Saint Sebastian Catholic Church

801 Broad Avenue · Belle Vernon, PA 15012

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A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg

THE HOLY FAMILY

"Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt." - Mt 2:14

December 28, 2025

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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Mass Schedule

Weekend: St. Sebastian: Sat.4:30 PM Sunday 9 & 11 AM

Epiphany: Sat. 4:00 PM Sun. 8:30 & 10:30 AM

Epiphany of Our Lord, 44 Pennsylvania Blvd. Monessen, PA.

Daily Mass: Mon.& Thur. 8:00 AM at Epiphany

Tuesday: 8:00 AM at St. Sebastian

Wednesday: 9:00 AM at St. John the Baptist

St. John the Baptist, 3332 Pittsburgh Rd, Perryopolis, PA

Friday: 8:00 AM at St. Sebastian

10:15 AM at St. Sebastian

Reconciliation—Saturday

Epiphany—3:00—3:45 PM

St. Sebastian—3:15—4:15 PM—By appointment anytime.

Mission Statement

We the Parish Family of Saint Sebastian, Belle Vernon, serve people in Westmoreland and Fayette Counties. We are Roman Catholics of various ethnic backgrounds with strong family values demonstrating a variety of skills, trades and professions. The purpose of the parish is to glorify God by assisting the community on the "Journey of a Lifetime" through the Liturgy and Sacraments, teaching and preaching the Word of God, and witnessing to our faith. As a community of faith, we are committed to love of God and neighbor through worshiping together and serving others in caring for their spiritual, emotional and physical needs. Each of us is called to strengthen and reach beyond our parish through being responsible stewards of our time, talent and treasure in the spirit of our patron, St. Sebastian.

Fr. Anthony's Reflection

HOLY FAMILY SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS, 28th DECEMBER 2025

GENESIS 15:1-6,21:1-3; PSALM 105; COLOSSIANS 3:12-21; LUKE 2:22-40

Grace and peace to you all. Today is the first Sunday after Christmas and the Church celebrates the feast of the Holy Family.

We have come today to do three things.

I. To thank God for the gifts of our families.

II. To pray for healing, faith, greater love and peace in our families and in families having troubles.

III. To reflect on the state of our families.

Today, I call upon us all to keep in prayers orphans and widows, those separated or divorced, those whose spouses do not support or encourage them in the faith, those who are hanging on in a marriage in which they no longer find joy. May the Lord strengthen them, may the Holy Spirit comfort them and may our Blessed Mother hold them in her loving arms.

Today, I will just draw three points from the readings for our reflection, which will be principally inspired by the Gospel of today.

A. The parents of Jesus were faithful observers of the law.

God was at the center of their family. They fulfilled their religious obligations and made an effort to bring their child up in the faith. This is an example and a challenge for us. Our family must be a domestic Church, a place where God is at the center, where faith is pivotal to our existence. We must be mindful of our baptismal promises to raise godly children. We are called to build a family where virtues are taught and encouraged. It is in such homes that children can easily discern God's call to service and be inspired to respond.

B. The parents of Jesus lived within their means.

You will notice that they took the option of the poor as they came to present Jesus in the temple - they came with either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Ordinarily, the rich should sacrifice a lamb for holocaust (Leviticus 12:8). The mystery is that even though they couldn't afford a lamb, they brought to God the true Lamb of sacrifice.

Let us learn as a family to live within our means, to live a life of contentment and simplicity, to avoid competing with any family or being desperate about anything. Let us not set standards, plans or targets that will end up giving us unnecessary stress and health problems, targets or standards that will end up making us prioritize money or our jobs over our families.

C. The Holy Spirit:

Simeon was led by the Holy Spirit and he saw in that little baby, the awaited Messiah. By the Holy Spirit, Simeon was led, prompted and instructed.

As parents, let us be open to the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom, vision, direction and discernment, so that we may see farther and clearer, so that we may see beyond appearances and so that we may be able to govern our homes according to the mind of God and in a way that our families will flourish.

I shall end with a gentle message for our children.

The First Reading tells us that God gave a child to Abraham and Sarah as a blessing. They named the child Isaac, which means laughter or happiness.

Every child is supposed to be an Isaac, that is, a source of joy, laughter and happiness. Every child is meant to be a blessing. Today, let us ask:

Am I a source of joy to my parents? Do I contribute to or diminish their happiness?

Am I a blessing?

Am I a grateful and obedient child?

The truth is that whatever we do as children is seeding. We shall inevitably reap the fruits sooner or later.

Fr. Anthony Onoko

VISIT THE MANGER SCENE

The Nativity scene will be up for the entire Christmas Season. Take time to visit the manger scene or the Christmas Crèche on the lawn of the Parish Center. Parents and grandparents, bring your children or grandchildren to the manger. Tell them the story of Christ's birth. Let them walk around and touch the outdoor statues; let them experience the beauty and wonder of the birth of Jesus Christ! Please take one of the holy cards in the basket near the manger.

Remembrance Tree

You are invited to add the names of those you wish to be remembered in prayer on the Tree of Remembrance. Their special intentions will be prayed for throughout the month of December by the daily rosary group.

Ministry of Care—As part of this parish Ministry, the names of those in need of prayer will be printed in the Sunday bulletin. If you or a member of your family find you are in need of prayer, please call the parish office and the name will be listed in the bulletin for at least one month. If you wish the request to continue, please call the parish office again. All parishioners are invited to be a part of this Ministry by lifting to the Lord in prayer the needs and concerns of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Lord, please remember the sick of our parish and community:

Rita Mandarino
Bernadette Dayner
George L. Cowan

Lord, give them strength in body, courage in spirit, and patience in pain. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Feast of the Holy Family

Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family, and the day focuses on the "Holiness of all of our families." Holiness is not a misty-eyed, otherworldly mode of living. Rather it is a realistic engagement in the difficulties, struggles, and tensions of human life and relating. Our own modern families are like the Holy Family in that, as they did, we too all face challenges in responding to God faithfully and obediently. The holiness of a family is not dependent upon perfection or an easy road. As Mary and Joseph showed us, holiness is dependent on faithfulness and obedience to God's message. What makes Jesus, Mary, and Joseph a holy family is their faithful, obedient response to God's message. Our families (and the family of the church) are also holy in our responding faithfully to God's will for us.

Today it is difficult to define what a family should be; in fact, family life today is beyond defining. None of us can be completely free from assumptions about families and a "well intended" list of family values that we should follow. Sometimes these values are sincere but sometime they are cynical. When we look at the holy family we do not look at them for the sociological model that they provide, rather they become a model of faith for us. So, the issue on this day is not that we should try to read into this feast a proposal for how to live as a family, but how each of us should remain open and obedient to the word of God.

Family life in our society has gone through so many drastic changes that none of us fit very well into a defined role, and that isn't such a bad thing. If we are honest with each other, we all live with some sort of dysfunction in life, there is simply no such thing as a perfect family. On this feast day we are reminded that we ought to be grateful for the people we have in life and most especially our families. Whether we are a traditional family or a single parent family, whether we have biological or adopted or foster children or no children, whether we live in an expensive home or a subsidized rental unit makes no difference for living as a holy family.

SAVE THE DATE!

We Gather Together—A Meet and Greet

Saturday, January 17, 2026
at St. Sebastian Parish Hall
1:00 PM until 3:00 PM
Refreshments & Hors d'oeuvres

A casual Meet and Greet bringing together friends and neighbors from our three parishes to shake off cabin fever, to connect, and to enjoy good company.

Open to all parishioners of Epiphany of Our Lord, St. John the Baptist and Saint Sebastian. Come socialize, laugh, and build togetherness.

Winter Weather Guidelines

Winter is here and with that comes the snow and ice. The following guidelines will be used throughout winter when the weather outside is extreme and/or unsafe. The safety and well-being of our parishioners is our priority. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office.

If the local school district has a 2 hour delay or cancellation, then the Daily Mass would be cancelled and the office hours would follow the same schedule as the school district.

Epiphany of our Lord would follow
Monessen School District

St John the Baptist would follow
Frazier School District

Saint Sebastian would follow Belle Vernon Area
St. Sebastian Regional School

FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Winter Break Notes

Class for Grades K thru 5 will resume **February 17** with an at-lesson: Liturgical Season Lesson - Lent.
First in-person class meeting in the St. Sebastian School building will be **February 24**.
Reminders will be sent out and emails will be sent out to families whose students are behind in work.

Youth Ministry will be on break **December 28** through January 11.

Regional Marriage Prep is hosted by St. Sebastian and held 3-4 times a year. We are in need of one or two couples who would be willing to facilitate these sessions. Training will be given to those who are interested. Contact Adelle at aslebodnik@dioceseofgreensburg.org or Darleen in the parish office if interested.

Mary, the Holy Mother of God

This solemnity is a rather recent addition to the cycle of seasons, Sundays, and feasts in our liturgical year. We have Pope Paul VI to thank for the 1974 enshrining of the devotion to Mary into our calendar on January 1. It is also a day in our calendar as a World Day for Peace.

Let us pray...

God of heaven and earth,
you came to us and took our earthly flesh
through the gift of Mary's yes.
She is our Mother in faith,
as she is your earthly mother.

We are thankful beyond our ability to thank you
for the gift of her Son as our brother and savior.
Through her self-giving,
we have been reconciled to you.

Bless us as we begin this New Year
and endow us with the desire and ability
to create a world of peace.

We ask all this,
through the intercession of Mary to you,
one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

DAY of PRAYER for the LEGAL PROTECTION of UNBORN CHILDREN

"Pray for Life" **Friday, January 23, 2026**
with The Greensburg Diocesan Council of the National Council of Catholic Women

ALL are Welcome *Come and go as your schedule permits*

Christ Our Shepherd Center, 2900 Seminary Drive, Greensburg

11:30 Rosary for priests
12:00 Mass celebrated by The Very Reverend Eric J. Dinga, VF
DCCW Spiritual Advisor
1:30 Rosary for Life
2:15 Stations of the cross
3:00 Divine Mercy Chaplet
3:30 Litany for Life
4:00 Closing Prayer and Benediction

Free will offering and Donations of diapers and baby items will be distributed to pregnancy centers throughout the diocese

March for Life 2026 in Washington DC

Friday, January 23th

Bus leaves Mother of Sorrows at 5:30 AM

Cost: $35, $25 for students, payable on bus or MOS office

Cash or check – payable to Mother of Sorrows Parish

Cash tip for bus driver

To register email Barb Koury at barbkoury@gmail.com

Include name and a cell phone number that you will have with you that day.

Trip includes Mass at the National Basilica in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel at 10:30 AM celebrated by Bishop Larry Kulick.

Would you like to join our Parish?

Has your information changed?
Simply fill out this coupon and drop it into the collection basket and a registration form will be mailed to you.

OR

You can pick up a registration form from the church pamphlet racks and mail it to the Parish Office.

Or scan the QR code for the Parish registration form.

- -

Please check all that apply:

__New Parishioner __I would like Envelopes

__Change Information

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Phone_____

E-mail_____

The Parish Staff

Pastor—Rev. Anthony Onoko
aonoko@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Parochial Vicar—Rev. Michael Thomas
mthomas@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Office Manager/Clearances—Mrs. Amy Legeza
alegeza@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Regional Business manager (off site)—Ms. Christine Coletti
ccoletti@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Regional Director of Faith Formation and Discipleship
Mrs. Adelle Slebodnik
aslebodnik@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Regional Director of Children's Formation & Discipleship
Mrs. Julianna Baluch
jbaluch@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Coordinator of Liturgical Music—Mr. Dean Dellamalva
ddellamalva@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Parish Secretary—Mrs. Linda Drury
ldrury@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Bulletin/Faith Formation Secretary—Mrs. Darleen Koury
dkoury@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Maintenance/Housekeeping—Ms. Lynn Rusnak
lrusnak@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Maintenance—Mr. Patrick Frederick
pfrederick@dioceseofgreensburg.org

St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School

Principal—Mrs. Carole Aiello
caiello@dioceseofgreensburg.org
School Business Manager—
Ms. Tiffany Zetty—TZetty@sssbv.org
School Telephone | 724-929-5143
Website | sssbv.org

Due to the early transmission of the Advent and Christmas bulletins, the financial report for December 14, 21, 25 & 28 will be in future bulletins.

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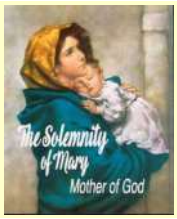

The Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God is a Holy Day of Obligation. The Parish **Office will be closed on January 1, 2026**. The Office will reopen on Tuesday, January 2 at 9:00 AM.

PLEASE NOTE: If you plan to invite any guest speaker to a church event, please first contact Adelle Slebodnik at 724-244-9434 or aslebodnik@dioceseofgreensburg.org. The Diocese requires all guest speakers to be vetted and have the required clearances. Thank you for your cooperation.

Liturgies this Week

December 27—Vigil
4:30 PM † (Date of Birth) John J. Barnot—Son, John

December 28—Feast of the Holy Family
9:00 AM † (Date of Birth) Vincenzo, Donna & Jeffrey Ambrose—Family
11:00 AM For All the People of Saint Sebastian Parish

Monday, December 29—St. Thomas Becket
8:00 AM Mass at Epiphany of Our Lord
Eucharistic Adoration

Tuesday, December 30
8:00 AM † (Death Anniv) Marion Pawlak—Family

Wednesday, December 31—Vigil
5:00 PM For All the People of Saint Sebastian Parish

Thursday, January 1—Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
10:00 AM †(MM) Robert A. Mallonee—Prayer Shawl Ministry

Friday, January 2—Ss. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianen
8:00 AM † Poor Souls in Purgatory—Donor
Eucharistic Adoration
10:15 AM No Mass

January 3—Vigil
4:30 PM † (Date of Birth) Jacob T. Hewitt—Dayna & Sissy

January 4—Solemnity of the Epiphany of Our Lord
9:00 AM For All the People of Saint Sebastian Parish
11:00 AM † (Death Anniv) Josephine Bacha—Family

Winter Closing Schedule

This winter, if there is a 2 hour delay for school, the parish office will also have a 2 hour opening delay. If there is a school cancelation, the parish office will also be closed. If a Mass was scheduled, it will be cancelled and rescheduled. Please follow your local school district. Questions, the parish office.

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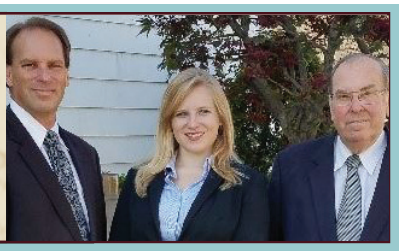

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2026 Catholic Calendar

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