



# Saint Francis of Assisi of Western Fayette County

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

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*A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg  
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust*

Bishop Larry J. Kulick, J.C.L.



## December 10, 2023

**Rev. Dick Anthony Cortado  
Administrator**

[dcortado@dioceseofgreensburg.org](mailto:dcortado@dioceseofgreensburg.org)

### Masses in Masontown

Monday, Wednesday, Friday ..8:00 am  
Saturday .....6:00 pm  
Sunday..... 8:00 am & 11:30 am

**Confessions:** Saturday 5:00-5:30 pm

**Adoration:** First & Third  
Fridays - 4:30 to 6:00 pm

### Masses in Footedale

Tuesday & Thursday .....8:00 am  
Saturday: .....4:00 pm  
Sunday.....9:30 am

**Confessions:** Saturday 3:00-3:30 pm

**Adoration:** Second & Fourth  
Wednesdays - 12:30 to 2:00 pm

**Office Hours:** Monday through  
Friday - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

**Bulletin Articles:** The deadline  
for placing articles in the bulletin  
is Monday at Noon.

### New Parishioners, Welcome!

Please register as soon as possible.

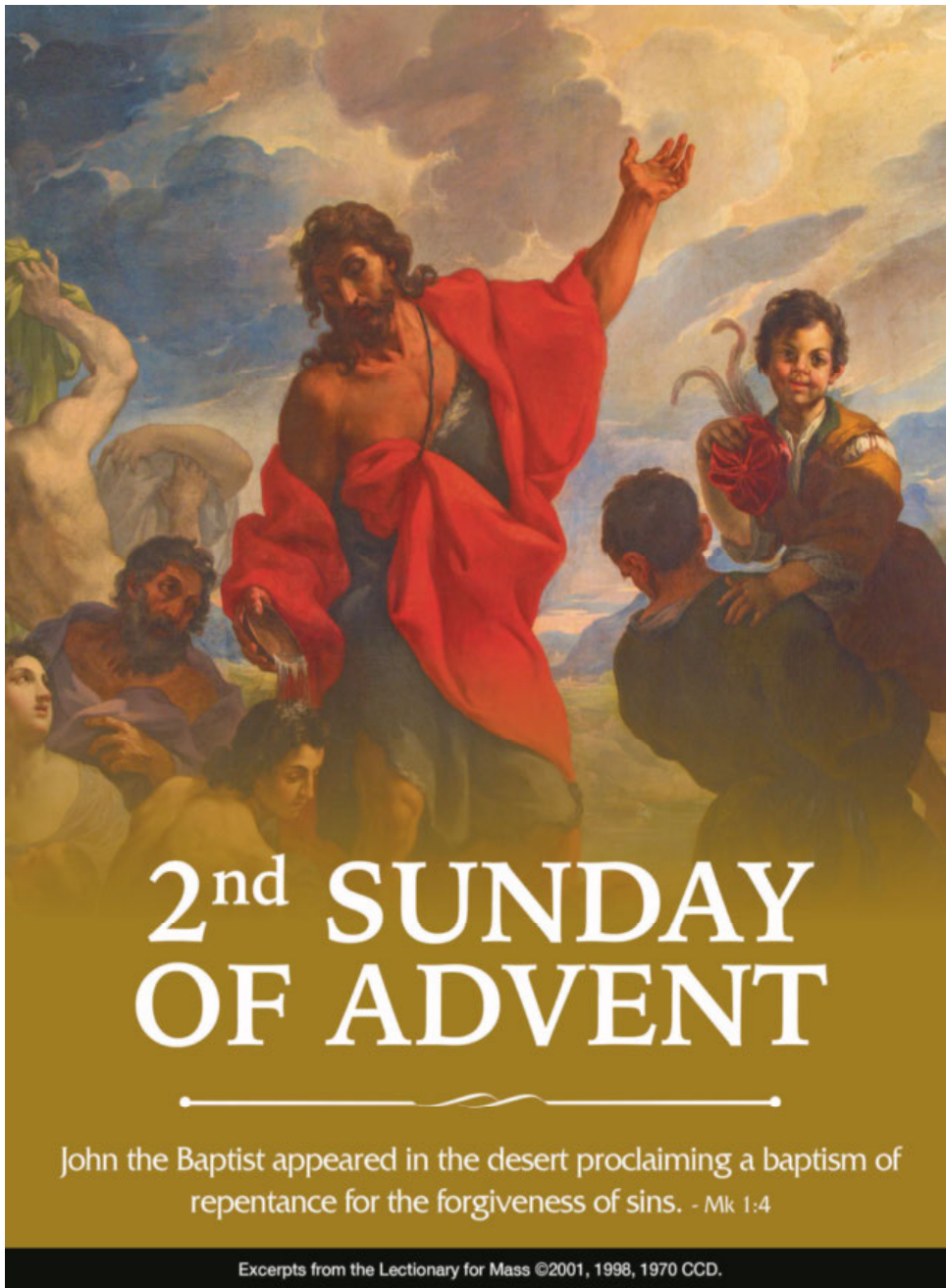
**Communion to the Homebound** is  
provided on a regular basis. Call the  
Parish Office to be added to our list.

**Sacrament of Baptism:** By  
appointment. Prior to your baby's  
Baptism, you must be a registered,  
practicing member of this parish.

**Sacrament of Marriage:** Requires  
parish membership by at least one of  
the parties for six months prior to  
making arrangements for marriage.

Weddings should be scheduled  
one year in advance.

**Prayer Chain:** To request prayer,  
please call Patty 724-245-9746  
or Valeria 724-583-9460



# 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of  
repentance for the forgiveness of sins. - Mk 1:4

## Thoughts from Father Anthony


 Second Week of Advent:  
Waiting for Christ
**Second Sunday of Advent - Year B (Matthew 3:1-12)**

A couple - both sixty years old - was celebrating their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary. While walking on the beach, they stumbled upon a lamp where a genie resides. After freeing the genie, they were granted the proverbial three wishes. The man immediately said, "I want you to give me a fleet of cars!" Immediately, the wish was granted. As a follow-up, he requested again, "Give me lots and lots of cash." It was granted. Then finally, he whispered to the genie, "Give me a wife forty years younger than me." Immediately, he became a hundred years old. Maybe the genie was stupid or maybe, he saw through the selfishness of the husband who only thought of his wishes.

On this Second Sunday of Advent, we are being challenged to prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Thus, let us change our attitudes from being selfish to selfless love. In today's Gospel, John the Baptist gets the limelight. Ironically, his personality shuns the limelight. In his preaching, he stressed that he is not the Messiah but the one who will prepare His way. We can learn a lot from the "voice crying in the wilderness." He was bold in proclaiming the Good News of salvation and the need for conversion. He challenged the Pharisees and the Sadducees who heeded his call for baptism to produce evidences of their repentance.

As we prepare for the coming of the Lord, we cannot just rely on uttering praises and words of faith in God. They must be supported by evidence. Some fruits like forgiveness, generosity, patience, and reverence should be a good start. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were known for their external piety. John would be of no help to them if he baptized them without telling them to compliment it with good actions towards others and God. In fact, the requirement is not only good for the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but to everyone who wanted to be baptized. The fruit being asked by John is not material. A complete change of heart should do it. Of course, we are not expected to attain the highest level of goodness instantly. It is more a matter of attitude and heart than time.

To infuse the faith dimension in our earthly journey, St. Peter (Second Reading) reminds us to accept and embrace the Lord as our faithful companion, as a co-pilgrim. The Lord shows "generous patience" in handling our missteps and hard-headedness, or our adamant will of not following the road map he has laid out for us. In fact, he makes sure that none of us "perishes" or "strays" out of the fold. Our God is a compassionate companion who leads us to "greener pasture." He blesses every step of our journey and because of this, "one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day."

Both the First Reading and the Gospel point to John the Baptist as the example and model in achieving our identity and mission as a "pilgrim people." John the Baptist sees his mission "as a voice that cries out to prepare the way of the Lord." "Proclaiming a baptism of repentance" and the "forgiveness of sins," he exhorts his followers to "follow the way of the Lord and clear him a straight path."

John the Baptist challenges us today to encounter the Lord Jesus in faith and to embrace him as the center of our personal and communal life. Our journey can easily become unfocused, confused, without a center. Our faith in the Lord Jesus is the voice that brings us close to our core and to our calling "to be holy in conduct." Confronted by the center that is the Lord, we could not but feel unworthy and unfit to "stoop and untie" his sandal straps. John the Baptist is a model par excellence of a pilgrim prophet.

The last challenge of our pilgrim status is to become compassionate with our fellow sojourners who are lost and marginalized, who are poor and overburdened, broken and unable to journey any farther. In solidarity with them, we provide the hand and heart, the face and soul of God's mercy and compassion. This could be the best preparation in the advent season.



## *December Faithful Challenge: Embrace Eucharistic Revival*

Eucharistic Revival is alive and well in our faith community! Over the last year, thousands of people responded to Bishop Kulick's weekly faithful challenges on social media. And it truly has made us a more Eucharistic Community. In December, as we celebrate both the Advent and Christmas seasons, we urge you to once again accept his challenge and open your heart and mind to the power of the Eucharist! Whether it be placing an Advent wreath in the center of your home, attending daily Mass or a Mass with the Bishop, or even saying a prayer for the Eucharistic Revival, you join with the living Body of Christ.





Christ is making a journey into each of our hearts this Advent. Clear away whatever blocks His way. Make straight the path. Invite Him in.

Today we light the second candle on our Advent wreath. It is the *“Bethlehem Candle,”* a symbol of the preparations being made to receive and cradle the Christ Child. May our hearts be ready to receive the Good News!

**Tuesday is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe** which recalls the apparitions of Mary at the hill of Tepeyac to the native convert, Juan Diego. She was declared patroness of the Americas by Pope Pius XII.

**Wednesday is the Feast of Saint Lucy** She is patroness of those afflicted with diseases of the eye and is associated with festivals of light.

**Thursday is the Feast of Saint John of the Cross** He was a mystic, a poet and an ally of Saint Teresa of Jesus of Avila. Known as the Mystical Doctor, he authored a number of books including *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night of the Soul*.

**The Giving Tree** - We sincerely thank everyone who participated in the Giving Tree program this year. A reminder that the gifts are due **this weekend**.

**Parish Family Christmas Tree** - Everyone is invited to bring an ornament, unique to you and your family, to place on our Parish Family Christmas Tree.

**Christmas Wafers (Oplatki)** are available at the Church entrances. The offering is \$2.00. There are four wafers per package (three white, one pink). The Christmas wafer reflects a tradition which is at least 2,000 years old. The father of the family solemnly breaks the wafers on Christmas Eve and distributes them to those present as a symbol of love and peace. These pieces are then shared with wishes for luck, health and happiness.

**Christmas Flower Memorials** - Please use the envelope from your packets to list the names of your loved ones. These will be placed on the altar and remembered in prayer throughout the Christmas season.

**Santa on the Square** - Sunday, **December 10**, at the Masontown Borough Building. Free carriage rides, Caroling, Cookies, Lighting of the Christmas tree and SANTA arrives at 6:00 pm. Please join us!

**Homemade Ravioli Dinner** - Sunday, **December 10**, Noon/5pm, McClellandtown Firehall hosted by Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church. Dinners \$9 include choice of meat or cheese ravioli, salad, roll/butter, dessert.

**Live Nativity** - Sunday, **December 10**, at Mount Macrina Manor 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

Advent resounds with the theme of **RECONCILIATION** and the **call to repentance**. That call is not about dwelling on our sins and being even more burdened by them, but the opposite: bringing them to God in sorrow and hope for forgiveness. It is a fitting time to approach Jesus in the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** and be able to approach Him in the Eucharist on Christmas with a renewed heart.

**Regional Advent Confession Schedule**

**Tuesday, December 12 - 6:00 pm**

St. Francis of Assisi, Masontown Worship Site

**Thursday, December 14 - 6:00 pm**

St. Peter, Brownsville

**Saturday, December 16 - 1:00 pm**

SS Cyril & Methodius, Fairchance

**Sunday, December 17 - 3:00 pm**

St. Joan of Arc, Farmington

**Tuesday, December 19 - 6:00 pm**

St. Mary Nativity, Uniontown

**Thursday, December 21 - 6:00 pm**

St. John the Evangelist, Uniontown



**Third Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols**

**Sunday, December 17 - 5:00 pm**

at the Footedale Worship Site

Music by the Combined Parish Choir  
Scripture Readings proclaimed by the Youth of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish

Light Refreshments follow in the Social Hall

Join us for a special Advent evening of Scripture and Song

**The Practice of Stewardship**

John the Baptist’s call to repentance is echoed in the U.S. Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Stewardship: *“Christians must beg God for the grace of conversion: the grace to know who they are, to whom they belong, how they are to live - the grace to repent and change and grow, the grace to become good disciples and stewards.”*

The **Advent Candles** in Footedale were given in memory of **Bill Rostich** by Braden, Patten & Bruno Fabrycki  
Our very grateful thanks♥

**Stewardship of Treasure**

**December 3:** \$7,237; loose \$479; monthly \$750; children \$8; online \$307; year end giving \$1,045; Accent \$358; totaling \$10,184. We also collected \$344 for our Social Ministry Fund.

**Our parish is grateful for your support!**

# **MASS SCHEDULE**

## Saturday, December 9 -- Vigil: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

4:00 pm-F Joe Mehalek (Wife, Donna)  
6:00 pm-M Pro Populo

## Sunday, December 10 -- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

8:00 am-M Tom Pavlovich (M/M Rick Zatloukovicz)  
9:30 am-F Brenda J. Otto (Son, Louis Otto & Family)  
11:30 am-M John & Nellie Bozek (Jerry/Cheryl Takacs)

## Monday, December 11 -- Saint Damasus I, pope

8:00 am-M John Krovich Sr. (Son, George Krovich)

## Tuesday, December 12 -- Our Lady of Guadalupe

8:00 am-F Wanda Valusek (M/M Ralph Cavalcante)  
**6:00 pm-M PENANCE SERVICE**

## Wednesday, December 13 -- Saint Lucy

8:00 am-M Donna Waslousky (Barb & Bobby)

## Thursday, December 14 -- Saint John of the Cross

8:00 am-F Joseph & Stella Borytsky (Dir: Constance/Family)

## Friday, December 15 -- Advent Weekday

8:00 am-M Fred Tineli (John & Carol DelGrosso)  
4:30-6:00 pm-M Adoration / Confessions

## Saturday, December 16 -- Vigil: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

3-3:30 pm-F Confessions  
4:00 pm-F Joan & Paul Cech Sr. (Mike/Missy Komara)  
5:00-5:30 pm-M Confessions  
6:00 pm-M John & Carolyn Takacs (Jerry & Cheryl)

## Sunday, December 17 -- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

8:00 am-M Donna Waslousky (Fedor Family)  
9:30 am-F John V. Shinsky Jr (Dtrs Briella/Bryrnie/Blake)  
11:30 am-M Martha Batis (Caroline Marella)

### Mass Readings for the Week Ahead

Monday: Is 35:1-10; Lk 5:17-26  
Tuesday: Zec 2:14-17; Lk 1:26-38  
Wednesday: Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30  
Thursday: Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15  
Friday: Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19  
Saturday: Sir 48:1-11; Mt 17:9-13  
Next Sunday: Is 61:1-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:1-28



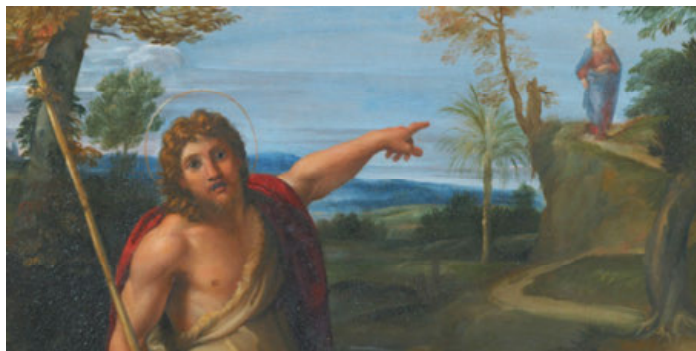
As we await new heavens and a new earth,  
let us make clear the way of the Lord by being  
servants of justice, truth and peace.



### Eucharistic Adoration

#### Friday, December 15, in Masontown

4:30-5:30 pm: Adoration & Confession  
5:30-5:45 pm: Chaplet of Divine Mercy  
5:45-6:00 pm: Benediction



“Make straight his paths,” Isaiah cried out, prophesying that the LORD would come to rescue and comfort the people of God. Centuries later, Mark quotes this call at the very beginning of his Gospel, presenting John the Baptist as the prophet who took this to heart, preparing the way for the Lord. Now, two millennia later, during this season when we prepare for the Lord’s coming into our lives and into our hearts, how can we “make straight his paths?”

**Question of the Week:** What is the most difficult obstacle I face in preparing a way for Christ to come into my heart anew this Christmas?  
How can I remove this obstacle?



### Tuesday, December 12, 6:00 pm in Masontown

Five priests will hear individual confessions in this season of preparation and penance. Come and allow your hearts to be open to the working of Christ.

**Memorial Candles** burn this week in loving memory of or for the special intention of:

- † **Sanctuary** - Birthday Blessings for Father Anthony
- † **Blessed Mother** - Mary E. Michalik & Linda Michalik  
requested by Janet Michalik  
William Tomotchko  
requested by his mother
- † **Saint Joseph** - Charles Rosnack  
requested by brother Ken  
Joe Mehalek  
requested by wife Donna
- † **Saint Anthony** - Mary & John Pasquale Jr.  
requested by children & grandchildren
- † **Sacred Heart** - Joseph & Stella Borytsky  
requested by daughter, Constance & family



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