

# CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

555 S. Main Street, Johnstown, Ohio 43031 • 740-967-7871 • [www.johnstownascension.org](http://www.johnstownascension.org)

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Parochial Vicar

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Kelly Pertee | 740-817-1628

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**Youth Minister**

Mary Nelson | 419-261-3872

[mnelson@johnstownascension.org](mailto:mnelson@johnstownascension.org)

**Cemetery Coordinator**

Jim Stafford | 614-402-3706

**Baptism Preparation Class**

Molly & Bob Orsini | 614-446-5622

**Social Committee**

Rodney Tornes | 740-817-0137

**St. Vincent de Paul Society**

24-hour Hotline | 740-349-0989

**Home School Contact**

Christie Thomas | 614-937-9066

[christie311@proton.me](mailto:christie311@proton.me)

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*Church of the Ascension is a Catholic community in Johnstown, Ohio that keeps Christ at the center of our hearts, families, homes and parish, so we can live the truth and share it with others*

*(John 14:6; 1 Peter 3:15).*

*With the help of sacred scripture, tradition, and the sacraments, we strive to know, love and serve God in this world, while encouraging others to do the same, so we may live eternally in heaven with Christ, the angels, and the saints*

*(Ephesians 2:4-8).*

Ascension of Christ, Gebhard Fugel (c. 1893)

**WEEKEND MASSES**

Saturday 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:30 a.m. • 11:00 a.m.

**HOLY DAYS**

Vigil 6:30 p.m.

8:00 a.m. • 7:00 p.m.

**ADORATION**

Tuesday 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:30-9:30 a.m.

**DAILY MASS**

Monday 8:00 am

Tuesday 6:30 pm

Wednesday-Saturday 8:00 am

**CONFESSIONS**

Tuesday 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:30-9:30 a.m.

WELCOME TO OUR FAITH COMMUNITY AT CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION.

TO REGISTER IN THE PARISH, PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE AT 740-967-7871.



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# CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

555 S. Main Street, Johnstown, OH 43031 • 740-967-7871 • www.johnstownascension.org

DECEMBER 10, 2023 • SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## Mass Intentions

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

8:00 a.m. Linda Kwiat  
by the Carter Family  
8:30 a.m. Adoration & Confessions  
4:00 p.m. Parish Family

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

8:30 a.m. Toni Burkart  
by Jack & Betsy Gallagher  
11:00 a.m. Jack & Donna Walsh  
by the Fox Family

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

8:00 a.m. Betty Disbennett  
by Sarah E. Coventry

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

5:00 p.m. Adoration & Confessions  
6:30 p.m. Bob & Beverly Meholick  
by the Cromwell Family

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

8:00 a.m. Les Zajac by Mike Haefs

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

8:00 a.m. Living & Deceased of the  
Antes Family  
by Dr. Pat Scarpitti

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

8:00 a.m. Betty Disbennett  
by the Jungers Family

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

8:00 a.m. Janet Muir  
by the Carter Family  
8:30 a.m. Adoration & Confessions  
4:00 p.m. Joan Roscoe by Nina Price

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

8:30 a.m. John Tabar by Linda Bently  
11:00 a.m. Parish Family

## Pastor's Corner

### Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. The Second Sunday of Advent gives us the opportunity to prepare our hearts in faithful waiting, celebrate the birth of Jesus, and ready ourselves for His Second Coming.

It's a beautiful chance to reflect on the ways prophecy has been fulfilled and to ponder what the future (promised to us through prophecies) will bring.

This week, we pause to remember who God is and what He has done for us. When our lives are hurried, we only have the chance to focus on our to-do lists. Making space in our schedules for prayer and meditation helps us to better see God at work in our lives and in our world.

As we prepare our hearts for the celebration of Jesus' arrival as a gift to all humanity, let's stir up in our hearts and homes a sense of anticipation. May God's spirit transform the days leading up to Christmas into a time of holy anticipation; preparing our hearts, as we faithfully await the chance to celebrate the arrival of our king.

The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming."

Advent in the 4th and 5th centuries was a time of preparation for the Baptism of new Christians. Christians would spend 40 days in prayer and fasting to prepare for the celebration that accompanied the Baptism of new believers.

Over time, Advent was connected to the Coming of Christ. Originally, Christians used this term to reference Christ's Second Coming, but by the Middle Ages, Advent was connected to Christ's First Coming that we celebrate at Christmas.

Advent Season is an invitation to get your mind off the stresses of the year. We can take our focus off of the crazy hustle of the season and the sadness that could accompany the different ways some of us may be choosing to observe the holiday season this year. Even when things feel chaotic, we can find peace in Jesus. Advent is a chance to focus our thoughts on the gift God has given us in His Son Jesus, who stepped down from heaven and took the form of a man so that we might believe.

The tradition for the Second Sunday of Advent includes lighting the second purple candle that is a symbol of faith.

This Second Sunday of Advent, we read, pray, and reflect on the hope God's plan gives us (foretold by the prophets and fulfilled by the life and death of Christ), and we meditate on the promise of Christ's coming glory-filled return.

*God Bless,*  
**Fr. Smith**

### PARISH ADVENT SERVICE

Please note that our PARISH ADVENT SERVICE will take place on Tuesday, December 19 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. There will be no Holy Hour/Adoration or Mass that evening.

### MASS INTENTIONS AVAILABLE

We have many open dates for Mass Intentions on our calendar. Please contact Kathy in the office at 740-967-7871 or office@johnstownascension.org, or drop a note in the collection with the intention and your name. We will do our best to accommodate any special date requests.



RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

RCIA topic for

Wednesday, December 12 is

The Saints/The Communion of Saints.

*Second Sunday of Advent* DECEMBER 9-10, 2023

	<i>SATURDAY • 4:00 P.M.</i>	<i>SUNDAY • 8:30 A.M.</i>	<i>SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M.</i>
ALTAR SERVERS:	Ethan Wnek	Luke Orsini	Alex Rush
	Shelli Writesel	Ben Orsini	Bode Cherry
	Christian Dorsten	Jackson Wernette	Mathew Cherry
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS:	Tom Nann – Host	Mary Sheehan – Chalice	Corinna Rush – Host
		Jerri Burgel – Chalice	
		Billy Staneart – Host	
LECTORS:	Dennis Murnane	Nadia Staneart	Mike Rush
	Diana Lewis – Angelus	Ali Staneart – Angelus	Peter Luhrman – Angelus
GREETERS/USHERS:	Jan Orkis	Ali Staneart	Olivia Ryan
	MaryAnn Shaffer	Tom Staneart	Anna Ryan
			Keith Ryan
LIVESTREAM OPERATOR:			Misiunas Family

*Third Sunday of Advent* DECEMBER 16-17, 2023

	<i>SATURDAY • 4:00 P.M.</i>	<i>SUNDAY • 8:30 A.M.</i>	<i>SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M.</i>
ALTAR SERVERS:	Jackson Wernette	Claire Barb	CC Zirille
	Jolene Bogner	Joey Barb	Alex Smithhisler
	Christian Dorsten	Brendan Sheehan	Jack Smithhisler
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS:	Mike Haefs – Host	Billy Staneart – Chalice	Cathy Biancone – Host
		Tom Staneart – Chalice	
		Michael Robbins – Host	
LECTORS:	Dave Bogner	Adele Robbins	Sally Blubaugh
	Tom Nann – Angelus	Diana Lewis – Angelus	Mike Dunfee – Angelus
GREETERS/USHERS:	Mary Ann Shaffer	Ali Staneart	Zirille Family
	Jan Orkis	Tom Staneart	Maureen Keebaugh
LIVESTREAM OPERATOR:			Smithhisler Family

*Your Gifts to God*

WEEKLY NEED \$7,115.00

430 REGISTERED FAMILIES

DECEMBER 2/3, 2023

<b>Total Offering</b>	<b>\$ 7,722.00</b>	Christmas	\$ 10.00
80 Envelopes	\$ 5,205.00	CHD	\$ 10.00
Loose Cash	\$ 611.00	Diocesan Charities-	\$ 10.00
Online	\$ 1,906.00	SOLT	\$ 60.00
St. Vincent de Paul	\$ 187.25	Religious Retirement	\$ 105.00
All Saints	\$ 25.00	Christmas Flowers	\$ 90.00

**SPECIAL COLLECTION**

The Retirement Fund for the Religious Collection will take place this weekend, December 9 and 10.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.



Do you return a portion of your time/skills/possessions to God in a spirit of gratitude? Looking for an easier way to give? Scan the QR code to open a link to the Church of the Ascension Parish SOFT Giving. Simply hold your phone's camera over the square and touch the link that appears at the top of your camera screen, or visit <https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/ascensionjohnstown>.

### **SECOND ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROL**

Join us for the **Second Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols** at 3:00 p.m. on **Sunday, December 17, 2022**. The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a service of Scripture and song that dates to the late 19th century. In this service, we listen to nine Scripture lessons which recount the Fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation, and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. Each lesson is followed by a carol or other song that reflects the lesson's message and a brief prayer. The **Ascension Adult Choir** and **RISE Youth Choir** will be performing, and they will be joined by several talented **instrumentalists from our parish family**. This concert is free of charge and open to the public. After the concert, you are all welcome to join us for a reception of cookies and hot cocoa.

### **HAPPY TRAILS TRAVELING WITH LINDA**

Shake off ole man winter as we travel to Amelia Island, St. Augustine, Jacksonville, FL and Savannah, GA. Narrated cruise on St John's River, visit the Fountain of Youth and so much more. Deluxe motorcoach departs from Newark, OH April 28-May 4, 2024, Sunday to Saturday. \$850.00 per person sharing double room. \$75.00 deposit due with reservation. Final payment due by February 21, 2024. Questions/copy of itinerary contact lindawoolard@windstream.net or 740-323-3105. Mail check to Linda A. Woolard, 636 Fox Run Circle South, Newark, OH 43055.



### **NEW! ONLINE BOOKING**

Fr. Smith is using a new, easier online booking system to meet with parishioners. If you'd like to schedule a meeting with Fr. Smith, please scan the QR code or visit his calendar at <https://calendly.com/frstephensmith>.

### **NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN FOR THE 2024 CATHOLIC MAN OF THE YEAR**

The Catholic Men's Luncheon Club is accepting nominations for the Diocese of Columbus 2024 Catholic Man of the Year. The annual award will be presented by Bishop Earl Fernandes on **Friday, February 2, 2024**, at the Men's Luncheon held at St. Patrick Church in downtown Columbus. The Catholic Man of the Year is awarded to one layman who, through his daily actions, words, and prayers, exemplifies the "good and faithful servant." The recipient will have the opportunity to share his personal testimony during the ceremony. Nominations will be accepted through **Sunday, December 31, 2023**. For details, nomination instructions and the required online nomination form, go to <https://www.catholicmensministry.com/catholicmanoftheyear>. Submit your nomination and let us know why your parishioner, husband, father, son, uncle, brother, or friend is the Catholic Man of the Year!

### **OPENINGS AVAILABLE**

There are still openings available to pick up donated items from Panera Bread on Saturday night and deliver it to The Haven in Newark and to drop off at Ascension on Sunday nights, (sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space or text your availability to Diane Green at 859-380-1944 or sign up on Flocknotes).

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### **JESSE TREE**

We will sponsor a **Jesse Tree** in the Gathering Space for the Salvation Army Homeless Shelter in Newark. Hats, scarves, gloves and mittens can be put **ON** the tree. The Knights of Columbus will be collecting baby items for Heartbeats. Diapers, baby items and layettes can be placed **UNDER** the tree.

### **3RD GRADE PYC CRS CHICKENS COLLECTION**

**In the spirit of Advent and in anticipation of Christmas**, the 3rd grade PYC (who is also hosting the 11:00 a.m. Mass this Sunday) is raising money to purchase a flock of chickens for a needy family in a developing country through Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Chickens not only supply a family with protein and poultry, but they provide a desperately needed income that can be used to send their children to school or for simple survival. Any additional money the students raise will go toward purchasing a goat or lamb to assist another family with nourishment and a source of income. The gifts of a farm animal is truly "the gift that just keeps on giving!"

If you are interested in providing a donation to help with this venture, the 3rd grade PYC class will be collecting money in the lobby after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. Baskets will be provided after the 4:00 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. Masses in the Gathering Space. Checks can be written out to Church of the Ascension and left with the office, as well (include "chickens/CRS" in the memo). Thank you for your generosity and concern for God's children.

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you to all who prepared Christmas Cards to include in the goodie bags that the Eucharistic Ministers are taking to the Homebound.

# *Christmas Schedule*

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

No 8:00 a.m. Mass  
 No Adoration or Confessions  
 Mass – 4:00 p.m

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023

Mass – 8:30 a.m.  
 Mass – 11:00 a.m.

## *CHRISTMAS EVE*

Mass – 4:00 p.m.  
 Mass – 6:30 p.m.  
 Mass – 11:00 p.m.

## *CHRISTMAS DAY*

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2023

Morning Mass – 10:00 a.m. only

Fourth Sunday of Advent	Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Obligation may be fulfilled from the evening (after 4pm) of Saturday, December 23 and throughout Sunday, December 24	Obligation may be fulfilled from the evening (after 4pm) of Sunday, December 24 and throughout Monday, December 25
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Obligation may be fulfilled at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anticipated (Saturday evening) Mass or Mass of the Fourth Sunday of Advent</li> <li>A Vigil Mass for Christmas on December 24</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Obligation may be fulfilled at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any evening Mass (after 4pm) on December 24</li> <li>Any Mass on December 25</li> </ul>

## *Your Prayers are Requested*

Your prayers this week are asked for Wesley Potts, Susan Welch, Dale Anne Davidson, Joyce Curran, Wilbur Suver, Gabrielle & Shawn, Dana Caswell, John & Sophie Wetherell, Suzanne Kubin, Sharon Freitag, Di Habash, Gordon Cromwell, Shalena & her twin baby boys Sloane & Lorenzo, Rosalie Lewein, Frank Eggart, Ross McClain, Taylor Byrer, Joe Lindsay, Little Mark Douglas, Ivan Booth, Zsolt Csaba, Mick, Donna Dellapina, Mark & Cathy Mann, Emily Scott, Peggy Hall, Mike Riordan, Steph Esselstein, Kristine Neal, Olivia Williams, Al Tharp, June Larick, Terry Baesmann, Mike & Jane Gaylk, John Tomich, Dakota Basford, Blair Lemon, Mike Colle, Janice Good, Barbara Penhorwood, Albert Luikart, Basil Crawford, Lois Hottinger, Margie Easterday, Lacey McLoughlin, Tony Gallo, John & Neva Stover, Jared Writesel, Katie Dooley, Judy Miller, Ann Bishop, Randy Hostetler, Joseph & Debbie Ford, Rita Reali, Peg Peyton, Don Vocca, Mike Dunn, Rose Neilson, Teresa Walton & her brother Richard, Deborah Parkey, Joseph Ford, Karen Reitz, Jeff Ankrom, JoAnn Wright, Barb VanHoose, Kris Bowers, Joyce Priest, Shane Hatten, Bob Muench, Hannah Cohagen Lehman, Ron & Ann Mullins, Ron Gallo, Sutton Parish, Helen Tomich, Sylvia Freed, and for those who have no one to pray for them.

### ***ARE YOU OR SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE MILITARY?***

Please let us know and we will add the names to our Prayer Requests.



## PREPARE THE WAY

Reflection on Mark 1:1-8

The scholar, Huston Smith, observes that at every time in human history, and in every place, people have found themselves faced with three inescapable questions: How to win food and shelter, which is the problem that the physical world poses; How to get along with one another, which is the social problem; and, How to relate themselves to the total scheme of things, which is the religious problem. (see *Why Religion Matters: The Fate of the Human Spirit in an Age of Disbelief*).

Whether we look far or near, we will see hunger and homelessness, division and acrimony, confusion and clashing religious views. To place these questions in the context of our Catholic sensibility, Christ is still present in the needs of the least among us, Christ's body is still divided, and Christ still hangs on the cross. Such is our present landscape, the wilderness in which we live together.

"Preparing the way of the Lord" in this wilderness involves not only our own personal repentance and conversion, but also, as Isaiah suggests, some major road construction: creating a highway through the desert, filling in valleys and leveling mountains, smoothing rugged land and rough country. In other words, mindfully and intentionally "bringing comfort to God's people" through our efforts at caring for the most vulnerable, bringing understanding and reconciliation to relationships broken and in discord, and heroically evangelizing to prepare the world for the Prince of Peace.

~ Fr. Jay



## WEEKLY SCRIPTURE

### Sunday, December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11

Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14

2 Pt 3:8-14

Mk 1:1-8

### Monday, December 11, 2023

Weekday

Is 35:1-10

Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14

Lk 5:17-26

### Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab

Judith 13:18bcde, 19

Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

### Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Is 40:25-31

Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10

Mt 11:28-30

### Thursday, December 14, 2023

Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Is 41:13-20

Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab

Mt 11:11-15

### Friday, December 15, 2023

Weekday

Is 48:17-19

Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6

Mt 11:16-19

### Saturday, December 16, 2023

Weekday

Sir 48:1-4, 9-11

Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19

Mt 17:9a, 10-13

Access Daily Readings from  
the New American Bible,  
Revised Edition (NABRE) online at  
<https://bible.usccb.org>

## SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS

Feast Day: December 14

Patron Saint of: Mystics

John is a saint because his life was a heroic effort to live up to his name: "of the Cross." The folly of the cross came to full realization in time. "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34b) is the story of John's life. The Paschal Mystery – through death to life – strongly marks John as reformer, mystic-poet, and theologian-priest. Ordained a Carmelite priest in 1567 at age 25, John met Teresa of Avila and like her, vowed himself to the primitive Rule of the Carmelites. As partner with Teresa and in his own right, John engaged in the work of reform, and came to experience the price of reform: increasing opposition, misunderstanding, persecution, imprisonment. He came to know the cross acutely – to experience the dying of Jesus – as he sat month after month in his dark, damp, narrow cell with only his God. Yet, the paradox! In this dying of imprisonment, John came to life, uttering poetry. In the darkness of the dungeon, John's spirit came into the Light. There are many mystics, many poets; John is unique as mystic-poet, expressing in his prison-cross the ecstasy of mystical union with God in the Spiritual Canticle.

But as agony leads to ecstasy, so John had his Ascent to Mt. Carmel, as he named it in his prose masterpiece. As man-Christian-Carmelite, he experienced in himself this purifying ascent; as spiritual director, he sensed it in others; as psychologist-theologian, he described and analyzed it in his prose writings. His prose works are outstanding in underscoring the cost of discipleship, the path of union with God: rigorous discipline, abandonment, purification. Uniquely and strongly, John underlines the Gospel paradox: The cross leads to resurrection, agony to ecstasy, darkness to light, abandonment to possession, denial to self to union with God. If you want to save your life, you must lose it. John is truly "of the Cross." He died at 49 – a life short, but full.

In his life and writings, John of the Cross has a crucial word for us today. We tend to be rich, soft, comfortable. We shrink even from words like self-denial, mortification, purification, asceticism, discipline. We run from the cross. John's message – like the Gospel – is loud and clear: Don't – if you really want to live!

Read the full article: "Saint John of the Cross" Franciscan Media, Franciscan Friars,  
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-john-of-the-cross/>. (Accessed November 28, 2023).



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