

Welcome!



St. John the Baptist Parish Handbook & Frequently Asked Questions

Rev April 2018

Parish Mission Statement

Saint John the Baptist Parish is located in Plum Borough, Pennsylvania and is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh.

As a faith community, we strive to imitate our patron Saint John the Baptist who led others to Christ. We are committed to keeping our faith alive and growing through prayer, sacraments, faith formation and service. Through evangelization and stewardship we encourage full and active participation of all members.

We hope to reflect the life and love of Christ by strengthening the faith of our parishioners while reaching out to all God's people.
Saint John the Baptist, pray for us!

On Mission For The Church Alive

To see Jesus is our ultimate goal in life. Yes, there are many ways that Jesus shows himself to us in the Eucharist and the other sacraments, in the hearts of those who love and serve in his name, but to meet him in heaven is what we desire most. Each day, we should seek to follow the path that leads to him by living virtuous lives and drawing near to God in prayer. Yet, we know that we can't do this alone. In fact, it is the Church that Christ himself established that is to be our support on this journey through life to the glory of heaven.

As the Church of the Diocese of Pittsburgh is *On Mission for The Church Alive!*, we pray that this initiative will result in a stronger, more vibrant Church. In addition, while we may wonder if that will mean a difference in our lives, we should be assured that it will! A stronger local Church means that we will be better supported on our journey with Jesus to eternal life. Whether it's inspiring celebrations of the sacraments or ministries that provide for the spiritual and temporal needs of all, a stronger Church will allow us to see Jesus more clearly in our midst and will give us greater hope as we prepare to see him in Heaven. Visit onmissionchurchalive.org to learn more and to stay informed.

A Message from the Pastor

Welcome to St. John the Baptists Parish. We have an active and lively parish where people of all ages and gifts are encouraged to serve God, Church and Community. If you are new to the parish, please take the time to get involved in something in addition to regular Mass attendance. Please contact me if there is anything that I can do for you.

Father Kevin Poecking

Mass and Penance Schedule

Mass Schedule

Weekday Mass- Monday through Saturday - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday vigil Mass – Saturday, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Mass - 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Holy Days of Obligation (varies so please double check the bulletin or parish website.)

As a parish in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, we are participating in the *On Mission for the Church Alive* and expect immediate changes in the Mass schedule in October 2018 during this ongoing community integration.

Penance Schedule

Reconciliation time is Saturday at 9:30 a.m. or by appointment.

Brief History

St. John the Baptist was established in 1911 as a mission of the Missionary Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (MCCD). The diocese formed the MCCD to bring religious instruction to Catholics living in small, isolated communities who did not have easy access to an existing church. The first known Mass celebrated in Unity took place on May 12, 1911. At first, Mass was celebrated in Unity Hall, a public school building. By the end of 1911, the parish rented a private home for use for Sunday Mass.

In 1915, the parish became independent with the appointment of a resident pastor on October 25. The parish continued to use the rented property for Mass while funds were raised to build a new church. Construction of the church began in 1917 and the completed structure was dedicated on July 14, 1918.

In 1955, land was purchased to provide a school for the local community. In September 1959, the school was opened and dedicated. Staffing the school were the Sister Servants of the Immaculate heart. Enrollment during its first year was 288 students. Another addition was added in 1963 and dedicated in 1964.

As time went on, the congregation continued to grow. By the 1960's, plans were drawn up for a new church. Ground for the church was broken on March 26, 1963. The first Mass in the new building was celebrated on November 24, 1963, and the church was formally dedicated on January 5, 1964. The old church was converted to a parish hall, but was eventually torn down.

The purpose of this Handbook is to welcome you and provide you with general information about St. John the Baptist Parish and its programs and ministries. If you are called to any of the programs or ministries contained in this Handbook, or if you have any questions – please contact the parish office for details. Again, WELCOME!

Parish Office Hours

Monday-Thursday - 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.;

Friday - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; and

Saturday – Closed.

Sunday - 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

Parish Contact Information

Parish Office Phone Number	412-793-4511
Fax Number	412-793-4311
Parish Website	www.stjohnthebaptistparish.net
School Phone Number	412-793-0555
Fax Number	412-793-2001
E-Mail	
Parish Office	parishoffice@stjohnplum.org
Parish Manager	manager@stjohnplum.org
Bulletin Editor	bulletin@stjohnplum.org
Music Ministry	music@stjohnplum.org
RCIA	RCIA@stjohnplum.org
Religious Education	reled@stjohnplum.org
Safe Environment	safe@stjohnplum.org
Young Adult Ministry	youngadult@stjohnplum.org
Youth Ministry	youth@stjohnplum.org
Diocesan Victim Hotline	888-808-1235

Parish Administration

The Parish Administration is responsible for the daily operations of the parish. To be good stewards of the parish's resources and to carry out the mission of the Catholic Church, many volunteer opportunities exist to help service the important functions.

- **Finance Council** - The Finance Council assists the pastor in providing good stewardship of parish financial resources, ensuring that sufficient means are available and allocated appropriately to carry out the mission of the parish.
- **Office Volunteers** – The parish is always in need of administrative volunteers. Volunteer opportunities include answering the phone, preparing bulk mailings, and other general office work.
- **Parish Pastoral Council** – A pastoral council is a consultative body in the parish that serves to advise the parish priest about pastoral issues. The council's main purpose is to investigate, reflect and reach conclusions about pastoral matters and make recommends to the parish priest as appropriate.
- **Special Projects Committee** – The parish is always in need of volunteers to help with special projects. Projects can include capital improvements, routine maintenance and other projects to keep our parish maintained and operable.
- **Safe Environment** - All adults serving in ministry, especially where children are the focus, are required to have all clearances and workshops necessary to provide a safe environment for our parish children.

Liturgical Ministries

Liturgical Ministries provide excellent opportunities for us to fulfill our baptismal call of service to one another. Our Liturgies utilize the talents and gifts that God has given this community to the fullest extent.

Whether participation is through “behind the scenes” preparation and planning or through a public role of service within the Mass, parishioner contributions help our Liturgies to be truly life-giving celebrations.

- **Altar Servers** – The Altar Server assists the priest and, in particular, prepares the altar and the vessels for the most important act of worship, the Celebration of Holy Mass. Children entering 5th grade and up are welcome to become altar servers.

- **Cantors** – The cantor leads the assembly’s songs, especially when the choir is not present. The cantor also proclaims the Responsorial Psalm, as well as intoning the Gospel Acclamation and verse.
- **Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist** - The Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist (Eucharistic Minister) assists in the distribution of Holy Communion at Mass and takes Holy Communion to the sick and homebound of the parish.
- **Hospitality** - Ushers and greeters are called to be Ministers of Hospitality. They are entrusted with promoting a sense of welcoming and belonging to all the faithful assembled for worship. *Ushers* are to serve in the sanctuary of the church. Ushers seat parishioners as they arrive at Mass, take up the collection, and guide Communion. *Greeters* serve, encourage and enrich the lives of each person entering the doors of the church by welcoming and supporting them in a positive, friendly and spiritual manner.
- **Reader** - The Reader/Lector is a ministry of proclamation of the Word of God. Readers exercise their responsibility in the liturgy. God speaks to the faithful through them. They provide a prayerful and well-prepared proclamation of the Word.
- **Music Ministry** - The Music Ministry enhances the experience of worship by heightening the Word of God and providing beauty to the liturgy through music. Through strong musical leadership of adults and children, music ministers such as cantors, choir members, instrumentalists strive to enable the song of the assembly to encourage full, active and conscious participation.
- **Rosary Society** - The Rosary Society is an organization devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Its primary purpose is to encourage the prayer of the Rosary and to promote fellowship, support, and spirituality among its members.
- **Wedding Coordinators** - Wedding coordinators assist the bride and groom in the logistics of the wedding day. The wedding coordinator also helps to lead the rehearsal on the night before the wedding, walking through processions and the liturgy as a whole. On the day of the wedding the wedding coordinator assists by preparing the space and returning the sanctuary for regular worship.
- **Worship Committee** – The Committee’s focus is to improve and enhance the worship experience: to make the worship space beautiful and reverent, to promote a spirit of joy and reverence at Mass and other Liturgies. In doing so, the Committee is dedicated to learning

liturgical plans and working with the pastor for an full, active and conscious celebration of liturgy.

Faith Formation and Religious Education

Faith Formation is about engaging people in the Catholic Faith, both spiritually and intellectually. Our formation as Catholics relies on continual learning and growing of our faith as children and adults.

- **Adult Faith Formation** – The Church's catechetical mission aims to help the faithful of all ages to grow in both human and Christian maturity, enriching the whole of life with the leaven of the Gospel. Consequently, appropriate goals and content will embrace all the faith dimensions of an adult life—for example, understanding and communicating the Faith, skills needed for personal growth, the experience of family life, relationships, public service, and concern for the common good.
- **Baptism Preparation for Parents** - Before the celebration of baptism, the Church expects parents and sponsors to be formed in the meaning of the Sacrament as well as its responsibilities (*Canon 851*). The parish offers preparation sessions for first parents.
- **Children’s Liturgy of the Word** – This Liturgy is an age-appropriate Liturgy of the Word offered for ages three through second grade at the 9:00 AM Mass. Volunteers that work can work with and help children conduct this service.
- **CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine)**- The parish CCD program instructs children from first through eighth grade about sacramental preparation and their faith formation. Adults that are interested in teaching faith to young children can volunteer as instructors.
- **Pre-Cana Marriage Preparation** – This program is called “Pre-Cana” because it recalls the Gospel passage (John 2:1-12) when Jesus attended a wedding in Cana and performed the miracle of turning water into wine. The goal of all marriage preparation programs is to help engaged couples understand the sanctity of the Sacrament of Matrimony and remind us that Christ is forever present in every marriage. Married couples should contact a priest or deacon to arrange for a wedding BEFORE signing up for a pre-cana class.
- **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** - The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is for those who have questions about

Jesus Christ or the Catholic Church such as those who seek baptism, those baptized in another Christian tradition and baptized Catholics desiring the Sacrament of Confirmation. Parishioners are invited to serve as sponsors, faith companions, catechists and hospitality.

- **Vacation Bible School** – The parish sponsors a Vacation Bible School, for one week, usually in the month of June for children age three through fifth grade. New in 2018 is a planned special classroom for special needs children.
- **Young Adult Ministry** - The Young Adult Ministry (age 18 -30's) exists to love, serve, and participate in the richness of the Catholic Church by developing a strong Catholic identity through sacraments, prayer, service, and community. We seek to do this through forming intentional relationships with other young adults for all others.
- **Youth Ministry** – The parish Youth Ministry is separated into a Junior High Youth Ministry (JHYM), grades six through eight, and a Senior High Youth Ministry (SHYM), grades nine through twelve. The ministry's mission is to build faith formation for children through socialization and service.

Parish Life

The parish has a special role in promoting participation in the life, mission, and work of the faith community. At St. John the Baptist, we seek members of the parish to help create and preserve a community for our members as well as proclaim our faith in Christ to others.

- **Catholic Men's Fellowship** - The Catholic Men's Fellowship (CMF) is dedicated to helping men answer the call to holiness and virtue through prayer, Word and sacrament. In addition, we are faithfully obedient to the sacred Magisterium of the Church, and committed to cultivating leaders among men for the Church's mission.
- **Comfort Shawl Ministry** - Compassion and the love of knitting/crocheting have been combined into a prayerful ministry and spiritual practice, which reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace, as well as in celebration and joy. All who like to knit and crochet are welcome at home on their own or at group meetings.
- **Cookie Committee** - Bakers are contacted throughout the year to help bake for parish and school events. This committee has no meetings and baking needs during the year are spread around everyone's schedules. Anyone who likes to bake is welcome to join this ministry.

- **Family Festival Committee** – The annual festival is the largest fundraiser and community event for the parish. It requires an extensive amount of planning and execution. This committee is responsible for organizing and managing the event.
- **Family Festival Volunteers** – To be a success, the annual festival requires a large amount of volunteers. Positions include cooking, parking, booth operation and other essential services to make the festival a success.
- **Fellowship Sunday** – To promote fellowship among parishioners, old and new, and visitors, coffee and donuts are served after the 9:00 a.m. Mass on the 3rd Sunday of the month.
- **Retreat Coordinators** - Retreat coordinators plan and facilitate retreats for parishioners that enhance community life and provide opportunity for spiritual growth in our faith together.
- **Vocation Committee** – This committee’s objective is to raise awareness and share information about the various Catholic vocations: priesthood, diaconate, religious, married and the baptismal call to holiness and service for all individuals. As a parish-based organization, the Parish Vocation Committee works closely with the pastor, parish council, school staff, youth group and other organizations that form the parish community. Every family/individual is encouraged to share in a weekly commitment to prayer for vocations using a parish chalice representing the Precious Blood of Christ that infuses life into every vocation and ministry in the community. Every week, this chalice is brought to the weekend celebration of Mass to be shared
- **Women’s Fellowship** - This fellowship group for women over the age of eighteen, meets to promote fellowship through the strengthening of their Catholic Faith. All women are invited and their young children are welcome.

Social Ministry and Concerns

“I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.” -- *Matthew 23:35-36*.

Social Ministry is to care in love for the poor and to work for the elimination of social injustice in the world and the advancement of peace

and concern for all people. Our parish participates in programs at the local and global level.

- **Ladies of Charity** – The Ladies of Charity is a national organization with a parish chapter at St. John. The organization is a federation of Catholic women that continues, expands, and improves charitable and spiritual works at the local and national level. Works of charity are carried on according to the directives of the founder, Saint Vincent de Paul.
- **Local Outreach** - The parish welcomes volunteers and donations for various local outreach initiatives. These initiatives include, but are not limited to, collecting food, supplies, clothes and volunteering for local food kitchens and food pantries in the area.
- **Diocesan and Global Outreach** - The parish is involved in various diocesan and global outreach programs for the poor, vulnerable and marginalized. In conjunction with the Diocese of Pittsburgh, the parish is also involved in helping those in need in Chimbote, Peru in a special way and other diocesan collections throughout the year.
- **Ministry to the Homebound** – Volunteers support those who are homebound by bringing Holy Communion, visiting, and providing some assisting services (limited/occasional grocery shopping, lawn care, sidewalk snow clearing, housekeeping, etc.)
- **Respect for Life Programs** - As a parish which respects all human life, we participate in acts of service toward those who are most vulnerable in our society. Parishioners are involved in the March for Life, 40 Days for Life, a baby bottle fund raiser for a pregnancy resource center and other activities that promote human life and dignity.
- **Substance Addiction Ministry (SAM)** - SAM is a special regional prayer ministry that is designed to provide a safe, confidential place for people touched by addiction to share their personal experiences with others. It offers a distinctively Catholic starting point to begin the process of healing.

Bereavement

The Bereavement Committee and volunteers is an expression of sympathy from St. John the Baptist Parish when a parishioner, or their immediate family member, dies.

- **Bereavement Committee and Volunteers** - The purpose of the Committee is to directly express the parish's sympathy by offering support at the time of death. This service is extended to all members of the community in the event of the death of parishioner or an immediate family member. Volunteers help with hospitality, funeral home prayer services and other services to help the grieving family and friends of the deceased.

Other Organizations

Knights of Columbus – The Knights of Columbus is an organization for Catholic men of faith and men of charitable action. The core principles are charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism.

St John the Baptist School

The mission of Saint John the Baptist Catholic School is to participate in the teaching ministry of the Catholic Church, by proclaiming the Gospel message of God's universal love for each person created in His image and likeness. We are called to form a true community of faith in which God's deep love is nurtured, experienced, and shared among all members. We strive to be a clear and understandable witness of God's love by our loving service to all who are entrusted to our care.

The school is currently participating in the regionalization process within the Diocese of Pittsburgh. “Regionalization is intended to reinforce Catholic schools’ identity and mission; reallocate resources to enhance academic excellence and stabilize tuition and enrollment; and enable greater collaboration in curriculum, technology, professional development, athletics and fundraising.”

Athletic Committee - Students are encouraged to participate in athletic programs at the school. The committee updates and monitors the policies for the sports program. It oversees the coaching, instruction and the practices for the health, safety, and physical development of the children involved in the program.

Parent-Teacher Guild (PTG) The PTG at St. John the Baptist serves as a liaison between the parents and the school. The Guild helps plan events, organize volunteer opportunities and raise financial support for the school. Parents, students and staff members are actively involved in the school and parish community.

School Advisory Board - The purpose of the School Advisory Board is to assist the Pastor and Principal in an advisory capacity by recommending local school policies, recruitment, retention and programs that can enhance curricular and extracurricular activities.

Frequently Asked Questions

What other sources of information should I be aware of? For announcement and details on programs, events and other information about the parish, see the Sunday parish bulletin or the parish website www.stjohnthebaptistparish.net. The parish bulletin is also available on the website, or can be mailed to registered parishioners upon request.

When is Eucharistic Adoration? Eucharistic Adoration is usually on the first Friday of the month beginning at 9:45 a.m. until 8:45 a.m., Saturday morning. On four special feasts throughout the year, it is held on those Sunday celebrations instead of a first Friday. Check the bulletin for alerts to those special Sunday events.

If I volunteer to help with children, what do I need and whom do I contact? As Christian adults, we have a moral and legal responsibility and are entrusted by God with the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of minors and vulnerable adults as they participate in activities within or sponsored by our parish. It is our responsibility and commitment to provide an environment that is safe and nurturing. Therefore certain safeguards are in place that protect our children, including, but not limited to, training, background checks and certifications. If you are interested in volunteering for events when children are present (and this is most since most ministries and events can have children present), you should contact the parish's Safe Environment Coordinator at the telephone number located in the bulletin or on our website.

Does the parish have electronic giving? In addition to the traditional envelopes for tithing, the parish is also enrolled in an electronic-donation program. Please call the parish office for details and instructions for enrollment.



