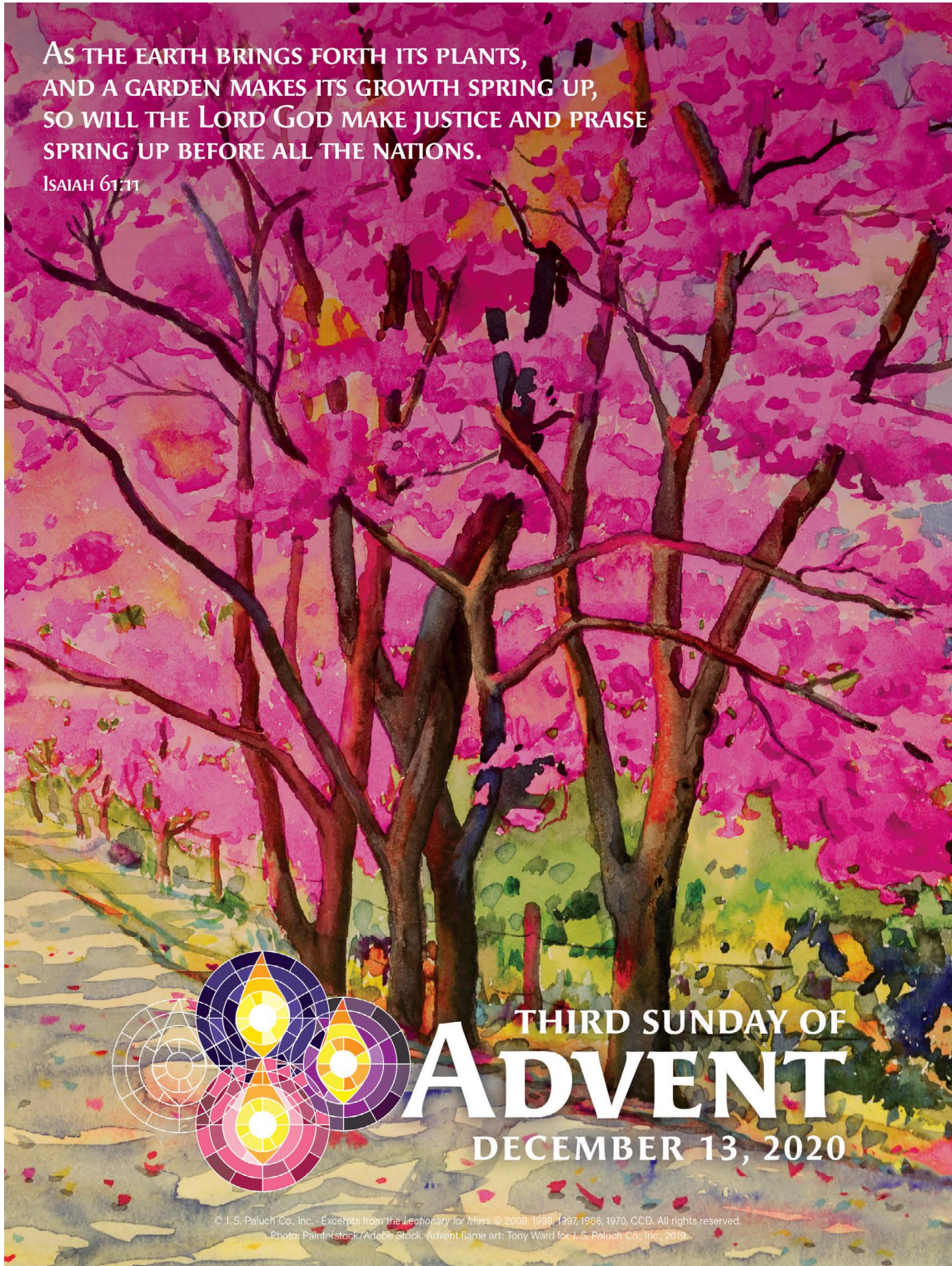


St. Thomas

DECEMBER 13, 2020 — THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

AS THE EARTH BRINGS FORTH ITS PLANTS,
AND A GARDEN MAKES ITS GROWTH SPRING UP,
SO WILL THE LORD GOD MAKE JUSTICE AND PRAISE
SPRING UP BEFORE ALL THE NATIONS.

ISAIAH 61:11



THIRD SUNDAY OF
ADVENT
DECEMBER 13, 2020

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church

1500 Brookdale Road, Naperville, IL 60563 | 630.355.8980 (Main Office) | 630.305.6318 (Religious Education) | 630.355.0521 (Fax)

Office Hours: 8:30 am to 8:30 pm, Monday–Thursday; 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Friday

email to mainoffice@stapostle.org or visit us at www.stapostle.org

Roman Catholic Diocese of Joliet-in-Illinois • Most Rev. Ronald A. Hicks, Bishop

Parish Staff

Priests in Residence

Rev. Philip Danaher, *Pastor*, x102, pdanaher@stapostle.org

Rev. Joseph Kappilumakkal, CMI, *Parochial Vicar*, x103, jkapp@stapostle.org

Priests Assisting on Weekends

Rev. Bob Colaresi, O. Carm., *Weekend Associate*, robco@robco.org

Rev. Matt Lorenz, *Senior Vicar*, Archdiocese of Chicago

Permanent Deacons

Michael (Kathryn) Barrett — 630.355.8980, x145, meabarrett@gmail.com

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Larry (Susan) Kearney — 630.355.8980, x225, lrkearney@comcast.net

Chuck (Sue) Lane — 630.355.8980, x223, chuck.lane2@icloud.com

Patrick (Mary Jo) Lennon — 630.901.3223, presence.now@gmail.com

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Jenni Kennedy, * *Faith Formation Administrative Assistant*, x118, REAdmin@stapostle.org

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Parish Pastoral Council

Barbara Mambu, *Chair*

Alison Ohl

Mike McCormick

Brittany Tres

Commission Representatives

Carrie Wujek, *Faith & Spiritual Formation*

Linda Bailey, *Service*

Susan Wood O'Leary, *Finance*

Barbara Mambu, *Stewardship*

Deb Scheckel, *Parish Life*

Jeff Balsewicz, *Worship*

Ex-Officio

Fr. Philip Danaher, *Pastor*

Rev. Joseph Kappilumakkal, *Parochial Vicar*

Janet Simmons, *Recording Secretary*

*indicates part-time staff

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Reconciliation is available Saturday, 3:30 to 4:15 pm, in the Reconciliation Room of the Chapel. Our priests are available during the week by appointment. Communal Penance services are held occasionally during the year.

In the Hospital or Home Bound: Call the Church Office to receive prayer/Eucharist from a priest, deacon or Minister of Care.

Baptism: Baptisms are usually celebrated two to three Sundays each month at a 2:00 pm service (will move to 1:00 pm in 2021). On selected dates, baptisms are celebrated during weekend Mass. Parents are required to attend a Baptismal awareness and renewal session prior to the Baptism. Call Kathy Ferguson in the Church Office a few months in advance to make arrangements.

Matrimony: A couple planning on being married at St. Thomas should contact the church six months in advance. One year is preferred. Either the bride or groom, or their parents, must be a registered parishioner at least three months before setting a date. Call Diane McQueen to schedule.

Religious Education: Call 630.305.6318 to register.

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults):

Any person wanting to learn more about the Catholic Faith, or to join our Catholic community should call the church at 630.355.8980.

Counseling Service: Contact Jan Olah, Pastoral Care 630.355.8980, x124.

Sunday Nursery: Nursery care is available for your child age one (walking) to four at the 9:30 and 11:15 am Masses. For more information call the church office.

Our Outreach Twinning Parishes:

St. Thomas the Apostle has an ongoing twinning relationship with the following parishes:

St. Marie Madeleine in Duchity, Haiti

St. Agnes on the Lakota Indian Reservation,

Manderson, South Dakota

St. Nicholas in Aurora, Illinois

Our Parish School:

All Saints Catholic Academy

1155 Aurora Ave

Naperville, IL 60540

630.961.6125

in the word



with
fr danaher

Dear Parish Family,

Today's gospel describes the ministry of John the Baptist, the "voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord.'"

What was there about John that encouraged the people to hear him preach, to ask him to baptize them so that their sins would be forgiven? Was it because he was different

than other preachers of his day, different than some of the preachers of our day, the ones who say that *they* will save the people from their sins?

John did not encourage people to follow him, but to follow God. It is God who forgives sins. It was John's ministry — as it was that of Jesus — to help sinners return to God and ask for His forgiveness. John did not extol his own greatness but instead he told his listeners how lowly he was, that he was not even worthy to do the work of a slave, to untie someone's sandals.

Unlike those in our day who build a great devotion to themselves, the ministry of John the Baptist was to build a great devotion to God.

A beautiful way to build a great devotion to God, along with each other, is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. **On Wednesday, December 16, beginning at 7:00 pm, we will have our Advent Reconciliation Service.** Please note that preregistration is not required but we will still collect contact information from all who attend. The liturgy will include readings from scripture and reflections, followed by an opportunity for individual confessions. There will be a number of priests available for individual reconciliations.

Let us all take advantage of this opportunity God has given us to renew ourselves in His love.

In the Word,

Fr. Danaher



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Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

— 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Liturgy Schedule

Daily

Mass: 8:30 am, Monday – Friday

In addition, the St. Thomas Deacons record a Daily Prayer Service that is available to watch on demand at www.stapostle.org

Weekend — Must sign up online to attend

Saturday Mass of Anticipation: 4:30 pm

Sunday: 9:30 am

Both weekend Masses will also be livestreamed and available to watch on demand at www.stapostle.org

Reconciliation

St. Thomas offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the Saturday 4:30 pm Mass. Reconciliation will be from 3:30–4:15 pm in the Galilee Room. Please check the website for full details.

Welcome Guests and Visitors!

We're so glad you're here and invite you to walk the path of faith with us. St. Thomas strives to provide a spiritual home where all are welcome, where the healing, reconciling, liberating love of God is shared by all. Join us!

Would you like to become a parishioner?

Call Kathy Ferguson in the General Office at 630.355.8980, x100

Church Office Hours

9:00 am–3:00 pm Monday–Friday

9:00 am–1:00 pm Saturdays

Evenings will vary according to needs. You can call to check on times before coming. Please enter through Door A.

Welcome New Parishioners

Michael and Mary Ellen Howell

Laura and Rustin Lindsey

Christina Moss

James and Karen Spratt

Worship Commission — Liturgy and Music

Reflection on the Readings

Today we celebrate Gaudete Sunday, meaning rejoice in Latin. We are in the rhythm of both gratitude and yearning. Between the two, there is great space for hope. We live in hope as some of the things we long for in God's reign of peace and justice have happened, and many have not. We are there, and yet we are not. So much remains unfinished; so many have not yet experienced what has been promised. Let us take a moment today to put all the Christmas planning and worries aside and reflect on the wonderful give God gave us in Jesus. And to remember that faith always includes hope.

Readings for Today

First Reading — As a garden makes its growth spring up, so will God make justice spring up before all the nations (Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11).

Psalm — My soul rejoices in my God
(Luke 1:46-50, 53-54).

Second Reading — Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:16-24).

Gospel — I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord (John 1:6-8, 19-28).

The English translation of the Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Readings for the Week

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Ps 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc-9;
Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19, 23;
Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday: Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25; Ps 85:9ab, 10-14; Lk 7:18b-23

Thursday: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17

Friday: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25

Saturday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17;
Lk 1:5-25

Sunday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29;
Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38



Today is the third Sunday of Advent. Even though this year's Christmas celebration will be different, we still gather as a faith community to celebrate the miracle of the first Christmas. We are working to provide various opportunities for the St. Thomas faith community to gather, whether it be in the church space, in the parking lot or virtual. Please see the Advent brochure online for complete details.

Advent Reconciliation – December 16

St. Thomas will have an Advent Reconciliation Service on December 16 at 7:00 pm. The opportunity for individual confessions with a Priest will conclude the service.

Presider Schedule December 19–20

Saturday, December 19

4:30 pm – Fr. Philip Danaher

Sunday, December 20

9:30 am – Fr. Bob Colaresi

Presider schedule is subject to change.

Liturgy Schedule and Mass Intentions

Please note, because we currently only have two weekend Masses, all the weekend intentions will be read at both Masses.

Monday, December 14, 2020

Monday, December 14, 2020

Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

8:30 am †Sandra Ittner, by Family

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

8:30 am †Anne Battisto, by The Battisto Family

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

8:30 am †Bartusiak-Madden Families, by Mary Bartusiak

Thursday, December 17, 2020

8:30 am †Fe Simeon, by Buddy and Mely Mallorca

Friday, December 18, 2020

8:30 am †Chuck Gary, by Chris and Kathy Singer

Saturday, December 19, 2020

4:30 pm *Mass of Anticipation*

†Bob Pattermann, by Dick and Kay

†Bill Feder, by The Feder Family

†Will Worden, by Ann Worden

†Charles Klipfel, by The Moran Family

Sunday, December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 am †Jerry Johnson, by Mom and Dad

9:30 am †For the People of St. Thomas

11:15 am †William Raef

6:00 pm Chuck Gary, by Chris and Kathy Singer

Christmas Mass Update at St. Thomas This Year

Like everything else in our lives, the pandemic will have an effect on how to celebrate Mass this Christmas. As Fr. Danaher said in his letter at the beginning of advent, "This isn't how Christmas is supposed to be". The Liturgy and Music department has been working hard to make Christmas as special as possible. For several months musicians have been working on Christmas Virtual Choir Videos.

These are videos created while all members of the group are separated and then combined together to make a "virtual choir." You've likely seen some of these on YouTube over the past several months. These may look like Zoom calls, but I assure you they are nothing like a Zoom call. It is all separate video and audio tracks from each person that have to be meticulously synced and then edited. We will have music representing all of the small groups at St. Thomas, as well as a very special video that includes people from all the groups and Voices of Faith choir and has more than 70 participants. There are three people within the parish who have been working on these videos along with myself: Mike Brose, Michael McCormick and William Gayde. I am most grateful for all their assistance and extra work.

Peggy Goralski is working hard to have a virtual Christmas Pageant that we will be able to show at Masses.

We have also had to limit the number of people we can have in church, and some Masses are already filled, but we have another wonderful option for celebrating Mass. All three of the Christmas Eve Masses will be projected outside in the parking lot, in the style of a drive-in theater. We have contracted an A/V company to help with the logistics, and the Parish Life Commission, headed by Deb Scheckel, along with many helpers is working hard to decorate outside and make everyone who is out there feel connected to St. Thomas. We will also distribute Communion outside, as we have already been doing.

So Christmas won't look like it has in the past and will certainly be one we will never forget, but with all the technology, it will also be immortalized like never before. Please join us in the parking lot if you are unable to make a reservation in the church.

Peace,

*Jim Clauer
Director of Liturgy and Music*

Patient Trust

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.

*We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.*

We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.

And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability — and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you; your ideas mature gradually — let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste.

Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be.

Give Our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

*~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ
excerpted from Hearts on Fire*

Faith and Formation Commission — Adult

C.A.R.E. CORNER

What do we mean by justice and injustice? We must begin with a definition. Justice conjures up the idea of fairness, correct treatment and equitable distribution of resources. Justice is the proper application of right and wrong. Justice is preserving someone's rights and rendering them their due. For us Catholics, justice is predicated on the respect we must bring to the dignity of every human person, just by virtue of them being human. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (#1931), each one of us must look upon every other person as 'another self.' In other words, every other person who lives is in essence another version of me — of my own self.

That means respect for human dignity must come before all other attachments. We must put people before things, before material goods, before monetary profit, or before our personal, social and economic desires. Jesus made that clear when he commanded us to love God with all our being and to love our neighbor as (if they were) ourself. And that raises the bar for those of us who consider ourselves to be disciples of Christ. Justice is always the ideal goal and we are charged with making justice a reality.



You are invited to make a donation toward the Christmas Environment/Flower Fund in recognition of a loved one. The names of these individuals will be on a display board at the Christmas Masses. A suggested donation of \$10 per name (exact change or check made payable to St. Thomas the Apostle) should be sent in with the order form. The completed form and payment should be placed in an envelope, to the "Attn of Kathy Ferguson" and can be mailed in, brought in through Door A during the building open hours or placed in the offertory collection basket. **Orders must be received by Monday, December 21.**

Christmas Environment/Flower Fund

I would like to make a contribution

In Honor of:

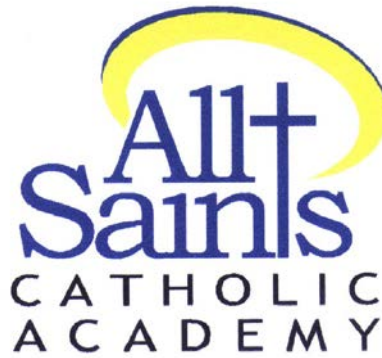
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

By:

PHONE #

AMOUNT ENCLOSED

Please return this form to the church office by Monday, December 21.



News from All Saints Catholic Academy

Back to School, and Having Fun at ASCA

Our All Saints school community is pleased to have successfully and safely completed 65 days of continuous 5-day in-person instruction as of the submission of this article. We feel truly blessed to be able come to school each day to learn and to pray. Additionally, and most importantly, **we are having fun together** at All Saints!

We just completed our **ASCA Turkey Tango** fundraiser that earned more than \$31,000 for technology enhancements. One of the first grade rewards was a crazy hair day.

Our 8A homeroom recently celebrated a **fiesta complete with chips, queso and salsa** donated by **My Chef Catering**, one of ASCA's very generous DDA sponsors. Delicioso!

We look forward to **Pizza Wednesdays** with Jets Pizza! Cheese or pepperoni — anyone for a corner or two?

We invite you to take a closer look at what we look like here this year at ASCA by checking out a video at ascacademy.org made by our very own PE teacher, Mr. Lindgren. All Saints will open up enrollment to families new to All Saints at the end of January. Stay tuned for information that we will share in our parish bulletins, as well as on our school website and social media.

Each day at All Saints, we are living this year's theme:

Together We Can



A big thank you to our ASCA patron sponsor:

My Chef Catering

For your generous partnership in the All Saints
2020 Dinner Dance Auction — The Crystal Gala

Faith and Formation Commission — Youth



St. Thomas the Apostle

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Children's Liturgy of the Word During Advent

Make Advent a special time with your children by reading and doing children's Liturgy of the Word together. Contact Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x109 for Children's Liturgy of the Word materials. It is available for you. They are geared for prekindergarten through fifth grade.

Children's Liturgy
of the **Word**

Fit to be a King?

Do you want to be a king for Epiphany? St. Thomas is celebrating Epiphany at the January 2–3 weekend Masses. As a king, you will be part of the Mass procession and talk about the meaning of your gift to Jesus. Contact Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x109 for more information.

Children's Mass Booklet for Second Graders

Reminder parents of second grade homeschool RE children: St. Thomas has a children's Mass booklet for you to pick up at the Church. Second grade homeschool RE children learned about the Mass in their lessons on December 5 and 8. The booklet will aide in the lesson and attending Mass in general. It will also help in preparing your child for their First Eucharist. Please use this often with your child as you attend Mass.

Reconciliation Parent Enrichment Session

The parent enhancement session for Reconciliation is now scheduled for Wednesday, January 27 from 7:15 pm–8:30 pm. A make-up parent enrichment session is now scheduled for Saturday, January 30 from 11:00 am–12:15 pm. An RSVP for this is needed and appreciated. Please RSVP for one of these sessions by contacting the faith formation office at readmin@stapostle.org.

It is necessary that the parents of fourth or fifth grade children, who haven't received the sacrament of Reconciliation and haven't attended a session previously, attend a session. It aides in preparing your child for this sacrament in March. Please remember to bring your registration form to the session. This is for parents only. If you have any questions, please contact Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x109.

Pre-K and Second Grade Mass Thank You

Thank you to all who helped for the pre-K and second grade Mass.

Special thanks goes to the grade level coordinators.

Pre-K: Colleen Steffgen

Second Grade: Tricia Serna.

A special thank you also goes to the pre-K and second grade catechists: Janet Bailey, Jennifer Burgess, Melissa Ernst, Katarzyna Williams; and aides: Lilianna Ernst, Caryn Phelan and Martyna Woznica.

They all share their faith by teaching the children throughout their religious education year. Thank you to all who donated Jello, ramen noodles or macaroni and cheese for the Care Pantry.

Question of the week ...

What is different about Jesus that sets him apart from just another teacher or prophet?



Advent Playlist

The season of Advent encourages us to slow down and ponder ... to ponder Christ's first coming in the miracle of Christmas ... to ponder Christ's second coming at the end of time. Yet, often, Advent is anything but quiet and relaxed. This playlist is full of ideas to help you or your family have meaningful Advent time. Check out the Advent playlist on the St. Thomas website.

Keeping Christ in Christmas Thank You

Many thanks to the families who attended the virtual Keeping Christ in Christmas gathering. It was so much fun to share, pray, celebrate, be creative and sing together with you. As you earn stars for the manger sky, remember what a bright star you are. Blessings on your Advent.

The Gift of Catechists and Volunteers

Middle school religious education at St. Thomas happens because of a dedicated group of catechists and volunteers.

These volunteers include our catechists: Mary Wright, Julia Krupa, Darlene Dionne-Karales, Mary Szczap, Kathy Powell, Elijah Powell, Chris Baker, Jen Kennedy, John Kennedy, Tim Berglind, Tanya Galer, Sean Elliffe, Karen Curran and Vicki Agustsson.

There are also volunteers who are willing to work behind the scenes to ensure our programs run smoothly. These volunteers include Bernie Salzig, John Growney, Carolyn Vondran, and Gina Howley.

Thanks to all of these volunteers for sharing the gifts of their time and talent with St. Thomas middle school students. Especially in this pandemic year, the dedication of our volunteers was a gift to the whole St. Thomas faith community.

Religious Education Tuition Angel

Would you like to be a tuition angel for a family attending Religious Education (RE) classes? For some of our St. Thomas families, it is a struggle to pay their RE tuition. If you can help, the fees are: \$120 for one child, \$200 for two children or \$260 for three children. Checks are made payable to St. Thomas the Apostle. Please write tuition gift on the memo line of the check. Please send it to the Faith Formation/Religious Education Office, attention Lorraine Katz. Thank you for your generosity of being a tuition angel. It is greatly appreciated.

Important Dates for Elementary RE

Saturday

December 12 RE Classes meet

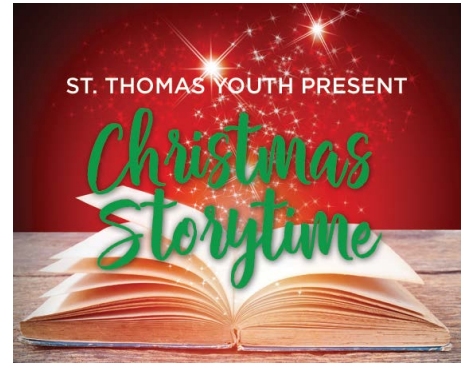
Tuesday

December 15 RE Classes meet

Important Dates for Middle School RE

December 12 Saturday middle school RE classes meet

December 14 Monday middle school RE classes meet



Christmas Storytime

In need of a little Christmas? Let the St. Thomas Youth put you in the spirit with a Christmas story.

The St. Thomas youth recorded the reading of some Christmas stories that we will post on the St. Thomas website throughout the Advent season.

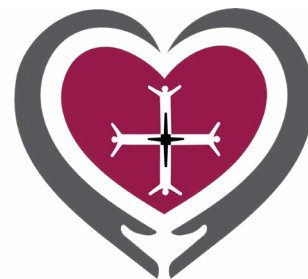
Gather the family, sit back, relax and listen to a Christmas story or two. Enjoy!

Service Commission — Pastoral Care

From the Office of the Parish Nurse Squeaky Knees Tell No Lies

Your knees might not talk, but a 2019 study says you can listen to them to diagnose osteoarthritis (OA). The study is the first to investigate a new technique that involves attaching small microphones to knees to detect high frequency sounds from joints as people sit and stand. Using computer analysis to distinguish the sounds, called “acoustic emissions,” researchers can distinguish between healthy knees and those with OA. They hope this technique will lead to better ways to diagnose and manage OA in the future.

Source: *PLOS One*, October 2019



PASTORAL CARE
St. Thomas the Apostle

From the Behavioral Health Ministry Christmas Break Fun During COVID-19

Pay It Forward

Now that you've received, consider something nice you can do for someone in need. It might be donating items to charity or maybe making something for your neighbors. Giving your kids the opportunity to serve others is one of the best gifts you could ever give!

Feed the Birds

Consider giving a little to our feathered friends outdoors. Depending on your area, interesting birds may be migrating during this time or they may be foraging for food. Either way, they could probably use a little help. Try making a pine-cone covered in peanut butter and birdseed

Host a Game Night

It might not be the most original idea, but Christmas break is the perfect time to break out your favorite board games that you never seem to have time to play and let each family member choose their favorite.

Build a Terrarium

Making a mini-terrarium can give kids an opportunity to learn a little horticulture and play in the dirt, even if they're inside. Depending on how green your thumb is, you can go traditional or try moss and lichens.

Make a Village

Now that you have a terrarium, think of new ways to decorate it. Make mini-fairies or dinosaurs. Kids can use sticks, rocks and other small items to make homes for their miniature friends. Make the time even more special by getting on the floor and playing alongside them.

Cook Together

You'll have to eat at some point, so why not let this time be an opportunity to teach your kids some culinary skills? Try something zany, like letting every family member choose one favorite food, or try a new ethnic food. Even the healthiest moms and the pickiest eaters can find middle ground.

Act Out

If your family is the dramatic type, try hosting a theater night. Depending on how much time and involvement you would like, write a script, practice parts, make costumes and enact a Broadway worthy-performance.

Scavenger or Treasure Hunt

This one takes a little additional work and planning from mom or dad, but can be fun and involved. Set up clues around the house. Be sure to have a few special items, gold stars or a prize for the “winner.”

Neighborhood Safari — Wear Masks and Social Distance

Go on a photo safari of your neighborhood and write a book about it! Take your kids and bring a camera on a walking adventure and document their favorite haunts. Make a list before you go, then come home, print out the photos and make it all into a story.

Source: *Living Well Spending Less*, livingwellspendingless.com



Behavioral Health Team
On the Journey Together

From the Behavioral Health Ministry Parenting During COVID-19

Parenting during ordinary times is challenging, but during a pandemic, it can feel like an uphill climb that never ends. Some parents are getting up early to begin working; other parents take turns parenting between virtual meetings and overseeing e-learning. With no clear end in sight, parents find themselves in a tough situation.

Parents are exhausted, overwhelmed and irritable. These feelings are normal and to be expected. How can parents fortify themselves? There's no quick fix. However, there are strategies that can help. Pick the ones that will work for you, some include:

- Consider accessing support and insight from virtual counseling
- Keep regular schedules including consistent bedtimes
- Practice mindfulness and meditation
- Intentional self-care, including exercise and maintaining a healthy diet
- Lower expectations for yourself and others
- Increase virtual social interaction
- Get in touch with what you are grateful for
- Manage your children's fears and disappointments with reassurance
- Offer extra affection to your family members, e.g. hugs
- Get creative with family activities e.g. cook a meal together, have a game night, keep a family journal
- Carve out adult time with your spouse or partner, even just once a week for even an hour
- Stay connected with family and good friends through social media
- Celebrate... birthdays, holidays and just "good" days
- Use streaming sites to visit national parks, faraway places and "go on vacation"
- Embrace the weather no matter what it is; sit in the sun or build a snowman

Above all, hang on to hope because this will not last forever! We know it's challenging to find the time and energy to do these things.

Source: *SamaraCare Counseling, info@samaraCarecounseling.org*



SUPPORT ST. THOMAS

Please, give

Please Continue Giving to St. Thomas

We are reopening St. Thomas slowly under guidelines set forth by the CDC and Diocese of Joliet. We are still limited to the number of worshipers and understand that many are unable to join us as they are in the at risk population or they simply aren't comfortable yet. There are two easy to use options to continue giving so you can support St. Thomas during this time:

Option 1: Sign Up For Online Giving THE EASIEST AND BEST OPTION!

St. Thomas partners with Our Sunday Visitor (OSV) which gives an online interface where you can create a secure account to enter your credit card number and manage your giving.

Option 2: Mail Your Envelopes

You can also mail your donation using one of the postage paid return envelopes in your envelope packet. Please note that St. Thomas continues to receive and check mail daily. The parish address is: St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, 1500 Brookdale Road, Naperville, IL 60563.

St. Thomas Is Grateful For You

We are very grateful for your continuing support, especially through this health crisis, to be the vibrant and engaging faith home you come to for spiritual nourishment. We continue to pray you are healthy and remain so until we can ALL joyfully celebrate Mass together again.

Pastoral Care Resources

For Spiritual Support and Prayer, please contact the following individuals if you are in need of assistance:

Counseling

Jan, Pastoral Care Office
630.355.8980, x124
Diane, General Office
630.355.8980, x101

Health Resource

Parish Nurses
Felicia, 630.355.8980, x104
Jan, 630.355.8980, x124

Hospital/Pastoral Care Info

Edward Hospital has a pastoral care department with a Catholic Chaplain for an emergency anointing or a Eucharistic visit.

St. Thomas Pastoral Care visit

Jan, Pastoral Care Office
630.355.8980, x124
Diane, General Office
630.355.8980, x101

Service Commission — Outreach and Social Justice



New St. Thomas Transitional Housing Family

We are happy to announce that St. Thomas has a new Transitional Housing family (mother and her three young children). They recently moved to the Naperville area after going through some difficult situations that required them to restart their lives. St. Thomas is working with Bridge Communities. We provide the funding for an apartment, as well as two mentors that will work with the family for the next 1-2 years, helping them to get back to self-sufficiency.

The Transitional Housing Ministry is blessed to be able to financially support another new family. However, to do that, additional mentors need to be welcomed to work with the families. New mentors are trained and supported by Bridge Communities and our experienced mentors. Mentoring involves developing a relationship with and providing support to a transitional family at multiple levels, including guidance related to financial issues, education, child development, health and social skills. Bridge Communities provides specialists in these areas to support mentors and families. For more information on mentoring, please contact Frank Szymanek at 815.592.7154 or frank3563@comcast.net.

Transitional Housing Video

Frank and Maria Szymanek facilitate the Transitional Housing Ministry and have been mentors to families. They have prepared a short video that tells the Transitional Housing story and communicates both the role of mentors and the rewards of being a mentor. Bridge Communities CEO Karen Wells discusses the support provided by Bridge Communities. Click [here](#) to view the video.

Haiti Twinning The Gift of Education

Throughout Advent season, Haiti Twinning is offering a Haitian Christmas card along with a picture of a Duchity student that you might send to your family and friends, perhaps in lieu of a gift. The gift of education to the children of Duchity is a gift that will last a lifetime.

A donation of \$50 is suggested, but any amount is welcomed. The goal is \$30,000 (\$19,250 collected to date). A Christmas card(s) with a picture(s) of a Duchity student will be mailed to you if requested or you can pick one up at St. Thomas. Contact the OSJ Office.

- Checks can be made to "St. Thomas OSJ" with "Haiti DEF" in the memo and mailed to St. Thomas OSJ (1500 Brookdale Rd, Naperville, 60563)
- To make an online donation, go to <https://osvhub.com/stapostle/funds/haiti-twinning-education>.

Charity with Solidarity

For 21 years, St. Thomas, has helped build three schools, including a high school, and has helped support those schools in our Haiti Twinning village of Duchity. Education has made a difference. More than 95 percent of the children now pass the state tests. (The country average is less than 50 percent.) That improvement is directly due to the help St. Thomas provides to subsidize the salaries that guarantee quality teachers. The doctor and one of the nurses in the Duchity healthcare clinic are graduates of St. Thomas high school.



Christmas Swaddling Project

The St. Thomas Pro-Life Ministry Swaddling Project is beginning! As with other Outreach projects, the pandemic has dictated changes for this year. Normally we distribute swaddling bags with a list of needs and they are returned full and overflowing to St. Thomas. This year we are asking for gift card donations. They will be given to three area pregnancy centers (Waterleaf in Aurora, Birthright of Joliet, and Avenue Women's Center in Naperville) to be distributed to the women they are serving



Please consider donating gift cards to Walmart, Target, Kohl's and grocery stores in denominations of \$10, \$20 and \$25 so that the pregnancy centers can easily distribute them to their clients. The gift cards can be put in the collection baskets at Mass, brought to St. Thomas during the week or mailed to:

St. Thomas the Apostle
Attn: Anne Shultz
1500 Brookdale Drive
Naperville, IL 60563

Cash donations will be used to purchase gift cards. Make checks out to "St. Thomas OSJ" with "Swaddling Project" in the memo.

May you and your loved ones experience moments of Light and Hope during Christmas season.

WHITE FRAGILITY

The St. Thomas Solidarity Coalition Ministry is periodically providing chapter summaries of the book "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo. We encourage you to purchase the book and follow along with us as we, as the author states, "challenge racism." It is a challenging book, and not always an "easy read." It might challenge your beliefs. That is a good thing in these times.

Chapter 3: Racism After the Civil Rights Movement

After the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion or national origin, it became much less socially acceptable for white people to admit to racial prejudice and white superiority. In addition to discrimination in the workplace and other institutions now being illegal, many people witnessed on TV the violence to which black people were subjected during Civil Rights demonstrations and did not want to be associated with such racist acts.

Unfortunately, all systems of oppression are adaptive and racism also adapted over time so that modern norms, policies and practices result in similar outcomes while not appearing to be explicitly racist. Racism was allowed to continue while most people claim to be non-racist.

There are several categories of racism discussed in this chapter:

- **Color Blind Racism** is rooted in the idea that we can actually be "color blind" or that race does not matter. While our intentions may be good it allows us to deny the reality that people of color have a very different life experience.
- **Aversive Racism** allows whites to enact racism while maintaining a positive self-image, for example making jokes or disparaging remarks to others when people of color are not present.
- **Cultural Racism** allows children to develop a sense of white superiority as early as preschool. The majority of children's toys and books reinforce the perception that whiteness is more desirable.

Racism's adaptations have produced some of the same outcomes as pre-Civil Rights era practices such as Jim Crow laws. People of color are often blocked from moving forward. The refusal to know is another pillar of White Fragility.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

- How is it possible that no one claims to be racist but racism still exists?
- What steps can we take to begin to "know" and better understand the causes and effects of the "new racism"?

Action

Observe incidents of Aversive Racism in conversations with friends, family, and co-workers. Pay close attention to your own response in these situations.

Racial Justice Focus

Regina Brent Reflection

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Last weekend at the Masses we were blessed with a visit from Regina Brent. Regina is a member of the DuPage African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Lisle. She is the founder and president of Unity Partnership that seeks to build trust between the police and all citizens they serve.

Regina provided the homily reflection on a weekend when the readings called on us to "prepare the way of the Lord." The vast majority of our community is white and has not experienced the pain of racial injustice. Regina provided witness to the pain of racial injustice as well as encouragement toward solutions. We need to listen to Regina with open hearts and open minds. We all have a role to play in the solutions.

Below is an excerpt from Regina's reflection. Click [here](#) to view a video of Regina's reflection or click [here](#) to read her entire reflection.

"And so the truth is, we need each other. We need to trust, and be able to rely upon all other believers. We can find ways on how to agree to disagree, and do it respectfully. We should love one another and not judge each other no matter who we may love, just as long as we love. God gave us each other to walk alongside, and to encourage one another to stand up for what is right. Your pain should be my pain and my gain should be your gain. If we bring our resources together, we would be unstoppable."

"As long as those hills of hatred and classism, mountains of white privilege, and rugged lands of racism dominate and exist in our society, there will never be a path for the Lord. The Prophet Isaiah says, 'Make a straight and smooth road through the desert for our God!' Get rid of those obstacles and the fences that separate us. We need to listen to that 'Voice from the Wilderness' that will allow us to get back to the Kingdom of God!"

Stewardship and Administration

The Week Ahead

Monday, December 14

4:30–5:45 pm Journey 1 Class, Youth Center
 7:00–9:00 pm Confirmation Classes, Ministry Center
 7:15–8:30 pm Middle School RE, Ministry Center
 7:00–9:00 pm Journey 1, Youth Center

Tuesday, December 15

10:00–11:00 am Care Pantry, Outside Drive Around
 4:30–5:45 pm R. E. at St. Thomas, Ministry Center
 7:00–9:00 pm Insight, Zoom meeting
 7:00–9:00 pm PPC, Zoom meeting

Wednesday, December 16

7:00 pm Advent Reconciliation, Church

Thursday, December 17

9:15–11:15 am Thursday AM Bible Study, Senior Center
 7:30–9:00 pm Thursday PM Bible Study, Zoom

Friday, December 18

Saturday, December 19

3:30–4:15 pm Reconciliation, Galilee

Sunday, December 20

9:00–11:30 am RCIA, Senior Center

Needed ... Devout Catholic Pre-K-12 Substitute Teachers

During these challenging COVID days, each Catholic school in the Diocese of Joliet is successfully implementing face-to-face instruction that honors the health and safety measures outlined in within its School Reopening Plan. As a result, several Catholic educators are needed to serve as substitute teachers at the Pre-School – Grade 12 levels. The substitute teacher candidate must love children and hold either a current Illinois Professional Educator License (PEL) or an Illinois Substitute License. Please complete an online application by using the link below.
<https://www.applitrack.com/diocesefjoliet/onlineapp/>

No degree in education? No problem!

If you are called to this ministry, a degree in education is not a prerequisite for becoming a licensed substitute teacher. An individual who holds a BA in any discipline is eligible to apply for an Illinois Substitute License through the seamless process of transcript evaluation. For further information about obtaining a teaching license in this manner, contact Karen Udell, CSO Assistant Superintendent of Leadership and Personnel, at 815.221.6123.

Last weekend's stewardship of financial gifts

Weekly Sunday Offertory

November 29, 2020	
Sunday Collection Offering*	\$13,629
Credit Card Online Giving	\$20,321
Automatic Direct Debit (5 th and 20 th each month)	none this week
Mailed in and stock donations	\$14,631
Total for the week	\$48,581
*Based on Collection Counters Reports prior to bank confirmation	
Fiscal Year (7/1 to 6/30)	\$737,824
Weekly Average 7/1/2019 to date	\$33,537
Offertory Goal Year to date	\$741,160
Over/short of goal to date	(\$3,336)
Goal for Fiscal Year 7/1 to 6/30	\$1,751,833
Percent of Annual Sunday Offertory Goal	42%
Remaining for Fiscal Year goal	\$1,014,009

This week, the Sunday collection is \$3,336 behind goal so far this year. Capital needs restricted gifts were \$240 this past week. We are grateful to those who recognize the need and responded.

Diocesan Appeal 2020

Parish Appeal Goal	\$174,600
Pledges Received	\$144,115
Percent of Goal pledged to date	82.54%
Unpaid pledges	\$7,873
Paid to Date	\$136,242
Percent of goal paid to date	78.03

thank you

Please take the time to read the ads which make this bulletin possible. Help support these businesses, especially during this time, as they support St. Thomas the Apostle. Mention the bulletin when you patronize their establishments.

Let them know they are appreciated!

Checked These Listings Lately? Thank You to Our Advertisers!

Make it a habit to check these advertisers when you need a product or a service. And when you purchase, be sure to mention you saw their ad in the St. Thomas bulletin!

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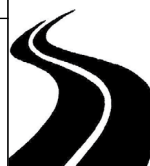
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GREAT PRODUCT - 62% of households keep the church bulletin the entire week as reference.

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