMO Marie Majestic
by Kathy Hughes
2. IMO JoAnn Heller
by Barbara Wollyung

St. Joseph

1. IMO Erika Stangl Seasock
by Joe & Dorothy Stangl
& Michael Felker
2. IMO Leo & Dorothy Lotz
by Ron & Pat Lombel

Sanctuary

IMO Erika Stangl Seasock
by Joe & Dorothy Stangl
& Michael Felker

Guardian Angels

1. IMO Al Majestic
by Kathy Hughes
2. IMO Mildred Ditzler
by Eleanor Schaeffer
- 3&4. Special Intention

Banns of Marriage

III—Alexandra Disabella
& Matthew Thomas

St. John's Choir

St. John's Choir is welcoming new and current members to the choir to sing Saturday 5:00 p.m. Masses and special Masses. This is a very rewarding experience for anyone seeking to become more involved in our Parish Family. No prior singing experience or reading of music is required. Contact St. John's Rectory 570-622-5470 for more information.

Welcome Visitors

Thank you for worshiping with us today. If you are visiting our beautiful church, please know you are most welcome! If you have questions or are interested in joining our parish family, please call the rectory 570-622-5470.

Liturgical Minister Schedule

December 24— 4 p.m. Mass

Reader: Frank Murphy
Euch.Min.: Nick Quinn, Mary Modesto, Justina Majestic, Bill Gianfagna
Servers: Luke Schane

December 24— 6 p.m. Mass

Reader: Jen Daubert
Euch.Min.: Brian & George Forney
Servers: Jackson & Hayden Daubert

December 24—10 p.m. Mass

Reader: Lucilla Kochol
Euch.Min.: Dan & Hermine Murphy
Server: Brandon & Andrew Smith

December 25—10 a.m. Mass

Reader: Heidi Gorski
Euch.Min.: Joyce Gerace
Servers: Stanley & Alek Gorski

December 26—8:15 a.m. Mass

Reader: Janet Daubert
Euch.Min.: Gerry Schwartz
Servers: Madison & Caden Wright

December 26—10:30 a.m. Mass

Reader: Mary Matulevich
Euch.Min.: Ray Petrilla
Servers: Lukas & Finley McNamara

2022 Church 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.

JOY

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve Masses

Friday, December 24
 4 p.m. + (6 p.m. Children's Mass) + 10 p.m.
(Preludes & Carols at 9:30 p.m.)

Christmas Day Masses

Saturday, December 25 -- 10:00 a.m. only

Feast of the Holy Family Masses

Sunday, December 26 -- 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

Solemnity of Mary Masses

Friday, December 31 -- 5:15 p.m.
 Saturday, January 1 -- 10:00 a.m. only

Epiphany of the Lord Masses

Sunday, January 2 -- 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.



The Advent Penance Service is scheduled for **Monday, December 20**, at St. Patrick Church. A brief prayer service will be offered at 7 pm. Six priests will be available to hear confessions. The Parishes of St. John the Baptist, St. Clare of Assisi, Holy Cross, and St. Patrick are invited to celebrate together at St. Patrick Church the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The priests will be available until the last confession is heard.

Going to Confession

The Church designates this Advent Season of preparation as an important time to receive the sacrament of Penance also known as the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this sacrament, we examine our life and we seek forgiveness for those things, those actions that keep us from letting the Lord more deeply in our heart.

Confessions at St. John's are as follows:

Monday—December 20—noon to 1 p.m.
 Tuesday—December 21—6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
 Wednesday—December 22—4 to 5 p.m.



Christmas Envelopes

The Christmas envelope again this year can be found in your recent envelope packet for December and January. There will be no special mailing of the Christmas envelope. If you do not receive regular envelopes or did not receive a Christmas envelope in the mail, they are available on the tables in the rear of church.

Once again, we ask for your generous support in the Christmas collection. May we suggest a **\$35.00** Christmas donation to the parish. If you can afford to give more, it is greatly appreciated. Once again, thank you for your continued generosity.

Children's Box Envelopes

If your child(ren) would like to receive a box of weekly contribution envelopes for 2022, please contact the rectory during the week at ... 622-5470 ext.3.



Thank You ...

We would like to thank Bob Hahner and the following Confirmation students for removing the flags from the veterans' graves in St John's cemetery in preparation for the winter: *Christian Alvarez, Jackson Daubert, Brody Herndon, Michael Prestileo, Andrew Smith*

The Nativity

The tradition of having a Nativity scene or “crèche” was made popular by St. Francis of Assisi. It is a reproduction of the cave in Bethlehem with Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus in a manger, shepherds, angels, and animals. Each night during Advent, children are encouraged to place in the manger one piece of straw for each good deed done that day by a family member. This Advent tradition combines the spirit of conversion and the coming of Jesus. There is a blessing ceremony provided by the Church in the Book of Blessings for the crèche.

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.

Christmas is a time of visiting, giving, helping and sharing. Christmas is a special feast for those who provide these and other services in their community. Parishioners are asked to reflect on the people and the circumstances of the first Christmas. 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.

Finding Christ

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.

Blessing of the Christmas Meal

Abba, Father, we gather at this table to celebrate the joy of Jesus' birth. We rejoice at being together and remember those who are distant; we recall with love those who have died. We thank you for the gift each of us is to the other (family members name some special trait of other members, or something special one member has done for another since last Christmas). Hold us close to you and to each other, and help us to share your love with all we meet. We pray this in the name of Jesus, born this day. Amen.



“
*HIS
 GREATNESS
 SHALL REACH
 TO THE ENDS
 OF THE
 EARTH; HE
 SHALL BE
 PEACE.*
 ”

(MI 5:3-4)

December 19, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mi 5:1-4 | Heb 10:5-10 | Lk 1:39-45

Written by
 THE
 FAITHFUL
 DISCIPLE

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

“You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah
 too small to be among the clans of Judah,
 from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel;”

We do not have to go see the most recent superhero movie or binge-watch a streaming TV series that celebrates the under-dog to feel the elation that comes with overcoming evil. We need only to look at our own lives, and God’s plan of salvation for us, to understand what it truly means to be triumphant. From tiny little Bethlehem – a town of no consequence – would arise the Savior of the world. He would be the One who came to do God’s will, and thus consecrated us to God through the offering of his own body as sacrifice, once for all. This is the One Mary carried in her womb and whom Elizabeth’s unborn child – we know to be John the Baptist – recognized. He is the child-most-vulnerable who would become King of the Universe, “stand[ing] firm and shepherd[ing] his flock by the strength of the Lord.” This is the God we serve: the One who became like us so that we may one day be like him. We shall soon celebrate the anniversary of his birth, while also waiting in joyful hope for his coming again. In this time of preparation, then, we pray for the grace to know the Lord more fully and to appreciate with gratitude the Savior he truly is.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, now is the time many of us will begin to gather – as families, friends, and faith communities. What an ideal opportunity to renew our relationships with one another and with Jesus, asking the Holy Spirit to help us recognize the presence of God in our lives and in others. Micah’s prophesy from today’s first reading endures: “His greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.” Let’s do our part to share the peace and joy of Christ with those we encounter, witnessing to his saving grace in our lives, and offering others an opportunity to be a part of the greatest story, ever – of God’s saving action.

INVITE/PRAY Invite visiting family members to your parish or faith community for a concert, worship or other Advent activity. If that’s not possible, pray the O Antiphons together at home.

Parochial Administrator *Rev. Kevin J. Bobbin*
Deacon *Lawrence Lonergan*

Parish Council President *Robert Bechtel*
Choir Director/Organist *David Derbes*
CCD Coordinator *Lucilla Kochol*

Rectory (570) 622-5470
Rectory Fax (570) 622-4589
E-mail *stjbparish@comcast.net*
Russell Building (570) 628-3002
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

First Sunday of each month 11:30 a.m.
 Second Sunday 10:30 a.m. Mass
 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

V: Pray for us, O holy
 Mother of God.

R: That we may be made
 worthy of the promises of Christ.