

# St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Parish Family

10<sup>th</sup> & Mahantongo Sts., Pottsville, Pa. 17901 • [www.saintjohnpottsville.org](http://www.saintjohnpottsville.org)

December 3, 2023 • First Sunday of Advent

*Hope*



*Advent*

## Mass Intentions

### Saturday, December 2

5:00 p.m. Louise Delaney  
(Kathleen Williams)

### Sunday, December 3

8:15 a.m. Annette Lieberman  
(John Lieberman Family)

### Sunday, December 3

10:30 a.m. John Steffan  
(Grandchildren)

### Monday, December 4

6:30 p.m. Frank Prestileo  
(Joe Molinaro & Feeney Family)

### Tuesday, December 5

9:00 a.m. John DiBiase  
(M/M Anthony Carroll)

### Wednesday, December 6

9:00 a.m. Dr. William & Ellen Schlitzer  
(Mary & Ed Hauck)

### Thursday, December 7

9:00 a.m. Justina Mitchell  
(Joel & Jennifer Gerace)

### Immaculate Conception of BVM

### Thursday, December 7

7:00 p.m. Kathleen Hohman  
(Hohman Family)

### Friday, December 8

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

5:15 p.m. Patrick Hohman  
(Mom & Dad & Brother)

### Saturday, December 9

5:00 p.m. George A. & Dolores Lynn  
(Dave, Joan Marie, Tony & Bob Lynn)

### Sunday, December 10

8:15 a.m. Michael & Anna Fedock  
(Donna & Jim Pugh)

### Sunday, December 10

10:30 a.m. Scott Rhoades  
(Carol Rhoades)

## Message from Father Bobbin

Dear Parishioners,

Today we begin the Advent season once again. As life gets even busier for many of us leading up to Christmas, Advent is a great gift. It helps us slow down (as least interiorly) and place our Lord at the center of our lives.

This time of year is filled with many things of a material nature, things that touch our senses (decorations, music, cards and gifts, food). We even use a visual symbol in church to help us focus on Advent: the Advent wreath. But the greatest realities in our lives are not material. The Advent wreath actually reminds us of some of them. As you may or may not know, the four Advent candles traditionally stand for four things: hope, faith, joy, and peace. Perhaps we can reflect on each of these over these four Sundays of Advent.

The candle for the First Sunday of Advent stands for *hope*. Many people experience fears and anxiety about the future. Maybe anxiety over tomorrow. Maybe anxiety over one's salvation at the end of this life. Advent reminds us that we are anticipating the Second Coming of Jesus and that, in the end, Jesus will be victorious. He has already conquered sin, evil, suffering, and death by His own death and resurrection. In the end, that victory will claim dominion over everything and everyone. Everything will be set right. Thus, Advent invites us to *hope*: to look to the future with confidence. This is not mere optimism or wishful thinking. Hope is grounded in reality. God always takes care of us and Jesus will be victorious in the end.

In these weeks of Advent, whenever you experience any fear or anxiety about the future, ask our Lord to increase your hope.

In Christ,  
Fr. Bobbin

## 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.



## Advent Reflection

The "O Antiphons," an **Advent Reflection**, will be offered by Fr. Bobbin and the Adult Faith Formation Team on **Sunday, December 3**, 2:00-3:30 in the chapel, followed by snacks in Longinus Hall. Join us for prayer, readings from Scripture, and Eucharistic Adoration to begin your Advent journey.

### 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

*Sheri Post • Robert Kline • Tony Kochol • Josephine Gallagher  
Tom Jefferson • Christine Kurtek • Dominic Maccarone • Drew Schaeffer  
Shawn Matz • Gerald Hudock • Miriam Tirjan • John Bernetsky  
Sue Mengle • Tony S. Gaburick*



## Upcoming Events

### December

3	9:15 a.m.	CCD Parent Meeting .....	L.H.
3	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School.....	L.H.
3	2-4 p.m.	Advent Reflection .....	Chapel & L.H.
5	6:00 p.m.	Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal .....	Church
6	6:00 p.m.	Catholic Women's Union Christmas Party.....	Blu Tavern
7	7:00 p.m.	Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass .....	Church
8	9:00 a.m.	Immaculate Conception Mass .....	Church
8	5:15 p.m.	Immaculate Conception Mass .....	Church
10	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School.....	L.H.
10	6:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class.....	L.H.
11	7:00 p.m.	Parish Council .....	L.H.
13	8:00 p.m.	St. John's Beneficial Society Mtg .....	F.R.
17	9:15 a.m.	CCD Community Mtg. ....	L.H.
19	6:00 p.m.	Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal .....	Church
20	7:00 p.m.	Advent Penance Service .....	Church
24	4:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass .....	Church
24	8:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass .....	Church
25	10:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass.....	Church

**L.H. = Longinus Hall F.R. = Rectory Fellowship Room R.B. = Russell Building**  
 Wednesdays 7:15 p.m. Weekly Men's Group ..... F.R.

## Weekly Collection

**November 25/26.....\$3,783.22**  
**Poverty Relief .....\$1,116.00**  
**Outreach ..... \$812.00**

## Candles

### BVM

1. IMO Mary Tray  
 by Tray & Cunningham Family  
 2. IMO Lorrie Cunningham  
 by Tray & Cunningham Family

### St. Joseph

1. IMO Francis Bercher  
 by Joan Bowers  
 2. Harold Bercher  
 by Joan Bowers

### Sanctuary

Deceased of Fidelis & Nerz Family  
 by Eleanor Schaeffer

### Guardian Angels

1. IMO Charles Bowers  
 by Joan Bowers  
 2. IMO Debbie Bowers  
 by Joan Bowers  
 3. IMO Christine Bowers  
 by Joan Bowers  
 4. IMO Scott Bowers  
 by Joan Bowers

## Liturgical Min. Schedule

### December 9 — 5:00 p.m.

**Reader:** Patty O'Neill  
**Euch.Min.:** John O'Neill  
**Server:** Connor Felty  
**Cantor:** Dave Derbes

### December 10— 8:15 a.m.

**Reader:** Jeff Naffin  
**Euch.Min.:** George Forney  
**Servers:** Lukas & Finley McNamara  
**Cantor:** Tina Seiger

### December 10— 10:30 a.m.

**Reader:** Frank Murphy  
**Euch.Min.:** John Matulevich  
**Servers:** Cooper & Cole Felty  
**Cantor:** Marianne Wollyung



*Immaculate Conception*

**Holy Day of Obligation**

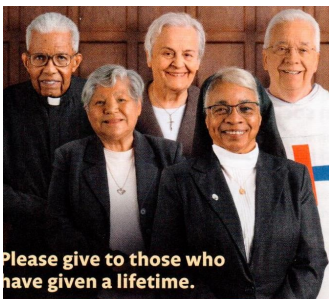
**Masses**

Thursday, December 7—7:00 p.m.  
 Friday, December 8—9:00 a.m. & 5:15 p.m.

## Chosen, Blessed, Shared

### Retired and infirmed Priests Annual Fund ...

Thank you to those who have given so generously to the "Chosen, Blessed, Shared" annual fund. If you haven't given, it isn't too late to support the retired priests of our Diocese by making a gift to the Endowment Fund for the Care of Retired Priests. This special fund is used to directly support retired priests in good standing including the future costs of their healthcare, insurance, and housing and sustenance. Please return your gift using the envelope you received in the mail. These envelopes may be returned in the mail or in the collection basket at Mass. For more information visit the website [www.weloveourpriests.org](http://www.weloveourpriests.org). Your generosity supports retired priests from all 5 counties of our Diocese!



Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

## Retirement Fund for Religious

**You can help.** "Religious are blessed to serve," says Dominican Father Bertraud Ebben, age 90. Please donate to the Retirement Fund for Religious next week. Your gift will provide essential care for nearly 25,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests who have dedicated their lives to serving others. Let us show our gratitude to these selfless individuals by giving generously.

## Next Week's Readings

**Second Sunday of Advent**  
**(December 9/10)**

**Reading I:** Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

**Reading II:** 2 Peter 3:8-14

**Gospel:** Mark 1:1-8

## Baptized in Christ

On November 19th, we celebrated the glorious baptism day of **Joel Arthur Whalen Jr.**, son of Joel and Kimberly (Shields) Whalen. He became a new creation in Christ in the waters of Holy Baptism and is now joined to us by the gifts of faith, hope and charity. We warmly welcome Joel into our parish family.

## Contemporary Music Ensemble

We are looking for new members! We are interested in both singers and instrumentalists. Commitment is minimal (2-3 hours per month) and musical experience/reading music is NOT required. Children and families are encouraged! We encourage parishioners who are interested in making a joyful noise to the Lord! Please email or call the rectory to join us! See you in the choir loft!



## 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. Please email or call the rectory for more information

## Family Matters

**Advent Season.** Do you have a favorite custom for the Advent season? Have you considered starting a new tradition? Plan on using this activity as a way for your family to grow closer to Jesus in this time of preparation and waiting.



Return your gift wrapped with the gift tag on the outside, attached to the ribbon. Please return the package under the tree by the weekend of **December 2/3**. The tag is very important because it has the person's identity number on it. If you are not able to purchase the item on the gift tag, please return it to the tree.

### **PLEASE DO NOT TAPE TAG TO THE PAPER**

Our gifts each year to the needy of the area are our way of reaching out to those who have meant so much and saying we love them and wish them the blessings of Christmas.

### **GIFTS ARE DUE BY December 2/3 weekend.**

**(Please Note:** If more than one item is listed on the tag ... You are asked to get one item ONLY)

## Catholic Women's Christmas Party

Attention Catholic Women's Union Members. Our Annual Christmas Party will take place on **Wednesday, December 6th** at the Blu Tavern at 6 p.m. Cost is \$25.00.

Menu choices: Stuffed Chicken Breast with filling or Broiled Haddock with Lemon or Virginia Baked Ham. We will also exchange a \$10.00 gift — please wrap your item.

For more information please call the Rectory at 570-622-5470 ext. 3.



## Dine-Out event

A big **"Thank You"** to all our parishioners and friends that supported our Dine-Out Event at The Crimson House Restaurant on Nov 15th. The winner of the 50/50 drawing (valued at \$115.00) was Carleen Bensinger, St. Clair. Our thanks to the Crimson House for supporting the dining event. The proceeds for the event were \$207, and with the 50/50 ticket sales, we netted \$322 for the day. All the funds realized will go toward our building restorations and repairs projects.



## Christmas Pageant—4 p.m. Mass—Christmas Eve

Any child 5 years or older who would like to take part in our Christmas Eve Pageant may sign up by contacting Sarah DeArment at 570-617-8418 or the Rectory 570-622-5470.

**Rehearsal Dates:** Tuesdays, December 5 & 19 from 6 to 6:45 p.m. in the Church.

No experience or special talents needed — please just bring your enthusiasm for Jesus and Christmas!

## 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 — Monday to Thursday.**



## Parish Council

Please approach any Parish Council Member listed below and ask that a question, concern, etc. be brought up at the next meeting on **Monday, December 11th**.

### Elected Members

Vincent Balulis  
Ann Blankenhorn  
Michael Brennan  
John Crane  
Michelle Darhun  
Darren DeArment  
Joseph Gerchak  
Heidi Gorski  
Sr. Mary Jane Hahner  
Michael Hummel  
Joseph Kurtek  
Nannette Major  
John Powers  
Reene Reddington  
Kay Wollyung  
Robert Wollyung

### Appointed Members

Lucilla Kochol  
John Consugar

### Ex-Officio

Father Kevin Bobbin  
Deacon Larry Lonergan  
Deacon Luis R. Visot  
Ed Brahler

## Church Decorating

Your help is needed!!  
All are welcome to help decorate our church for Christmas. Please call the rectory if you can help or just show up on ... **Sunday, December 17th after 10:30 a.m. Mass**

## 2024 Calendars

Church calendars for the New Year will be available next weekend. 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.

## Catholic Women's Union Christmas Cookie Sale

Homemade Christmas Cookies to benefit St. John's Catholic Women's Union will be available in Longinus Hall on the following dates ... **Saturday, December 9th** after 5 p.m. Mass and **Sunday, December 10th** after 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. Masses.

**Prices: \$7.00 and \$8.00 per dozen and Peanut Rolls (price to be determined)**



## Lenten Dinners – Kitchen Coordinators Needed

This past year we were fortunate to bring back our Friday Lenten Dinners at the Russel Building, with the option of dining in or taking out. We are grateful to all the people who took charge and organized the dinners, and to the many volunteers. Unfortunately, some of our key people are no longer able to help organize the dinners because of changes in their personal circumstances. Therefore, future Lenten dinners will depend on one or more persons stepping forward to fill the role of kitchen coordinator(s). This is a leadership role, which would involve taking charge of the kitchen, planning the menu and determining what foods and supplies must be purchased, and delegating responsibilities to the volunteers. This role can be shared by two or three people working together. Please call the rectory or speak with Father as soon as possible if you can help.

## Diocesan Events

### Monica Ministry

The St. Monica Ministry will hold a bilingual Holy Hour to pray for the return of loved ones who have left the Church. The Holy Hour will take place at St. Theresa Church, Hellertown, at 6:00pm on **Tuesday, December 12th**, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It will be preceded by a buffet dinner and basket raffle starting at 4:00pm in the parish's Friendship Hall. Presiding at the Holy Hour will be Deacon Miguel Ramirez of Our Lady of Mercy and St. Anthony of Padua Parishes in Easton. Deacon Ramirez will offer a bilingual reflection on Our Lady of Guadalupe's maternal love for her children, and on her constant intercession for those who have left the Church. No registration is required to take part in the Holy Hour. To register for the dinner, visit

[www.allentowndiocese.org/stmonicaministry](http://www.allentowndiocese.org/stmonicaministry). For more information, please email [StMonicaMinistry27@gmail.com](mailto:StMonicaMinistry27@gmail.com)

### Women's Advent Retreat: A Season of Joy

**Saturday, December 16**, 9:00 am – 12 noon, St. Mary's Church Hall, 94 Walnut Rd., Hamburg, PA. Open to women of all ages, the morning will feature breakfast, fellowship, Keynote by Fr. Stephan Isaac, and prayer. Co-Sponsored by the Diocese of Allentown's Bishop's Commission for Women and the Catholic Women's Society of Giving. Please register here: [allentowndiocese.flocknote.com/signup/141991](http://allentowndiocese.flocknote.com/signup/141991).

## Neighboring Events

**Spaghetti Dinner** ... sponsored by St. Patrick Church on **Sunday, December 3rd** at the parish center on Mahantongo St. from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (or sell out). Spaghetti platter includes pasta with our homemade sauce, two meatballs, a salad, and bread. Cost \$11 per platter. Extra meatballs and / or sauce available for purchase.

**All You Can Eat Breakfast** ... sponsored by St. Clare of Assisi Parish in St. Clair on **Sunday, December 10th** from 8 a.m. until 12 noon at the Immaculate Conception Hall on Diener's Hill.

Adults \$10.00; Children \$5.00

Breakfast includes: Ham, Bacon, Sausage, Potatoes, "Eggs, Pancakes, French Toast, Coffee, Tea, Orange Juice and Apple Juice.





December 3, 2023

## First Sunday of Advent

Is 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7 | 1 Cor 1:3-9 | Mk 13:33-37

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

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

In a nineteenth-century sermon, St. John Henry Newman wrote of today's Gospel: "[Jesus] mercifully whispers into our ears ... not to share in the general unbelief [around us], not to be carried away by the world but to 'beware, keep alert' and look out for his coming." I love the thought that Jesus is "mercifully whispering" to us. Welcome to Advent! We know that Advent is a time of anticipation and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ, but today's readings also speak to me of training ourselves to be alert for God's presence in the small, everyday moments of our lives. In his Letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes that "[we] are not lacking in any spiritual gift" as we await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are gifted with his grace. Our loving God bestows countless graces on us each day, and with the help of the Holy Spirit we can seek ways to be more aware of these graces. Yes, we can be more "alert" to them, but can also be thankful for these small moments of God's presence with us.

### GO EVANGELIZE

#### PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Advent is a season of joyful hope. "I hope I can get my Christmas shopping done in time ... I hope I have time to get my house decorated this weekend." We all have "hopes and dreams" for this time of year, and, God-willing we will be blessed with a truly festive and joyous holiday season with our families. For Catholics, though, this season of "joyful hope" is one that has a much deeper meaning. We long for the return of Christ and our eternal union with him with a hope that is built on the promises of Jesus in the Scriptures. Our hope is not passive, but active. We know that God is always there for us, comforting us in bad times and rejoicing with us in times of happiness. Let us give thanks for our Triune God who desires to be in relationship with us enough that he sent his Son to take on our humanity. And let us silence any noise in our hearts so as to hear Jesus' merciful whisper of encouragement to be on the watch for his coming.

**SING** *People, look east. The time is near  
Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the guest, is on the way.*

**Pastor** ..... *Rev. Kevin J. Bobbin*  
**Deacon** ..... *Lawrence Lonergan*

**Parish Council President** ..... *Kevin McNamara*  
**Choir Director/Organist** ..... *David Derbes*  
**CCD Coordinator** ..... *Lucilla Kochol*  
**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](mailto:prusso@allentowndiocese.org)

