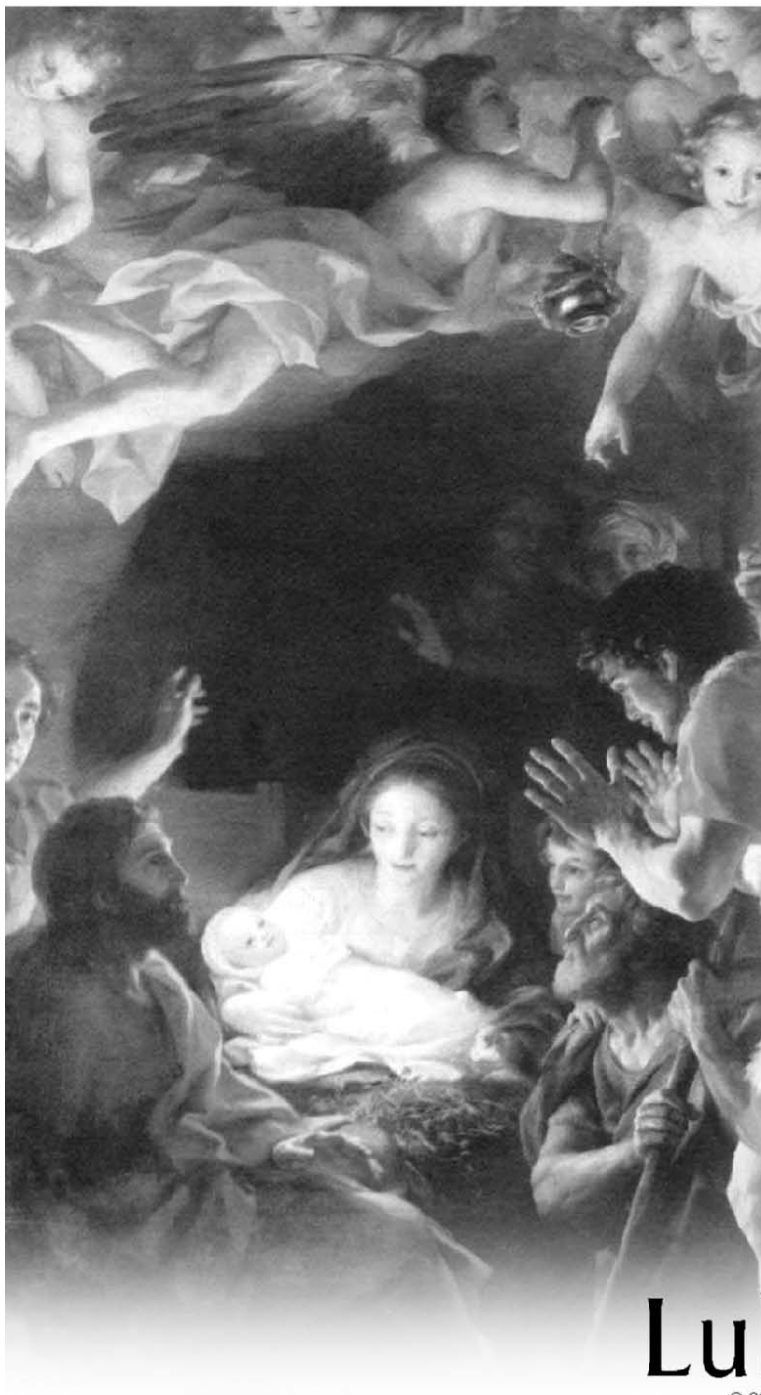


Saint Thomas the Apostle

Roman Catholic Church

Rectory/Parish Center: (973) 338-9190 • Fax: (973) 338-4224 • Religious Education: (973) 338-7400
School: (973) 338-8505 • Convent: (973) 338-9118
Address: 60 Byrd Avenue, Bloomfield, New Jersey • Website: www.stachurchbloomfield.com



For unto
you is born
this day
in the city
of David
a Savior,
which is
Christ
the Lord
Luke 2:11

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Christmas 2009

Masses for the Week

Sunday, December 20

Saturday, December 19

5:00 pm Josephine B. Ruffalo (5th Anniv.) – Son

Sunday, December 20

7:30 am For the People of the Parish

9:00 am Angelo Melia – Family

10:30 am Onbalsky Family – Family

12:00 pm Michael John Melograno – Wife

Monday, December 21

7:30 am Louis Occhetti – Friend

11:30 am Modesta Clemente – Family

Tuesday, December 22

7:30 am Frank Palma – Friend

11:30 am John & Mary Walters – Daughter

Wednesday, December 23

7:30 am Altavilla Family – Family

11:30 am Gertrude M. Norton – Bequest

Thursday, December 24 *CHRISTMAS EVE*

8:30 am (Daily Mass) Savino Laricchia – Friend

4:00 pm (Church) Anna Korec – Family

4:00 pm (HH) Henry & Dolores Wurts – Son & Dtr

6:00 pm Joseph Bianchi and Ernest & Philomena Cordasco – Daughter & Wife

10:30 pm Enrique Hernan Lopez – Family

Friday, December 25 *CHRISTMAS DAY*

8:00 am Jacob Szajkowski – Daughters

10:00 am Daniel & Marie Lovallo – Family

12:00 pm Jacqueline Sefjack – Husband

Saturday, December 26

8:30 am George J. Poster – Wife

Sunday, December 27

Saturday, December 26

5:00 pm Deceased Members of Ofsak & Russo Families – Family

Sunday, December 27

7:30 am Esterina & Silvester Fusco – Family

9:00 am For the People of the Parish

10:30 am Joseph Stevens – Daughter & Family

12:00 pm Kevin Younkins – Uncle

PRAY FOR OUR SICK:

Frank Korec, Noelle Angela,
Ryan Joseph, Dolly Sandoval, George Scott

REST IN PEACE:

Rocco Donatiello, Helen Frederico

CANDLE INTENTIONS:

Church: Aurora & Rafael Ferido
Convent: The Rohan / Powers Family
Rectory: David Kossack and Bridget & Onufre Kochuk

Fourth Sunday of Advent



Advent is drawing to a close: Christmas is near. The liturgy focuses on Mary, whose free acceptance of God's will for her prepared the way for the messiah. On this Sunday, so close to Christmas, we hear the angel's message to Mary with a special urgency. God allows his plan for the salvation of his people to depend upon the decision of a young girl.

The Nativity of the Lord



—December 25—

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Thursday, December 24, 2009 (Christmas Eve)

4:00pm (Herron Hall – School)
Christmas Music Prelude and Mass
4:00pm (Church) Christmas Music Prelude and Mass
6:00pm (Church) Mass
10:30pm (Church) Concelebrated Mass with Music
Prelude at 9:45pm. (No Midnight Mass)

Friday, December 25, 2009 (Christmas Day)

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
(All Masses with traditional Christmas Carols)

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Saturday, December 26, 2009 – 5:00pm
Sunday, Dec. 27, 2009 – 7:30am-9am-10:30am-12noon
Blessing of Families at Masses today

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Thursday, December 31, 2009 – 4:00pm (Vigil Mass)
Friday, January 1, 2010 – 7:30am – 11:30am

SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY
(Annual "Bell Sunday")

Saturday, January 2, 2010 – 5:00pm Vigil Mass
Sunday, January 3, 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am & 12pm
(Children's Epiphany Pageant following 12noon Mass)

Visit our website at:
www.stachurchbloomfield.com

From the Pastor's Desk...



Dear Parishioners,

Christmas is a wonderful and holy time of the year. It is when we become more aware of the many gifts God gives us all year - the gift of life, the gift of faith, and the gift of each other. On Christmas God showed how deeply he loved us by taking on flesh and becoming one like us, so that we could become more like Him.

All of us here at Saint Thomas the Apostle, priests and staff, wish you and your family a happy and holy Christmas. My prayer is that the Christ, whose birth we celebrate, may be present in your hearts and in your homes throughout this season of joy!

In the Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rev. Charles J. Miller".

*Rev. Charles J. Miller,
Pastor*

The 12 Days of Christmas

The song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" speaks only of gifts for each day. Some families have spread out the Christmas gift-giving to span the Twelve Days, much like the gift-giving at Hanukkah spans eight days.

It seems that this song actually began with Catholics in England as one of the ways they taught the faith to their children during the period (1558-1829) they were forbidden to practice their religion. Several schemas link doctrines to the twelve days:

- The partridge stands for Christ, who gathers his own under his wings-God's first gift.
- Two turtle doves represent the sacrifice of the Jewish family at the birth of a son, or the two Testaments of the Bible.
- Three French hens symbolize the gifts of the Magi; the persons of the Trinity; or faith, hope and love.
- Four calling birds remind us of the four evangelists.
- Five golden rings suggest the first five books of the Old Testament, the Torah.
- Six geese suggest the six days of the week when humanity labors.
- Seven swans remind us of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Eight maids represent the people saved in the Ark or the eight beatitudes.
- Nine ladies represent the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) or the nine ranks of angels.
- Ten lords stand for the Ten Commandments.
- Eleven pipers represent the eleven apostles who were faithful.
- Twelve drummers remind us of the articles of the Apostles Creed, the gates of heaven or the tribes of Israel.

SCHOOL, RELIGIOUS ED & SACRAMENTS



May you be blest with
peace and joy this
Christmas Season
STA School Community



OPEN HOUSE FOR NEW FAMILIES
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31ST, 10:00 A.M.

Please come and explore what a wonderful place STA School is to enroll your child.

Pre K3 through 8th grades
Middle States Accredited

Full-Day or Half-Day Pre K 3 & 4
Full-Day or Half-Day Kindergarten

BeforeCare & AfterCare programs
Advanced Technology

Jr. High Science / Synergistics Program
Physical Education for all grades

Spanish & Italian Classes - Art & Music Classes
Wide Variety of Extra-Curricular Activities



ATTENTION STA ALUMNI

Please check out the Alumni Registration page on our website www.stthomastheapostlenj.com.

Religious Education News

A reminder to all parishioners that our Summer CCD program will run from Tuesday, July 6th through Friday, July 16th 9:00-12:30 each day. Children in grades 3 through 8 are eligible. Registration space is very limited and the program is only available to our parish families. No notices will be sent home about Summer Registration. An announcement will be made in the church bulletin sometime in January when registration packages become available. Please do not call the Religious Education Office until the announcement has been placed in the bulletin.

We are in need of summer teachers in grades 3, 6, 7, & 8 – if interested please call the Religious Education Office at 338-7400. Please note that if you volunteer to teach in our summer program, your children are automatically accepted into the program.

If you have children ages 4-12, mark your calendars for our popular Vacation Bible School program. It will run from Monday, June 28th 'til Friday, July 2, 9:00-12:00 each day. We are in need of volunteers to help out for the whole week – especially Confirmation Candidates. Please watch the bulletin for further information and registration forms.

CCD Christmas recess ends January 3rd. ALL classes will resume the week of January 4th, 2010. Please remember that children in grades 1-7 are only allowed six absences and if your child is close to that mark you should call the Religious Education Office.

Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year to all of our students, families, volunteers, and teachers.



Tickets for the 2010 Calendar Raffle are on sale!

You should have received your tickets in the mail by now. Additional tickets are available on the desk in the Parish Center or by calling Gen Pezzino at 973-771-0463. All proceeds from the Raffle will go directly to benefit the educational programs of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish School.

STA SOCIETIES, MINISTRIES & EVENTS

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE



The main source of operating funds for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is our weekly offertory contribution. To assist us in being good stewards of God's gift of treasure, our contribution from last weekend is compared below to the amount we need this week to meet our budget. You may have noticed this amount will vary. This is because our budget varies by season, just as yours does.

DECEMBER 13TH COLLECTION: \$20,226
AMOUNT NEEDED PER WEEK: \$20,500

PLANNED GIVING

Here are some other ways you can help Saint Thomas the Apostle Church continue its mission of serving God's people. Give a gift of cash or check for general use or a specific purpose. Give a gift of stocks or bonds. There could be a significant tax advantage to you if there has been appreciation in their value and they are transferred to Saint Thomas the Apostle Church.

A bequest in your will assure that your possessions are distributed as you desire. When making a bequest, use the full legal name and address: **Saint Thomas the Apostle Church 60 Byrd Ave., Bloomfield, NJ 07003**. Make Saint Thomas the Apostle Church partial or primary beneficiary of a life insurance policy that is no longer needed for family security. Ask the insurance company for the forms necessary to change the beneficiary or to transfer the ownership to Saint Thomas the Apostle Church.

Wellness Ministry Cares... Assistance Program

The Wellness Ministry phone line is available Mon-Fri, 9am to 8pm. Call the Parish Center 973-338-9190 ext. 20. A return call will be made within 24 hours. A Parish Nurse will provide limited confidential health counseling & referrals to Community health resources & services. Volunteers are available for errands, home visits and phone contacts.

Blood Pressure Screening THIS Sunday, Dec. 20

Blood pressure screenings this month will be held on Sunday, December 20, 2009 from 8am to 12Noon in the parish center.



Thank you for supporting the Archbishop's Annual Appeal. In order for our parish to receive a rebate, we must exceed our goal in funds collected by December 31st. If you have an outstanding balance on your pledge, please make sure to send it in before the deadline. If you have not yet made your gift, please complete your gift envelope as soon as possible and either send it directly to the Archdiocese of Newark or turn it in at the parish center.



RIGHT TO LIFE

For all children: that their beauty, joy and innocence may serve as reminders that each child is a precious gift from God;

We pray to the Lord

RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE

The Respect Life Committee needs your help!

The Respect Life Committee desperately needs disposable diapers and baby supplies. Also Aspirin, Tylenol, ibuprofen, bar soap and used sheets and towels. The latter items are for a container going to Cuba in January.

God bless and thank you for your generous support!



***VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED***

SUNDAY, DEC. 20th at 1p.m.
We need men to volunteer to help carry in Christmas trees into the Church for our Christmas decorations.

JOB SEEKERS GROUP

Looking for a job? Come to a meeting of the St. Thomas the Apostle job seekers on the first and third Thursdays of every month at 7:30 pm in the Parish Center where you will get a chance to network, get some advice, and pray with other members of the parish who are searching for a job. If you're not looking for work, but are looking for a good worker, come to one of our meetings and you'll meet plenty of them!

For additional information, send an email to:
workministry@stachurchbloomfield.com

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP NEWS

MEETINGS EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT IN THE PARISH CENTER FROM 7-9PM. ALL HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH ARE WELCOME

12/20 6PM ADVENT MASS 7PM CHRISTMAS MEETING

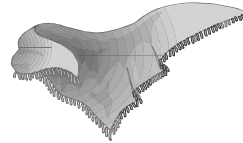
MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

01/10/10 KICK-OFF MEETING

50 IN 15 PASTA

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT TIM DENNIN AT tdennin@att.net

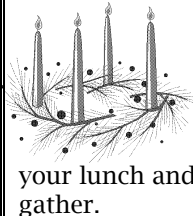
The Prayer Shawl Ministry



We will meet Sunday, January 17th starting at 11:30-2PM. We meet in the Parish Center. If you cannot attend the meeting but wish to participate please contact Alicia.

We're in need of shawls measuring **at least** 22" x 60". If you have any questions please contact the Ministry: Bernadette at 973-893-0114, Sister Arleen at 973-338-9190, or Alicia at 973-473-6633

Women's Advent Reflection Group



Tuesday at 12:40 pm, will be our last meeting before Christmas. Come pray, reflect, and share on the Sunday Readings this 4th week of Advent. All women are invited. If you attend the 11:30 am Mass, you are most welcome to bring your lunch and eat here in the Parish Center before we gather.

**Children's Christmas Event
Epiphany Pageant**

OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN OF THE PARISH
Ages Pre-K4 - Grade 3

Sunday, January 3, 2010
Immediately following 12:00 Noon Mass

Three Kings Reception in the Parish Center to follow. Angels, Shepherds and Kings are needed to join our Nativity and Epiphany scene. Many costumes will be provided.

Please complete the form below and return to the Parish Center Attention: "Children's Pageant".

Child's Name: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

_____ I would like to help with costumes.

_____ I would like to help with the Three Kings Reception.

Parent Name: _____

Phone: _____

**JANUARY 3RD BULLETIN DUE:
MON. DEC. 21 BY 10:30 AM**



**PLEASE SUBMIT ALL BULLETIN INFORMATION TO
THE PARISH CENTER BY THE DEADLINE.**

**SEND VIA EMAIL TO: jwgasparini@aol.com
DROP OFF AT THE PARISH CENTER,
OR SEND VIA FAX TO 973-338-4224.**

The Catholic Parishes of Deanery 16
invite you to

Simbang Gabi 2009

Filipino Christmas Novena Masses

Schedule of masses in other parishes:

Dec. 20, Sunday 5pm	Holy Family Church Nutley
Dec. 21, Monday 7:30pm	Sacred Heart Church Bloomfield
Dec. 22, Tuesday 7:30 pm	St. Mary Church Nutley
Dec. 23, Wednesday 7pm	Holy Name of Jesus Church East Orange

MEN'S CORNERSTONE – MARCH 12 and 13, 2010

"Cornerstone for me was the perfect sanctuary for
healing."
– Rob Gibney

St. Thomas the Apostle Mission Statement

The Roman Catholic faith community of St. Thomas the Apostle recognizes God's call to be a sign of His Kingdom in the communities we serve. We respond to this call by:

- † Leading people to a deeper relationship with Christ by providing opportunities for spiritual growth, renewal, education, the celebration of the Sacraments, and the worship of God in the sacred liturgy;
- † Encouraging a commitment to justice and to service of those in need;
- † Promoting good stewardship of our time, talent and treasure;
- † Building a community of hospitality and support in the daily living out of Christian ideals by nourishing mutual respect and understanding within our Church, our families, our community, and other faith traditions.

The Institute for Christian Spirituality, Center for Workplace Spirituality, *presents the workshop...*

Finding Work & Managing Your Career in Tough Economic Times,

Saturday, January 30, 2010 - St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Parish Center, St. Peter's Room, Bloomfield, NJ, Mass at 8:30am (optional), 9:30a – 12:30p (light breakfast will be served), *Topics of discussion will include:*

- Proactive job-hunting: what really works?
- Networking: the #1 way to find work!
- What you should be doing to manage your career while still employed
- Resumes: what type is best for you?
- Reinvigorating a long job-search
- Points for mature job-seekers
- AND...where is God in all this?

Please join us for a time of prayer and reflection on the meaning of work in our lives and learn the best ways to find work in today's job market; learn what you should be doing to sustain your career, even while you are working... all discussions are confidential.

Know that you are not alone...

This workshop will be facilitated by Julie V. Burkey, MAPM, Director of the Center for Workplace Spirituality at Seton Hall University where she is also an adjunct professor. Julie has led numerous workshops on issues of employment; previously, she spent many years in her own business as an executive search consultant to major industrial companies.

**Kindly RSVP by January 22, 2010 to
workministry@stachurchbloomfield.com**

Ministry of Spiritual Direction

NEW YEAR NEW BEGINNINGS RETREAT DAY

Guided Retreat for Men & Women

Saturday, January 9, 2010

9:00am – 4:00pm in the Parish Center

"Rise up, be off to the potter's house;
there I will give you my message."

Jeremiah 18:2

Though the holidays bring many graces and blessings often they bring pressure, disappointment and anxiety for many of us. This day we will take time to explore some of these areas that require self-knowledge & awareness in hopes that all will lead to a deeper intimacy with Our God.

Please Register by Jan 7 • Anna – (973) 338-9538
Offering • Light Continental Breakfast
Bag a Lunch • Offering \$25