

St. 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

Address: 60 Byrd Avenue, Bloomfield, NJ 07003 • Website: www.stachurchbloomfield.com

Facebook: Saint Thomas the Apostle Church Twitter: @stachurchnj

Parish Center Hours: Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm. Friday 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm, Saturday 9am-1pm

Rev. Lawrence J. Fama, Pastor

Rev. Charles J. Miller, Pastor Emeritus

Parochial Vicar: Rev. Antonio T. Sarento, M.Div.

In Residence: Rev. John Gordon, V.F., Rev. Charles Pinyan

Weekend Assistant: Rev. Thomas Cembor

PERMANENT DEACONS

Deacon Thomas J. Coyle • Deacon Brian J. Murphy

Deacon Dennis J. Besida, Retired • Deacon Albert H. Tizzano, Retired

EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY

Saturday Eve: 5:00pm

Sundays: 7:30, 9:00,
10:30am & 12:00 Noon

Weekdays: 7:30, & 11:30am

Saturday Mornings: 8:30am Only

Holy Days:
7:30, 11:30am & 7:30pm

Holidays: 8:30am Only

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE FOR
ELEMENTARY CATECHETICS

Tracey Hann

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Michael Petrillo

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MUSIC MINISTRIES

Dr. Patricio Molina

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Robert P. Miller

COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Quinn Furnald

TRUSTEES

Bernadette Lipoma

James McKittrick

SACRAMENT OF
RECONCILIATION
(Penance/Confessions)
Saturday: 11:00am

MARIAN
DEVOTIONS
Mondays
Novena Prayer
11:30am Mass

LITURGY OF
THE WORD
WITH CHILDREN
Sundays: 10:30am Mass
September - June

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December 15, 2019 • Third Sunday of Advent

Masses for the Week

Saturday, December 14

5:00 pm Brendan Boyle – Bequest

Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday of Advent

7:30 am Vanjean Cayetano – Family
9:00 am Msgr. William C. Hatcher – Friend
10:30 am For the People
12:00 pm John J. McGovern – Family

Monday, December 16

Advent Weekday

7:30 am Maryann Garner – Friend
11:30 am Michael & Fannie Bove – Family

Tuesday, December 17

Late Advent Weekday

7:30 am Josephine & Dominick Tortorello – Bequest
11:30 am Joan C. Murawinski – Family

Wednesday, December 18

Late Advent Weekday

7:30 am Cecilia Marra – Daughter
11:30 am Joan C. Murawinski – Friend

Thursday, December 19

Late Advent Weekday

7:30 am Bebe Virata – Family
11:30 am Robert White – Family

Friday, December 20

Late Advent Weekday

7:30 am Mary Rogalcheck – 100th Birthday – Family
11:30 am Victoria Rooney – Friends

Saturday, December 21

Late Advent Weekday

St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church

8:30 am Salvatore & Antoinette Rotunda – Family
5:00 pm Thomas Gonzales – Spouse

Sunday, December 22

Fourth Sunday of Advent

7:30 am Elizabeth Dennen – Family
9:00 am Mary Rogalcheck – Family
10:30 am Tom Gonzales – Spouse
12:00 pm For the People



Third Sunday of Advent

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called *Gaudete Sunday*. *Gaudete* is the Latin word meaning “rejoice.” This Sunday is so named because “Rejoice” is the first word in the entrance antiphon for today’s Mass taken from Philippians 4:4,5: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near.” Some people mark this Sunday on their Advent wreath with a pink candle instead of a purple candle. This Sunday is a joyful reminder that our salvation is near.

This week’s Gospel Reading continues our Advent reflection on the person and message of John the Baptist. Last week we heard John speak about his relationship to the coming Messiah, Jesus. This week, we hear Jesus’ message to John the Baptist, now in prison, about the signs of the kingdom found in Jesus’ ministry and Jesus’ assessment of John’s role in the Kingdom of God.

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of John’s arrest in chapter 14:3-12. In today’s Gospel, John sends word to Jesus from prison, asking if Jesus is the Messiah for whom he has been waiting. Jesus responds by pointing to the miracles that he has worked and invites John and the other hearers to make their own determination. In his next breath, however, Jesus praises John for his role in preparing the way for Jesus. Then Jesus says that all of those who work for the Kingdom of God will be as great as John and even greater.

Jesus’ message to John about the signs of the kingdom being performed recalls the salvation described by the prophet Isaiah. This passage is a reminder that the beginning of salvation is already mysteriously present to us, but also yet to be fulfilled. Salvation is already in our midst as manifest in the miraculous deeds of Jesus and in the Church. But salvation is also to be fulfilled in the coming reign of God. Even as we observe our world today, we can find glimpses of God’s work among us. Even more, we help to prepare the way for God’s kingdom by our words and our deeds. This message is indeed a cause for rejoicing.

PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Phyllis Manion, John Rennie,
Nancy Salerno, Lucia Avallone

REST IN PEACE

Josephine M. Calafiore, Louise Kreutzer, Frank De Munno

SANCTUARY CANDLE INTENTIONS

CHURCH: Fred Lardiere
RECTORY: Ronald Novak

View this bulletin online at:

<http://stachurchbloomfield.com/bulletin>

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE



The Main source of operating funds for St. Thomas is our weekly / holyday offertory collections. The information below will show where the Parish is as of December 8th compared to the budget amount for the year. The break-even date is June 30, 2020. The amount needed each week is \$17,496 and the amount collected last weekend was \$17,869.

Budget Amount	Year to Date	Remaining Amount
\$892,300	\$383,166	\$509,134

The year to date amount is negative by \$19,242 as of week number 23 in our current budget year.

HOLIDAY SEASON BULLETIN DEADLINES

DECEMBER 22nd BULLETIN
Deadline: 5pm on Monday December 9th
DECEMBER 29th BULLETIN
Deadline: 5pm on Friday December 13th
JANUARY 5th BULLETIN
Deadline: 5pm on Friday December 20th

This week at STA stachurchbloomfield.com

Location key: (CH) Church (PC) Parish Center (G) Gym (HH) Herron Hall

Day	Date	Time	Event and location (refer to key)
Su	12/15	8:00a	Blood Pressure Screening (PC)
		9:00a	Hospitality (PC)
		10:00a	RCIA (PC)
		10:30a	Mass – Children's Liturgy (PC)
		11:30a	Prayer Shawl Ministry (PC)
		1:30p	Baptism Sacrament (CH)
		7:00p	Youth Group (PC)
M	12/16	12:00	Eucharistic Adoration (CH)
		3:40p	CCD Class (HH)
		7:30p	Life Holy Hour (CH)
		7:30p	Men's Scripture (PC)
T	12/17	3:40p	CCD Class (HH)
		7:00p	Choir Adult CH
W	12/18	4:00p	Bell Choir (PC)
		7:00p	BSA Scout (HH)
		7:00p	Small Christian Community (PC)
Th	12/19	6:00p	Cub Den Meeting (HH)
		7:30p	Choir Adult (CH)
F	12/20	7:20p	Small Christian Community (PC)
Sa	12/21	11:00a	Confession (CH)
Su	12/22	10:00a	RCIA (PC)
		10:30a	Mass – Children's Liturgy (PC)
		7:00p	Simbang Gabi (CH)

Mass Schedule for Christmas Season at St. Thomas the Apostle Church



RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION) SCHEDULE

Saturdays, December 14th, & 21st at 11:00 a.m.
(St. Thomas the Apostle Church)

with Individual Confessions heard by the Priests from
the Churches of St. Thomas the Apostle,
St. Valentine & Sacred Heart Church.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday, December 24th Christmas Eve

4:00pm (Herron Hall – School)

Christmas Music Prelude and Mass

4:00pm (Church) Christmas Music Prelude and Mass

6:00pm (Church) Mass

10:00pm (Church) Concelebrated Mass with Music
Prelude at 9:30pm. **(No Midnight Mass)**

Wednesday, December 25th (Christmas Day)

8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

(All Masses with traditional Christmas Carols)

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Tuesday, December 31st – 5pm Mass New Year's Eve

Wednesday, January 1st (New Year's Day)

10:00am & 11:30am

SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY

(Annual "Bell Sunday")

Saturday, January 4th - 5:00pm Vigil Mass

Sunday, January 5th - 7:30, 9:00, & 10:30am

12 noon with Bell Choir

(Children's Epiphany Pageant following 12 noon Mass)

Welcome

...to Fr. Charlie Pinyan, who is in residence in our rectory. Fr. Charlie is a classmate of Fr. Larry's and is the new Vicar for Clergy for the Archdiocese.

Parish Stewardship Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

My parish is composed of people like me; **I help make it what it is.**

It will be friendly, **if I am.**

Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.

It will do great work, **if I work.**

It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver.

It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, **if I invite and bring them.**

It will be a parish of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a parish with a noble spirit, **if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these same things.**

Therefore, with Your help, O God, I shall dedicate myself to the task of being all things that I want my parish to be.

Reprinted from the September 2019 issue of *One Family in Mission* newsletter, courtesy of the Office of Parish Stewardship, Diocese of Rockville Centre.



WELCOME TO OUR NEWLY BAPTIZED

*We welcome our newly Baptized,
with our prayers and good wishes,
into our Community of Faith...*



Maci Faith Bernardo

Parents: Alyssa (Bieksha) & Anthony Bernardo, Jr.

Michael Joshua Hughes

Parents: Dianne (Bazan) & Jason Hughes.

Luke Christopher Parsons

Parents: Brittany (Lohman) & David Parsons

Christian Jonathan Porter

Parents: Meghan (McWatters) & Brett Porter

Everleigh Forest Schmidt

Parents: Ysolt (Usigan) & Jesse Schmidt

Boy Scout Troop 22 Bloomfield, NJ

Christmas Wreath Fundraiser

\$20.00 Each available for
purchase at Sunday Masses on
Dec. 14th and 15th Please Help
Support our youth and join in the spirit of the
Christmas season



St. Thomas the Apostle Prayer Shawl Ministry December 15 in the St. Peter room 11:30-1:30pm



The Prayer Shawl Ministry is in need of new members who knit or crochet and would like to share their talent with our ministry. All are welcome to join

our gathering of fellowship on the 3rd Sunday of each month in the St. Peter room from 11:30 to 1:30pm. The meeting gives our members a chance to pray and work together as a group as well as exchange patterns and new ideas to enhance our ability to comfort others in need. Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry can knit or crochet at home or with our group. You do not need to attend these meetings to be an active member to share your talent with our ministry.

Please come to a meeting or call Betsy @ 973-893-2441 for more information on sharing your talent with our ministry.

NEW HOLY WATER DISPENSER

Thanks to the generosity of Angelique and Roland Sharps we have a brand new holy water dispenser. It is located in the niche on the north side of the church near the Reconciliation Room.

You are welcome to bring in bottles to take some of the water home to use to bless your homes and your family.

Pre-Cana Informational Meeting

If you're looking for a great way to spend some quality time with your spouse why not join our Pre Cana team? We are looking for table leaders, speakers, administrative helpers, etc. No experience necessary! If interested please come to our Informational meeting in the Parish Center on Saturday, January 11th at 9:00am. See you there!

It is easy to look at our world and become discouraged by the apparent absence of God and signs of God's salvation. Advent, however, is a season of hope, in which we acknowledge that salvation is both mysteriously present, even in our world, and yet to be fulfilled.

Read together today's Gospel. Think about John's question to Jesus: Are you the One? Jesus does not answer directly, but points to the signs of the kingdom present in his midst.

Together as a family, look through the newspaper for signs of hope that God is at work in our world. Pray that the world will know God's salvation by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Our 2020 Mass book is almost filled. When it is filled there will be no more Masses available until we open the 2021 Mass book in early 2020. We will give you a 3-week notice in the bulletin.

There are other ways to remember your loved ones here at St. Thomas. We have Memorial candles, including the Sanctuary Lamps in the church and in the Rectory chapel.

If you would like to have a Mass said for your loved one quickly, we offer "off-site" Masses which will be said at the Archdiocesan Center by Fr. John Gordon, by the prison ministry, and at St. John Vianney in Rutherford by one of our retired priests.

ALL ARE WELCOME

On Sunday, December 22nd, Cardinal Tobin will be here to celebrate the noon Mass. This is the first time that the Cardinal is coming for an official parish visit. Let's fill the church to welcome our Chief Shepherd of the Archdiocese to our parish.

Living the 3 T's

By sharing your Time, Talent, & Treasure

"But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret..." (Mt 6:3-4)

For Jesus' greater honor and glory on His birthday, let's commit to being more generous in giving others our time, talent, and treasure this Christmas. And when Christmas is "over," let's commit to playing the role of "Secret Santa" throughout the new year, gifting others with spiritual and material gifts—anonously--wanting nothing in return, "except" God's nod of approval—knowing that on top of that, as Jesus promises when we give alms secretly: "...[our] **Father who sees in secret will repay [us].**" (Mt 6:4)

MEN'S SCRIPTURE READING AND REFLECTION

ALL MEN are invited **Monday, December 16, 2019** at 7:30pm in St. James room. Join a group of ordinary men and spend 90 minutes reflecting on the Sunday Scripture Readings for the coming week and discussing some of the **Challenges to our Catholic Faith**. We will be reading Bishop Robert Barron's **Letter to a Struggling Church**. Come and share the extraordinary Word of God and together learn more about our beautiful Catholic faith.

NEW TO OUR PARISH? WELCOME!!

PARISH MEMBERSHIP; New Parishioners are request to register in the Parish as soon as possible. Please notify the Parish Office of any changes in address or phone number.

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____

Phone _____

Email _____

____ I wish to receive a registration form

____ I have an address change

____ I am moving out of the Parish

Please cut out and return to Parish office or drop in the collection basket.

CONGRATULATIONS!

.....to Cheryl Bitecola, a Junior at Paramus Catholic High School, for achieving First Honors last marking period. Cheryl's name was missed in our last article of Congratulations and we are sorry for the omission. Great job, Cheryl!



Are you or someone you know interested in being baptized or need to receive the sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation? Perhaps you just want to learn more about your faith. The RCIA is the process by which adults prepare for the reception of the sacraments in a friendly, relaxed, and informal setting. It is also a way for those who have already received their sacraments in initiation to learn about their faith in a deeper way. The RCIA meetings are held every Sunday after the 9 a.m. Mass in the St. Thomas room in the parish center. For more information call Bob Miller at 973.338.9190 x135.

Beyond Cornerstone Service visits

St. Augustine's Soup Kitchen

We endeavor to provide a special meal each month to St. Augustine's soup kitchen. You may donate to this Ministry by writing a check to St. Thomas Parish---please note on the check that it is for the SOUP KITCHEN. Mark the envelope "Soup Kitchen--- att. Alicia" Your donation may be dropped off at the Parish center or placed in the Sunday collection basket.

STA Calendar Raffle

It's that time of year! The STA Home & School Association is holding its annual Calendar Raffle. The proceeds will directly support the education programs at St. Thomas the Apostle School.

We ask for a \$10.00 donation for each raffle ticket. The raffle will begin February 3, 2020 and run through April 30, 2020. Prizes range from \$100 to \$1,000.

You can pick up raffle tickets at the STA School Office, the STA Parish Center, or you can order them from Michele Gilfillan at mggilfillan@yahoo.com or at (646) 584 8187. Checks or money orders can be made out to STA Home & School Association. **Deadline for purchasing tickets is January 31, 2020.**

The raffle tickets make a great Christmas gift or stocking stuffer for college students, grandparents, and friends!

Have your young child join us in our annual CHILDREN'S EPIPHANY PAGEANT

SUNDAY - JANUARY 5TH 2019 in church
immediately following the 12 noon mass - 12:50 pm
OPEN TO CHILDREN OF THE PARISH Pre-K 4 - Grade 3
Bring this form to rehearsal or drop off at the Parish Center, CCD or School Offices
PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST STAY FOR REHEARSALS!
[COSTUME GUIDANCE AFTER REHEARSAL]
FINAL/DRESS REHEARSAL [CHILD MUST ATTEND]
SATURDAY, JANUARY 4TH 6:30 - 7:30 PM – CHURCH
Bring costumes if you have - Parent again must stay.
As always we need angels, shepherds, kings and possibly a Mary and Joseph!

CHILD[REN] NAMES _____
 GRADE IN SCHOOL _____
 PARENT CONTACT NAME (PRINT) _____
 PHONE _____

Thank you, St. Thomas Family for your generous donation of drawstring bags, flip flops, hats, water bottles and soccer gear this past summer. Not only did it help me on my path to Eagle, it also made the orphaned children of Djibouti very happy. I would also like to thank Sergeant Cerracchio and his unit for making this happen. We pray for their safe return.
Max Zwiener, Alumnus 2018



Christ in the Eucharist - Article Four The Old Testament Background

Most Catholics know and understand that the background to the Mass is the Last Supper. Many also recognize that the Last Supper that Jesus celebrated was a celebration of the Jewish Passover. But what is equally important to understand regarding the Old Testament background of the Eucharist is a particular type of Jewish sacrifice called a *Todah*. The Hebrew word *Todah* literally means "Thanksgiving". It was a sacrifice offered by an individual to God in thanksgiving for having saved the life of a person from sickness or death. The Greek translation for *Todah* is *eucharistein* which is where we get our word Eucharist.

What is particularly interesting about the celebration of the *Todah* is that it had many parallels with the Passover celebration and, therefore, parallels to our celebration of the Mass. The celebration of a *Todah* would include the offering of bread and wine, the sacrificial offering of a lamb, and the retelling of the story of how God saved the person. The ancient rabbis taught that a *Todah* could be offered at any time except during Passover. Why? Because while a *Todah* is a celebration of an individual life being saved, the Passover was the commemoration of the salvation of the entire people of Israel. What is noteworthy regarding the offering of the bread in a *Todah*, is that it was the only bread offered in sacrifice which those who were not priests were allowed to eat. This is similar to the Passover where the family participates in eating the blessed matzah or unleavened bread and, therefore, an anticipation of our reception of the Eucharist.

The celebration of Passover is a commemoration of Israel's exodus from slavery in Egypt. Prior to the Israelites being set free, a series of plagues fell upon the Egyptians. The tenth plague was the death of the first-born son in each Egyptian home. The recounting of this plague, in Exodus 12, tells of what the Israelites must do in order to avoid being victims of the same plague. The Israelites were to acquire a lamb; slaughter the lamb without breaking its bones; sprinkle the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintels of their shelters; roast the lamb and eat it.

The final instruction on eating the lamb is not insignificant. If one did not eat the lamb, then they, too, would fall victim to the plague of death. There was no instruction by God to eat a *symbol* of the lamb. The Israelites literally consumed the lamb which died in their place. The lamb gave its physical life and in the act of eating that lamb, the Israelites saved their lives as well.

The Old Testament lamb anticipates Jesus in the New Testament who is called the Lamb of God by John the Baptist (John 1:29). The relationship of this Passover imagery to the Eucharist we celebrate at Mass is clear. When we recite the "Lamb of God" at Mass prior to receiving communion, we are proclaiming that what we are about to receive is not simply bread, but Jesus who, like the lamb from Exodus, gave his life in our place. But like the Israelites, we **do not consume a symbol**, but the actual flesh of the one who died for us. Unlike the Israelites who consumed the lamb for physical life, we consume the Lamb who gives us spiritual life.

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