

### CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

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

Father Stephen Smith, Pastor frsmith@johnstownascension.org

Father Jesse Chick, CFIC Parochial Vicar jchick@johnstownascension.org

**Deacon Byron Phillips** bphillips@johnstownascension.org

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.

### **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)

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 JOHNSTOWN, OHIO

### CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

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

### DECEMBER 24, 2023 • FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### Mass Intentions

### **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23**

8:00 a.m. NO MASS

8:30 a.m. NO Adoration & Confessions

4:00 p.m. Les Zajac by Mike Haefs

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

8:30 a.m. Amy Yeagle by Kathy Richards

11:00 a.m. Parish Family

### **CHRISTMAS EVE**

4:00 p.m. Dominic, Julia &

Chuck Prestarri

by your family

6:30 p.m. Bob & Beverly Meholickv

by the Cromwell Family

11:00 p.m. Parish Family

### **MONDAY, DECEMBER 25**

8:00 a.m. Teresa Eichner

by Terry & Denny Shank

### **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26**

5:00 p.m. Adoration & Confessions

6:30 p.m. Wilbur DePue

by Marilyn Costanzo

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

8:00 a.m. For the healing of

Gillian Monterio by Sondra Southard

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

8:00 a.m. For the Special Intentions of

Theresa Lewis

by Sondra Southard

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

8:00 a.m. Margaret Lewis

by Sondra Southard

### **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30**

8:00 a.m. Warren Chantler

by the Carter Family

8:30 a.m. Adoration & Confessions

4:00 p.m. Don Litterini by Regina Pasini

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

8:30 a.m. Parish Family

11:00 a.m. Dennis Yingling

by the Rush Family

### Pastor's Corner

### Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This weekend, we celebrate both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and the Nativity of Our Lord at Christmas. This is the second time since I have been a priest that Christmas Eve has fallen on a Sunday – this means, at least for priests, that it is a very busy day indeed! After Fr. Jesse and I finish with our Sunday Masses, we will begin preparing for our Christmas Eve Masses a few hours later. We look forward to seeing you there!

I am very grateful to all who made this Advent Season such a beautiful one to celebrate, and to those who offered (or will offer) their gifts of talent for the Christmas Season ahead. Thank you to our musicians and those who lent their talents to decorate our church for the season!

I welcome, in a special way, all visitors to our parish during this Christmas Season and welcome back those who may have been away for a time. We are grateful for your presence and the presence of all the faithful who gather to celebrate the coming of Christ!

It is in these times that we are called to remember all the blessings Our Lord has given us in our lives, especially our own families. We are also called to remember the gift of Christ Incarnate, who brings salvation to the world. This Christmas Season is filled with great joy and expectation in the Second Coming of Christ and the Glory of God in the Highest! The liturgical celebration of the Lord's Nativity has many variables and components. There are four particular timeframes during which Mass might be celebrated in observance of this great feast: a vigil, a Mass at night, a Mass at dawn and a Mass during the day. Each of these Masses have their own unique prayers and readings. The newness of life made possible because of the Incarnation pervades the prayers and feasts of the Christmas season.

The four different Gospel readings assigned for use at the different Masses of Christmas all speak of the variety of the people affected by the Savior's coming. The beginning of St. Matthew's Gospel (see Mt 1:1-25), which lists Jesus' family lineage, is proclaimed at the Vigil Mass. This includes major figures of Judaism like Abraham and David, whose covenants with God foreshadow the new and everlasting covenant that will be sealed in the blood of Christ. But Christ's lineage also emphasizes that He came to save the poor and lowly, shown by connecting Him to ancestors of low degree, socially or morally — like the four women mentioned, including David's mistress Bathsheba. Jesus came to save them all.

The Gospel read at the Mass at night (see Lk 2:1-14) also underscores the importance of Christ's Coming for the marginalized and outcast, embodied by the news of His birth being shared firstly with the shepherds and not the rulers endowed with earthly power, who might be perceived as entitled to receiving such news on behalf of their subjects.

It is important to note that on Christmas, the faithful all are to genuflect or kneel during the Creed at the words relative to this central mystery of Christian faith, "and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man." This helps us keep our hearts and minds focused on what the feast is all about. As the popular Christmas carol "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" phrases it, Jesus was "born that man no more may die; born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth…"

May our hearts be stirred to a deeper love of the mysteries of our faith and the Lord Himself during this Christmas Season!

God bless,

Fr. Smith

	SATURDAY • 4:00 P.M.	SUNDAY • 8:30 A.M.	SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M.
ALTAR SERVERS:	Ethan Wnek	Claire Barb	Bode Cherry
	Christian Dorsten	Joey Barb	Mathew Cherry
	Volunteer Needed	Jackson Wernette	Volunteer Needed
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS:	Mike Keebaugh – Host	Rachel Barb – Chalice	Bernadette Fox – Host
		Mike Haefs – Chalice	
		Jerri Burgel – Host	
LECTORS:	Maureen Keebaugh	Volunteer Needed	Mike Dunfee
	Mike Keebaugh – Angelus	Aaron Locker – Angelus	Volunteer Needed – Angelu
GREETERS/USHERS:	Dennis Murnane	Bubby Eichner	Lora Dunfee
	Jan Orkis	Robbi Eichner	Mike Dunfee
IVESTREAM OPERATOR:			Jim Stafford
	SUNDAY • 4:00 P.M. Ben Orsini	SUNDAY • 6:30 P.M. Brendan Sheehan	SUNDAY • 11:00 P.M. Billy Staneart
ALTAR SERVERS:	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Pat Scarpitti
	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Phil Scherer
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS:	Volunteer Needed – Host	Volunteer Needed – Host	Volunteer Needed – Chalice
			Volunteer Needed – Chalico
			Tom Staneart – Host
LECTORS:	Diane Green	Volunteer Needed	Nadia Staneart
	Joe Green – Angelus	Tom Nann – Angelus	Ali Staneart – Angelus
GREETERS/USHERS:	Shelli Writesel	Mark Sheehan	Ali Stanert
	Mary Ann Shaffer	Mary Sheehan	Tom Staneart
IVESTREAM OPERATOR:	Jeff Thomas		
Christmas Day decemв	ER 25, 2023  MONDAY • 10:00 A.M.		
LTAR SERVERS:	Volunteers Needed		
	Joanne Hawkins – Host		
	+-		
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS: ECTOR/USHERS:	Olivia Ryan	Anna Ryan	Mike Dunfee
ECTOR/USHERS:	Olivia Ryan  Sus, Mary and Joseph	b DECEMBER 30-31, 2023	Mike Dunfee
ECTOR/USHERS:	Olivia Ryan		SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M.
ECTOR/USHERS:	Olivia Ryan  Sus, Mary and Joseph  SATURDAY • 4:00 P.M.  Mike Keebaugh	DECEMBER 30-31, 2023  SUNDAY • 8:30 A.M.  Joey Barb	SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M. Cole Fox
ector/ushers: The Holy Family of Je	Olivia Ryan  Sus, Mary and Joseph  SATURDAY • 4:00 P.M.  Mike Keebaugh  Ethan Wnek	SUNDAY • 8:30 A.M.  Joey Barb  Brendan Sheehan	SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M.  Cole Fox  CC Zirille
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ECTOR/USHERS:  The Holy Family of Jenus 1995  LTAR SERVERS:	Olivia Ryan  Sus, Mary and Joseph  SATURDAY • 4:00 P.M.  Mike Keebaugh  Ethan Wnek	SUNDAY • 8:30 A.M.  Joey Barb  Brendan Sheehan  Claire Barb  Tom Staneart – Chalice	SUNDAY • 11:00 A.M.  Cole Fox  CC Zirille
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CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION JOHNSTOWN, OHIO

### Your Gifts to God



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 ParishSOFT 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.

Thank you for your generous gifts to the RETIREMENT FUND FOR THE RELIGIOUS.

### CHRISTMAS CATHOLIC CHARITIES COLLECTION

This annual collection, held each Christmas, allows the Diocese of Columbus to meet a variety of basic needs directly and through diocesan agencies and *diocesan-sponsored* organizations including J.O.I.N. (Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs), and the St. Francis Evangelization Center in McArthur, Catholic Social Services, St. Stephen's Community House, and St. Vincent Family Services. You can help share in this important work by generously supporting the Catholic Charities collection this year.

Our 2024 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE NOW AVAILABLE for pickup in the east hallway across from the restrooms. Please note that they are arranged in alphabetical order, but you may not have the same number as last year, so please double check your name before taking them. If there is not a set with your name on them, please see the sheet at the table for instructions.



### 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.

**LECTOR WORKBOOKS** are now available in the closet in the east hallway. If you are a Lector, please pick one up for your reference.

### **MASS INTENTIONS AVAILABLE**

We have many open dates for Mass Intentions on our calendar. Please contact Kathy in the office at 740-967-7871, on my cell at 614-325-0188 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.

No RCIA classes until Wednesday, January 3, 2024.



### THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who donated for the flowers and who worked hard to make our church so beautiful for the celebration of Our Savior's birth.

### 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!

Many thanks to all who purchased cookies from our YOUTH GROUP last weekend.



### DID YOU KNOW? - MODERN-DAY MANGER

As we inch our way toward the celebration of the most significant birth in history, we need to remember the "Bethlehems" right here in our back yard. There are women who are caring for their babies in a way not dissimilar to Mary twenty-one centuries ago. Oftentimes, through no fault of their own, these mothers are thrown into a life of poverty that inflicts the child with a life that is rough and hard to endure. 2024 is just around the corner. Have a blessed Christmas and stay tuned for the improvements and

increased aid that Bottoms Up will offer those who most need us! For more information and ways you can help, visit www.bottomsup.life.

### THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEED YOU!

It's that time of year when the Knights of Columbus offer many charitable contributions, including our Keep Christ in Christmas program, Tree for Life, and more.



Want to make a difference in the world and build friendships with like-minded men in the parish?

Join us! Go to kofc.org/join and use 4324 when asked for your preferred local council. For more information, please contact Grand Knight Jeff Thomas at 614-580-6772 or jeffmthomas@protonmail.com.

### CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY FAMILY

The Sunday after Christmas is the Feast of the Holy Family and Father Smith, Father Jesse and the Knights encourage each family to invite the Holy Family into our lives to establish or strengthen the Domestic Church, our homes. The decision to consecrate your family needs to be intentional and a process through which you completely surrender to God through the Holy Family. You are accepting the truth that salvation history was changed forever by a family, and that through your domestic church, you are called to live their example. Please see the bulletin insert for ways to prepare for this event.

### **FAMILY FULLY ALIVE**

The Knights of Columbus encourage each family to strengthen the Domestic Church by inviting God into our homes in the coming year. The Family Fully Alive program provides guidance on ways to establish and strengthen your Domestic Church in the form of themes, Scripture verses and activities. This is not simply a booklet and you are on your own, but a continuous program that will take feedback, offer support, and grow with our parishioners throughout the year and beyond.

To begin this program with your family, please pick up a booklet in the Gathering Space. If you have any questions, please contact Gus Smithhisler at 614-530-0160. And watch for additional opportunities and programs in coming months.

### **JESSE TREE**

Many thanks to those who donated items on and under the **Jesse Tree** in the Gathering Space. Hats, scarves, gloves and mittens on the tree will be donated to the Salvation Army homeless shelter in Newark. The Knights of Columbus will deliver baby items for Heartbeats.

### Christmas Schedule

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23 No 8:00 a.m. Mass

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

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023

Mass – 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. CHRISTMAS EVE

Mass – 4:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m., 11:00 p.m. *CHRISTMAS DAY* MONDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2023

Morning Mass – 10:00 a.m. only

2023 n. 200 p.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent

Obligation may be fulfilled from the evening (after 4pm) of Saturday, December 23 and throughout Sunday, December 24

Obligation may be fulfilled at:

• Anticipated (Saturday evening) Mass or Mass of the Fourth Sunday of Advent

• A Vigil Mass for Christmas on December 24

Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Obligation may be fulfilled from the evening (after 4pm) of Sunday, December 24 and throughout Monday, December 25

Obligation may be fulfilled at:

• Any evening Mass (after 4pm) on December 24

• Any Mass on December 25

### 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.

### Your Prayers are Requested

Your prayers this week are asked for John Yeagle, Wesley Potts, Susan Welch, 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.

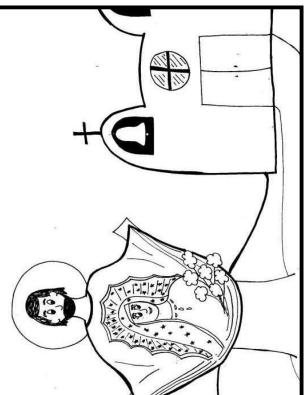
### Saint Juan Diego

oses for the bishop. This doesn't seem special—but it was wanted proof of Juan Diego's vision. Mary told him to pick Mary, the Mother of Jesus, appeared to Saint Juan Diego and asked him to build a church. Saint Juan Diego asked the bishop for help to build the church, but the Bishop snowy outside. Roses don't grow in the snow!

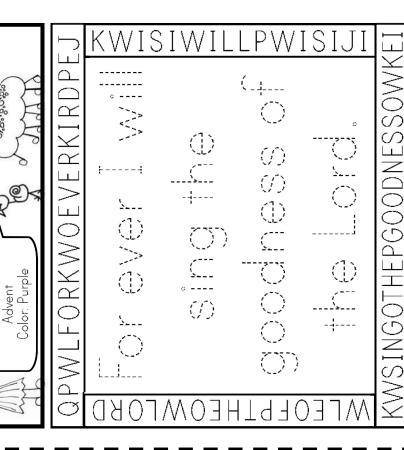
December 24, 2023

tilma. When he showed the roses to the bishop, there was a beautiful picture of Mary on his tilma. That picture is a Saint Juan Diego carried the roses in his coat called a special image of Mary called...

## Our Lady of Guadalupe



Year B: Fourth Sunday of Advent



Which candles are lit today

Color this wreath to match on the Advent wreath?

the one at your church.

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### **GOD'S CALL**

Reflection on Luke 1:26-38

The Gospel for this fourth Sunday of Advent is the familiar visitation scene – God calling Mary to be the mother of His Son. With her "yes," Mary is elevated from an obscure teenager to be the mother of God, from a time-and-space-bound human being to Queen of Heaven, from a prayerful supplicant to the eternal go-to Lady for intercession and perpetual help! The interruption of the incarnation becomes, for Mary, the path to holiness: "Blessed are you among women!"

In these final days of Advent waiting and preparation, consider how the incarnation – the birth of Jesus both in human history and in this very moment of your life – calls you to God's higher purposes. With Mary as our pattern of holiness, God is revealing some of what God wants from us: to be a co-creator of life, a nurturer, a font of love, a teacher, a healer, a reconciler, a prophet, a companion. "May it be done to me according to your word."

~ Fr. Jay

# Advent HOPE | PEACE | JOY | LOVE

### **WEEKLY SCRIPTURE**

Sunday, December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 Rom 16:25-27 Lk 1:26-38

Monday, December 25, 2023

The Nativity of the Lord Is 52:7-10 Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

Saint Stephen, The First Martyr Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 Mt 10:17-22

Wednesday, December 27, 2023

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist 1 Jn 1:1-4 Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 Jn 20:1a and 2-8 Thursday, December 28, 2023

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs 1 Jn 1:5–2:2 Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8 Mt 2:13-18

Friday, December 29, 2023

Fifth Day within the Octave 1 Jn 2:3-11 Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 Lk 2:22-35

Saturday, December 30, 2023

Sixth Day within the Octave 1 Jn 2:12-17 Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 Lk 2:36-40

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

### SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST

Feast Day: December 27 Patron Saint of: Turkey

It is God who calls; human beings answer. The vocation of John and his brother James is stated very simply in the Gospels, along with that of Peter and his brother Andrew: Jesus called them; they followed. For the three former fishermen—Peter, James and John—that faith was to be rewarded by a special friendship with Jesus, but John's friendship was even more special. John's own Gospel refers to him as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (see John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2), the one who reclined next to Jesus at the Last Supper, and the one to whom Jesus gave the exquisite honor of caring for his mother, as John stood beneath the cross. "Woman, behold your son.... Behold, your mother" (John 19:26b, 27b).

On the first Easter, Mary Magdalene "ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, 'They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him'" (John 20:2). John recalls, perhaps with a smile, that he and Peter ran side by side, but then "the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first" (John 20:4b). He did not enter, but waited for Peter and let him go in first. "Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed" (John 20:8).

John was with Peter when the first great miracle after the Resurrection took place—the cure of the man crippled from birth—which led to their spending the night in jail together. The mysterious experience of the Resurrection is perhaps best contained in the words of Acts: "Observing the boldness of Peter and John and perceiving them to be uneducated, ordinary men, they [the questioners] were amazed, and they recognized them as the companions of Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

"The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16).

Read the full article: "Saint John the Evangelist" Franciscan Media, Franciscan Friars, https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-john-the-evangelist/. (Accessed December 8, 2023).

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