

St. Thomas

FEBRUARY 7, 2021 — FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Lord
heals
the
brokenhearted

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: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Monday–Friday; 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, Saturday; evenings vary according to needs

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

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

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

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Lorraine Katz, *Director of Religious Education*, x109, lkatz@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,

Jesus showed us in the gospel that our God never stops working. Just like any of us, Jesus would have also appreciated some time off in the evening. Instead, the gospel describes how He spent His evening greeting the whole town who came to Him and asked Him to cure their sicknesses.

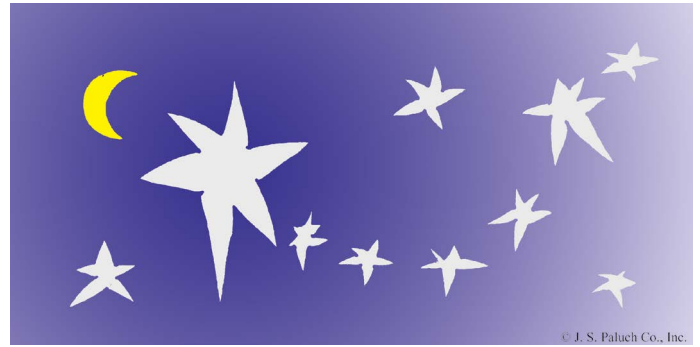
The gospel also describes how He got up before dawn to spend some quiet time with God, quiet time which was interrupted when He was told that everyone was looking for Him. Instead of asking for time off, Jesus insisted on continuing His work of sharing the good news of life and love.

Besides worshipping a God who never stops working, we also worship a God who never gives up. No matter how often we have turned away from God and His ways, He has never given up on us. No matter how often we are confronted with the many demons in our world, let us never give up doing our best to drive them out as Jesus did. Everyone was looking for Jesus in the gospel. Jesus is looking for each of us to preach by word and example His good news of life and love.

Please be as generous as you are able with our Joliet Diocesan Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal. As I wrote in last week's bulletin, the Appeal not only funds many of the operations of the diocese, it also funds services that are of great help to the ministries here in our parish. Besides supporting the Religious Education/Formation Office, the CMAA also supports the Catholic Schools Office which is also important to St. Thomas because families from St. Thomas attend All Saints Catholic Academy. Both of those offices help in the religious and education formation of our young people and their families.

Speaking of Religious Formation, on Saturday, February 13, we welcome Bishop Hicks for the first time as he confirms 34 of our young people during a special Mass at 2:00 pm. (Please note that, because of COVID restrictions, another Confirmation liturgy will take place on Saturday, May 8.) As we congratulate our young people and their families, we also thank those who helped prepare them for this special day: our Youth Ministry Director, Dorothy Grantham, along with the following catechists: Sheleagh Bishop, Rick Cotner, Bill Follin, Colleen Fournier, Kelly Giacolo, Gendy Jaramillo, Karen Lankisch, Dan Matern, Cari Pellegrino, Matt Walbridge, Lisa Wehr and Tony Wyklendt.

In the Word,



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 7, 2021

[The LORD] tells the number of the stars and calls them by name.

— Psalm 147:4

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.

Welcome New Parishioners

Javier and Hillary Anguiano

Rick and Nichelle Kennedy

Jim and Sandra Leonard

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.

Worship Commission — Liturgy and Music

Reflection on the Readings

"I shall not see happiness again." With these words, Job concludes his lament to the Lord. Job was obviously in the depths of despair. His words echo the way we can feel when we allow life's struggles and disappointments to take hold of us. The Lord Jesus, however, has something else in mind for us. The simple story in Mark's Gospel of the curing of Peter's mother-in-law shows us that the Lord wants to lift us up out of any despair that has set in. The Gospel is good news for us. If today is a day when we are feeling particularly burdened by illness or disappointment, let us, like the people in today's Gospel story, bring our cares and gather them at the Lord's door. With hope, let's be attentive to the saving power of God's Word.

~ adapted from Saint Margaret Sunday Missal, copyright J.S. Paluch Company

Readings for Today

First Reading — Job finds life on earth to be drudgery; he is filled with restlessness (Job 7:1-4, 6-7).

Psalm — Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted (Psalm 147).

Second Reading — Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. I have become all things to all, to save at least some (1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23).

Gospel — Jesus cured many who were sick with various diseases (Mark 1:29-39).

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: Gn 1:1-19; Ps 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10, 12, 24, 35c; Mk 6:53-56

Tuesday: Gn 1:20 — 2:4a; Ps 8:4-9; Mk 7:1-13

Wednesday: Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17; Ps 104:1-2a, 27-28, 29bc-30; Mk 7:14-23

Thursday: Gn 2:18-25; Ps 128:1-5; Mk 7:24-30

Friday: Gn 3:1-8; Ps 32:1-2, 5-7; Mk 7:31-37

Saturday: Gn 3:9-24; Ps 90:2-6, 12-13; Mk 8:1-10

Sunday: Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Cor 10:31 — 11:1; Mk 1:40-45

Presider Schedule February 13–14

Saturday, February 13

4:30 pm — Fr. Joseph Kappilumakkal

Sunday, February 14

9:30 am — Fr. Philip Danaher

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, February 8, 2021

8:30 am †Mary Gowney, by John Gowney

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

8:30 am †Freda Berg, by Donnamarie Pierson

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

8:30 am

Thursday, February 11, 2021

8:30 am †Ferdinand DeGuzman, by Family

Friday, February 12, 2021

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

Saturday, February 13, 2021

4:30 pm *Mass of Anticipation*

†Thomas Flavin, by Jim and Mary Schmitt

†Jim Wolff, by Mary Ann

Sunday, February 14, 2021

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:30 am †Sylvestre Papillon, by The Lucado Family

†Zbigniew Durnas, by The Durnas Family

†Ann and Bud Hjorth, by Larry Hjorth

Ash Wednesday is February 17

To commence our Lenten journey, we Christians are reminded of from where we come through the distribution of ashes. Listed below are several opportunities to worship as community and receive ashes. We will also distribute ashes throughout the day from 7:30 am–7:00 pm in the circle drive whenever there is not a service happening. Please remain in your car and someone will come out to you.

7:00 am	Communion Service
8:30 am	Mass
12:00 pm	Liturgy of the Word
4:30 pm	Liturgy of the Word <i>(with a family oriented focus)</i>
7:00 pm	Mass

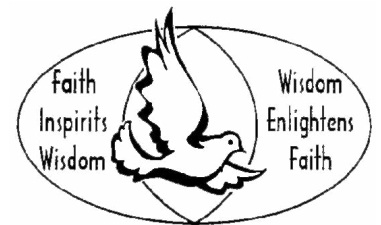


IMPORTANT NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 crisis, ash distribution will be different this year. To avoid physical contact with recipients, the Vatican has asked that a tiny amount of ashes be sprinkled on the crown of the head, rather than making the cross on the forehead. This is actually an ancient tradition and is the way ashes have continued to be distributed in the Vatican, Italy and much of the world.

Faith and Formation Commission — Adult

C.A.R.E. CORNER

As we know, Jesus was very inclusive. He invited and welcomed people who were typically shunned by others. Jesus ate with blatant sinners — the very kind most people would have gone out of their way to avoid. Jesus spoke to women in public, which was against the social norms of his time. He even had female friends — Martha and Mary likely come to mind. And we know he had female disciples — Mary Magdalene and Joanna to name a few. Especially clear from Luke's Gospel, Jesus treated women with dignity, rather than like property, which was the prevailing view in his day. Jesus wasn't afraid to touch the infirm and those with visible diseases, such as leprosy. And it was not unusual for him to speak kindly about foreigners and people who were not members of his own religious traditions and heritage.



In light of all that, we should not be surprised that Jesus told his disciples that the greatest commandment was to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength” and to “love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mark 12:30-31) Jesus certainly did just that, and he expected his disciples to do the same. This is biblical justice — and the divine form of justice is restorative, merciful and life-giving. That's why Jesus was so adamant about it.

A Lent podcast: “The Word”

A Lent podcast “The Word” is being offered by Fr. James Martin, S.J. and the staff of *America* magazine. A new reflection will be available every other day starting Ash Wednesday, February 17.

Subscribe to “The Word” on Apple, Spotify, Google or Americamagazine.org/podcasts.

Lenten reflections are also available through mayslakeministries.org and loyolapress.org.

These opportunities are offered to aid in deepening and enriching your faith life during the season of Lent and beyond.

How to be Married and Stay Engaged

The Inter-parish Marriage Enrichment Team presents its 13th Annual Event: How to be Married and Stay Engaged, Back to Back, Face to Face and Shoulder to Shoulder.

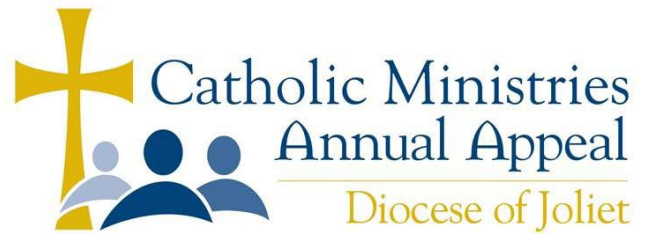
- Deepen your friendship and commitment
- Remember God's place in your marriage
- Enjoy a relaxing time together reconnecting

Live virtual presentation by Dr. Jim Healy Saturday, March 20, 2021, from 10:00 am–1:30 pm (includes lunch break) in the comfort of your own home.

For more information and to register visit www.imetevents.org.

Your Gift to the CMAA Makes a Difference

In an abundance of caution, the opening report for the 2021 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal (CMAA) is being delivered directly to your inbox and is also available online at www.stapostle.org as well as www.jolietdioceseappeal.org. Please take a moment to read how the 30 ministries supported through our annual appeal truly illustrate this year's theme, Shining the Light of Christ, serve our most vulnerable brothers and sisters, and assist parishes, including ours.



Our parish's goal for the 2021 CMAA is \$174,100, with 70 percent of any amount we raise over this goal returned to us for our use. The Diocese of Joliet mailed a packet about the CMAA, including a pledge card, to all registered parishioners in January, and our pastor is sending additional information this month. Please prayerfully reflect on your gift to this year's CMAA and return your pledge card or envelope, make a gift online at jolietdioceseappeal.org or text DONATE to (815) 205-1949.

Thank you for considering the most generous pledge possible to this year's annual appeal.

Help Wanted at St. Thomas the Apostle

FAITH FORMATION ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Job-Share Description – Part-time (12-25 hours per week), non-benefited position

The Faith Formation Administrative Assistants support the four ministries of Faith Formation: Elementary Faith Formation (pre-K through Grade 5), Middle School Faith Formation (Grades 6-8), High School Youth/Young Adult Ministry, and Adult Faith Formation.

General Job Responsibilities

- Work closely and cooperatively with the other Faith Formation Assistant to perform job duties.
- Be the welcoming face and presence of St. Thomas faith formation.
- Maintain communication with the four faith formation directors so as to understand the needs of the program and to handle questions from parishioners, parents, catechists, and grade-level coordinators.
- Phone and in-person communication with the general public.
- Maintain religious education student files and adult faith formation participant files.
- Maintain the sacrament files.
- Maintain email contact groups.
- Prepare mailings.
- Provide support for faith formation volunteers.

The following task lists provide more detail to the general job responsibilities:

- Class registration responsibilities
- Assist the catechists, grade-level coordinators, and directors in gathering the materials they need for classes, catechist meetings, and sacrament meetings.
- Alert directors when office supplies are running low.
- Sacrament Responsibilities
- Scripture Safari
- Create publicity for upcoming programs
- Maintain email lists for current and future programs
- Track attendance at parish programs that fall under the faith formation department
- Be willing to assist at the 'big' department events such as First Communion, Reconciliation, Confirmation, grade-level Masses, family faith events, Scripture Safari, Easter Vigil, etc., as needed by the director responsible for that event.

Skills

- Excellent teamwork, dedication and flexibility
- General willingness to help with a servant leader attitude
- Good oral and written communication skills
- Willingness to learn new technology
- Organizational skills
- Ability to prioritize tasks
- Attention to detail
- Proofreading ability

*For a complete job description, please see www.stapostle.org. If interested, please submit resume to Kathy Ferguson, 1500 Brookdale Road, Naperville 60563, no later than **February 9, 2021**. Questions? Contact Kathy at mainoffice@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x100.*

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Celebrates Black History Month

Worship Commission and Racial Justice Committee

Starting in September 2020, the St. Thomas the Apostle community has undergone initiatives to bring forth the theme of Racial Justice to our parish. Following the cultural and political events of the past year, we felt it necessary to address this systemic problem from the lens of faith – as shown through our Mission Statement:

*St. Thomas the Apostle unites with the Universal Church in ensuring that all who love God, also love their brothers and sisters (1 Jn 4:21). Through a purposeful focus on racial justice, we are **challenged** to discern ways in which we, individually and as community, can grow into and act upon our calling to be disciples of Christ and the gospel mission.*

Throughout the month of February, St. Thomas the Apostle has traditionally celebrated Black History Month. We will continue to do so through Worship Commission and Racial Justice Committee Initiatives. Each week of February, the parish bulletin will highlight the life of a Black individual who has lived the life of Christ and has made a mark of the fight for racial justice. The following prayer from the USCCB also provides a moment of reflection for us all:

*God of Heaven and Earth,
you created the one human family
and endowed each person with great dignity.
Aid us, we pray, in overcoming the sin of racism.
Grant us your grace in eliminating this blight
from our hearts, our communities,
our social and civil institutions.
Fill our hearts with love for you and our neighbor
so that we may work with you
in healing our land from racial injustice.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.*

Also through the publishing of articles detailing “10 Ways to Fight Hate,” and encountering our White Fragility, we hope to take the time during the Season of Lent to EDUCATE ourselves about Black History and our own involvement with the sin of racism and the fight for Racial Justice. We have reflected. We have prayed. And now, with changed hearts, let us move our feet into action.

Hank Aaron

Hank Aaron (1934-2021) is a legend for many reasons. His baseball career was impressive: rising up from a small program in Alabama, through the Negro leagues, to the Braves organization for 23 years. Aaron is probably most known for breaking Babe Ruth’s home run record — which elevated him to a national figure. But Aaron stated many times that the racism that was exhibited toward him throughout his career tainted his ability to enjoy his success. Even his Catholic faith was challenged due to racism. When the Braves moved from Milwaukee to Atlanta, he declared to his friend, Fr. Michael Sablica, that “down there, they won’t let me go to Mass.” Even so, throughout his career Aaron was known to keep a copy of the devotional book “The Imitation of Christ” by Thomas à Kempis in his locker.

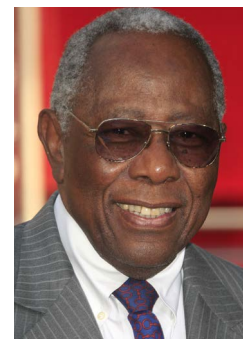
Hank Aaron continued his groundbreaking work in Major League Baseball after his retirement through a push for equal promotion of black and white players to the league. Continually stating his frustration with league management, Aaron was an advocate for equality and justice in the sport.

As St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church continues to work for Racial Justice through our parish wide initiative, we reflect on the life of Hank Aaron. He broke down barriers, fought for the downtrodden and carried the cross of racism throughout his life. Hank Aaron was a face of Christ.

“It is good for us to have trials and troubles at times, for they often remind us that we are on probation and ought not to hope in any worldly thing. It is good for us sometimes to suffer contradiction, to be misjudged by men even though we do well and mean well. These things help us to be humble and shield us from vainglory. When to all outward appearances men give us no credit, when they do not think well of us, then we are more inclined to seek God Who sees our hearts. Therefore, a man ought to root himself so firmly in God that he will not need the consolations of men.”

~ Thomas à Kempis, The Imitation of Christ

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/30759337/hank-aaron-lasting-impact-measured-more-home-runs
<https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/blog/hank-aaron-gentleman-activist-catholic/29750/>



Faith and Formation Commission — Youth



St. Thomas the Apostle

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

First Grade Mass

Calling all First Graders! You are invited to a Mass just for you Sunday, February 21 at 9:30 am. Please bring your families. Remember to sign up the Thursday before the Mass to reserve a seat. Please bring cereal or macaroni and cheese for the Care Pantry collection.

First Communion Prayer Service

The next First Communion Prayer Service for families is Wednesday, February 10 or Thursday, February 11 at 7:00 pm in the Church. You need only attend one of these two prayer services. The focus of this prayer service is "Listening to God's Word." Please see your email to RSVP with the number attending in your family. If you missed the first prayer service, please contact Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x109. Please contact the Faith Formation Office if you have any questions.

Scouting Religious Medal

Girl Scouts, American Heritage Girls and Campfire Youth — Now is the time to earn your religious medal. Please contact Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x109 for more information.

Scouting Day of Reflection

The Joliet Diocese Catholic Committee on Scouting (JDCCS) invites you to their annual Day of Reflection "Help People At All Times." It is open to all registered American Heritage Girls, all levels of Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Youth, Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA and Venturers. It will be on Saturday, February 27, 2021, from 9:00 am–1:00 pm virtual or in person in Darien.

Question of the week ...

When was the last time you were outside enjoying God's creation of the earth?



For further information go to www.dioceseofjoliet.org/scouting then click on the Day of Reflection banner for more information and to register.

Third grade artwork

Below is a sampling of the bulletin drawings that the third grade RE classes did that pertain to the gospel for their Mass this weekend. To see all of the artwork, please see the St. Thomas website at www.stapostle.org.



Ash Wednesday Family Opportunities

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, there will be a family prayer service, in church, with the distribution of ashes. This service will take place at 4:30 pm. Families are invited to attend the service together as a prayerful way to begin their Lenten journey. Those wishing to attend will need to register on the St. Thomas website.

On Ash Wednesday evening, from 6:30-7:15 pm, join us for a Zoom family faith activity. This will be a time of prayer and sharing. In addition, each family will make a craft that can be used throughout the Lenten season as a reminder of the journey and focus of Lent. Those families who register for this special evening will be asked to pick up their Lent activity packet at St. Thomas. The activity packet will include what you need to join in prayer and our craft, as well as the Zoom link for the meeting.

Email Peggy Goralski at pgoralski@stapostle.org or Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org by February 15 to register.

Terry Nelson Johnson Speaking to Middle School RE Classes

On February 20 and 22, Terry Nelson Johnson will share with middle school RE classes (in-person, Zoom, and home school students). Parents are also welcome to attend Terry's presentation which will take place during the regular RE (in-person) class times (8:30-9:45 am on February 20 and 7:15-8:30 pm on February 22). To allow ample room for social distancing, this presentation will take place in the church.

Terry's presentation is entitled 'Running the Paschal Mystery' and he explains the title this way, "One gets the impression that Jesus did the Paschal Mystery for us a really, really long time ago and every year during Holy Week we gather to remember the story and thank him ... again. Ah, but is it possible that with respect to the Paschal Mystery, the passing over from death to life, Jesus went first – and now, today, he invites us in to the Mystery with him? What if the Paschal Mystery is 'the rhythm of Love,' and to the extent that we have the guts to participate in this Mystery, Jesus exquisitely companions us in to New Life!"

Terry's art is the written and spoken word. Through storytelling, poetry, and humor, Terry challenges us to enter more deeply into the mystery of grace, the mystery of spirit, the mystery of God. Terry has served on the faculty of the Loyola Academy Jesuit High School for 18 years and is Founder and Executive Director of Soul-Play, LLC, an enterprise serving congregations, families, schools and adult retreats. He is Resident Theologian and Animator of Faith at Old St. Patrick's Church, holds a master's degree from the Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University; and a Doctorate of Ministry from the University of St. Mary of the Lake.

Living Stations of the Cross

We are looking to be able to carry on the tradition of Living Stations of the Cross in some socially distanced and safe way this year. Middle school volunteers will be needed to act out the Stations and to provide the narration. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to come to a deeper understanding of the depth of God's love for us. If you are interested or would like more information, contact Peggy Goralski at pgoralski@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x123.



Teens with Character

Middle school students ... Teens with Character will meet on Sunday, February 28, 2021, from 4:30–6:00 pm, at St. Thomas. Bring your facemask and join us. Games, faith sharing, checking in with each other are all part of the Teens with Character experience. We would love to see you!

Middle School Summer Service Trip

Just5Days is a 5-day experience of service, hands-on learning activities, prayer and liturgy, and community building designed for groups of middle school youth. The Just5Days experience immerses middle schoolers in hands-on service to those in need as they learn about justice in engaging and exciting ways.

Plans are underway for the 2021 Just5Days middle school mission trip. This year, the St. Thomas Just5Days group will be staying and ministering in Chicago from July 12–16. The cost for the week is \$340. Registration forms are available on the St. Thomas website and outside Peggy Goralski's office. If you have questions or would like additional information, contact Peggy at 630.355.8980, x123 or pgoralski@stapostle.org.

To learn more about the Just5Days program, visit www.just5days.org.

Important Religious Education Dates

Elementary RE

Saturday

February 6 — RE Classes meet

February 20 — RE Classes meet

Tuesday

February 9 — RE Classes meet

March 2 — RE Classes meet

Middle School RE

February 8, 22 — Monday middle school RE classes meet

February 20 — Saturday middle school RE classes meet

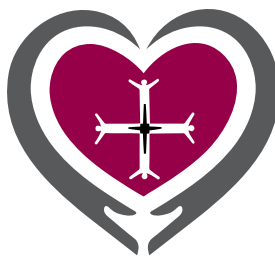
Service Commission — Pastoral Care

From the Office of the Parish Nurse 21 Well-Being Tips for 2021

Improving your health and well-being does not need to be complicated. In fact, great accomplishments are the sum of small steps! Start the new year off on the right foot by trying some or all of these ideas. Keep a simple log.

1. Drink a glass of water first thing in the morning.
2. Schedule a preventive care exam such as an annual physical or well-woman exam.
3. Each day, eat one more serving of a fruit or vegetable than you normally would.
4. Add 10 minutes of exercise to your day.
5. Avoid slouching! Keep your back straight, shoulders back and head up.
6. Prepare one healthy vegetarian recipe for dinner every week.
7. Find an activity or hobby that helps boost your mood.
8. Spend at least 10 minutes on a stress-relieving activity.
9. Aim to go to bed at a time that allows you to sleep for 8 hours five days per week.
10. Try a new exercise.
11. Mind your manners by saying “please” and “thank you.”
12. Use a fitness device, app or pedometer to see to track your activity.
13. At each meal fill half your plate with fruits and veggies, a quarter whole grains and a quarter protein.
14. Include three days of resistance or strength-building exercises each week.
15. Write down three things you are grateful for every day.
16. Try a new whole grain like quinoa, bulgur, amaranth, millet, sorghum, teff or buckwheat.
17. Get out into nature at least one day per week.
18. Designate three evenings each week to be screen-free time.
19. Every time you put yourself down, compliment yourself twice immediately after.
20. Do some jumping jacks before starting your favorite TV show.
21. Drink a glass of water before you eat a meal.

Source: <https://blog.healthadvocate.com/2020/12/21-well-being-tips-for-2021/>



PASTORAL CARE
St. Thomas the Apostle

New Year, New Hope: Mental Health is Just as Important as Physical Health

We have just finished a very difficult year — restrictions and fears related to the coronavirus pandemic, many different losses, the most unusual holiday season ever and a challenging winter. Some people are experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety. Others seem to be doing okay. What are ways we can improve our mental health? What might be signs for concern? What are resources to help restore mental health, and how does someone take that first step?

Join us to learn how to help yourself or someone you care about begin the new year with renewed hope and energy.

Paula Kosin is a member of the Behavioral Health Ministry Team at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish where she facilitates grief support groups. She is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC), a consultant, career coach, writer and speaker, as well as a hospice vigil volunteer.

When:

Wednesday, February 24, 2021
7:00–8:00 pm

Sponsored by:

Pastoral Care, Behavioral Health Ministry

For more information and to register call Susan Kearney at 630.355.8980, x108 or email sdkearney@comcast.net.

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

From the Behavioral Health Ministry
10 Random Acts of Kindness for Random Acts of Kindness Day
February 17, 2021

- Smile.
- Hold the door open.
- Give an honest compliment.
- Thank someone who you appreciate.
- Be a good listener.
- Offer your help to someone.
- Ask the person who's serving you how their day is going.
- Treat someone to a coffee or tea.
- Let someone go past you in the grocery queue.
- Send flowers or chocolates to a friend out of the blue.



There's a few other cool ones I've spotted on the blogosphere so I've put some of my favorite inspirations below.

Other random acts of kindness by Simpler Life Today

- Give away something you consider valuable.
- Clean up someone else's mess.
- Compliment a stranger.

Celebrating a birthday through random acts of kindness by Robyn Bomar from Mix Mingle Glow

- Hand bottled water to walkers, joggers or bikers from a car window.
- Walk up to a family eating lunch at a local restaurant and leave a gift card for them for their lunch.
- Drop off stuffed animals at the children's hospital.

Little acts of kindness by Oprah

- Take a minute to direct someone who's lost, even though you're rushing.
- Give a homeless person your doggie bag (or better yet, buy them a sandwich).
- Put a coin in an expired meter.

Source: Susanna Newsonen

<https://happyologist.co.uk/happiness/10-random-acts-of-kindness/>

From the Office of the Parish Nurse
Safety Foremost for Prayer Shawls and Prayer Squares

If you or your loved one needs a prayer shawl or prayer square and can wait for safety measures in place before receiving the spiritual gifting, please call Diane McQueen 630.355.8980, x101 in the General Office (Monday-Friday) and leave your name, phone number and the name of the recipient. You will receive a call back within two days or earlier to receive a shawl or square. Thank you for your understanding and patience.



~Prayer Shawl Ministry

Save the Date

The next blood drive will take place Saturday, March 13, 2021, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at Fort Hill Activity Center (*new location*).

More details to come.



SUPPORT ST. THOMAS

Please, give

Please Continue Giving to St. Thomas

We continue to follow the guidelines set 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.

Service Commission — Outreach and Social Justice

All Saints Catholic Academy Food Drive for Care Pantry

On December 22, the OSJ Office received a phone call from Margaret Bergquist, a teacher at All Saints Catholic Academy (ASCA). The school was planning a Martin Luther King Day service project for the school. The idea was to collect food for those in need during the week prior to MLK Day. And they had selected St. Thomas Care Pantry as the recipient of the food collected.

It was a very successful food drive! They filled seven large plastic bins and at least twice that amount in other bags of food. We estimated 143 bags of food ... including lots of Rahmen Noodles which was on the list of items most needed. A huge thank you to the ASCA students for their wonderful response to the call to feed the hungry.

We provided some information to ASCA prior to the food drive, including the following:

Over the last year, the St. Thomas Care Pantry provided food to an average of 151 households per month, a 9.4 percent increase over the prior year. In addition, significant food donations were made to St. Nicholas Pantry in Aurora, Marie Wilkinson Pantry in Aurora and the Sisters of Notre Dame Pantry in Chicago. No one asking for food has ever been turned away from the St. Thomas Care Pantry.

Culture of Life

What does it really mean for followers of Jesus to be pro-life in our times, encompassing all aspects that relate to cherishing life and protecting life? Last weekend (January 30-31), Brian Hickey provided the homily reflection that addressed that question.

Brian is an associate director in the Office for Humanity Dignity at the Diocese of Joliet. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Master of Global Affairs degree in May 2020, specializing in Catholic Social Teaching and public policy. He previously served for a year with migrants and refugees in Djibouti, a small country in the Horn of Africa. He also worked as a teacher and coach at a Palestinian High School in the West Bank.

To read Brian Hickey's homily reflection, please go to the St. Thomas website Home Page (www.stapostle.org).

The following are excerpts from Brian's reflection:

What are we, followers of Christ, famous for in our neighborhoods? ... Jesus told us we should be known for our love for one another. That means protecting and supporting all life at every stage of development, from conception to natural death.

We cannot accept truth if it is without love, and we cannot accept something as love if it lacks truth.

How can a society form a moral vision for humanity when we cannot legally protect unborn children? ... Yet, we know that if we call ourselves pro-life, we must not only work to pass laws, we must also support expectant mothers, single mothers and young families with more than words.

In our Western culture that emphasizes efficiency and productivity, how do we authentically love the life of the elderly, those with disabilities and migrants who do not yet have the skills for employment in our country? ... Not only by providing for their basic needs, but by enabling them to give the best of themselves ... Because God loves them, we must love them as if we are loving Christ Himself.

It is remarkable how our country has turned its back to refugees worldwide, especially at a time when the number of forcibly displaced people continues at an all-time high. ... Now, the Church teaches, and I believe that a country has a right to control its borders, but does this mean being indifferent to a global crisis?

We also must discern how to foster a culture of life in our everyday action. We do not need to undertake significant actions to do it — just conscious and intentional living. ... I sometimes struggled with the reality that I must humble myself to know that I can't change the world in big, swift actions.

So, I pray: Jesus, shine through and be so in us that every soul we come in contact with may feel Your presence in our souls. Let them look up and see no longer us, but only You! Amen.



40 Days for Life During Lent

A 40 Days for Life prayer vigil will be held at Planned Parenthood beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 17. The Prayer vigil location is Planned Parenthood (3051 E. New York St., Aurora) behind Waterleaf Women's Center. Parking available at Waterleaf.

All are welcome to participate by simply going to the prayer vigil and spending an hour in prayer. You can also sign for a day and time up by going to: <https://www.40daysforlife.com/aurora>. If you have any questions, contact 40days4lifeaurora@gmail.com.

40 Days for Life is a beautiful opportunity to join others in peaceful prayer and keeping vigil. Through God, lives are changed during 40 Days for Life. When communities rally in this effort, God works miracles. The "no show" rate for abortion appointments increases dramatically while people are praying outside.

*Redeemer in the Womb
Lord Jesus Christ, You took our human nature upon Yourself. You shared our life and death, our childhood and adulthood.*

Lord Jesus, we ask You to bless and protect the children who today are in their mothers' womb. Save them from the danger of abortion. Help all people to recognize in the preborn child a brother, a sister, saved by You, our Redeemer in the womb.

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 4: How Does Race Shape the Lives of White People?

Being white in the United States means that you share with other white people a common set of privileged experiences that no person of color can claim.

Belonging: As has been mentioned in earlier chapters, most power structures are arranged hierarchically along racial lines, with white people holding dominant roles. In business, industry, education, health care, history, government, and cultural and social interactions, a person who is white fits in racially at a "natural" level. White people are advised to avoid situations where they are in the minority because such situations are considered dangerous.

Freedom from the Burden of Race: White people are typically not aware of the ways their race affects the way they are treated. And while they may see unfair practices toward other races, they accept no responsibility, so long as they have not personally acted unfairly. People of color must always be aware of their race and how it is perceived.

Freedom of Movement: In America, white people have a presumed freedom to be in most spaces without fear of being questioned or threatened. This cannot be said for people of color.

Just "People": Whiteness is seen as the standard of normality. This is reflected, for example, in the prevalence of such events as Black History Month or in ideals of beauty represented in advertising, even in visual representations of spiritual figures such as Adam and Even or Jesus.

White Solidarity: This is defined as "the unspoken agreement among whites to protect white advantage" and to not confront racial discrimination when they encounter it. To break that silence could cause you to be deemed a troublemaker or too sensitive. This kind of racial solidarity preserves the status quo.

The Good Old Days: This mindset depends upon the history of white privilege as a longstanding ideal. For people of color the past represents repression and persecution. And yet, examination of our institutions shows that they are still controlled by a white elite, though some circumstances have changed.

White people generally expect that the burden of proving racial discrimination lies upon people of color. At the same time, they often hold opinions of other races as dangerous, accept segregation as a circumstance they are innocent of creating, and hold on to segregation as a reasonable consequence of white superiority. The socialization that maintains these attitudes must be faced.

Question for Thought and Discussion: Which of the privileges discussed above do you recognize in your own thinking and experience?

Swaddling Project

Thank You, St. Thomas

The St. Thomas Pro-Life Ministry Swaddling Project was different this year, due to the pandemic. Gift card donations were requested to be given to three area pregnancy centers (Waterleaf in Aurora, Birthright of Joliet and Avenue Women's Center in Naperville).

In addition to gift cards, some monetary donations were received. Those funds were used to purchase additional gift cards. \$1,505 in gift cards were shared with the pregnancy center to be distributed to the women they are serving. Thank you to all who were able to help.



Food Donations for Care Pantry

Drive-Through Donations Accepted Tuesday, February 9 from 9:00–11:00 am or 4:00–5:00 pm

The "Drive-Thru Donations" days have been a great success. Thank you!

Bring donations to St. Thomas on **Tuesday, February 9 from 9:00–11:00 am or 4:00–5:00 pm**. Place the items in the trunk or the back of your vehicle, stay in your vehicle and we will remove the items for you. Items will be collected outside Door C, which is across from the labyrinth. As you start to drive around the building, you will see orange cones with instructions.

In order to serve our Care Pantry families in the best possible way, we are requesting items unavailable from the food bank and items we particularly need. Please bring only the items listed below.

- Mac & Cheese
- Boxed Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Jiffy Mix
- Jell-O
- Bar Soap
- Meat Meal in a Can (Chili, SpaghettiOs, etc.)
- Pancake Syrup

Thank you for your support. Consider being a drop off location for people in your neighborhood and bringing a trunk load of food to St. Thomas.

Stewardship and Administration

The Week Ahead

Monday, February 8

7:00–9:00 pm The Mass Part II, Zoom
7:15–8:30 pm Middle School RE, Ministry Center

Tuesday, February 9

4:30–5:15 pm Elementary RE, Ministry Center
7:00–9:00 pm Finance Committee, Zoom

Wednesday, February 10

9:15–11:15 am Wednesday Bible Study, Zoom
7:00–7:45 pm First Eucharist Prayer Service, Church
7:15–8:45 pm Faith Formation Commission, Zoom

Thursday, February 11

9:15–11:15 am Thursday AM Bible Study, Senior Center
7:00–7:45 pm First Eucharist Prayer Service, Church
7:30–9:00 pm Thursday PM Bible Study, Zoom

Friday, February 12

7:00–8:00 pm Confirmation Rehearsal, Church

Saturday, February 13

2:00–3:30 pm Confirmation, Church
3:30–4:15 pm Reconciliation, Galilee

Sunday, February 14

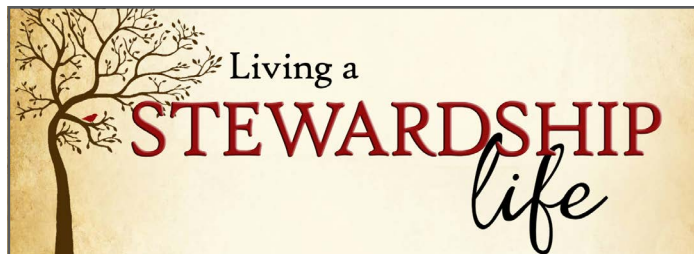
9:00 am–12:00 pm RCIA, Senior Center
12:30–2:30 pm Journey 1 Classes
4:30–5:45 pm Journey 1 Classes
7:15–8:30 pm Journey 1 Classes

Last weekend's stewardship of financial gifts

Weekly Sunday Offertory

January 24, 2021	
Sunday Collection Offering*	\$6,128
Credit Card Online Giving	none this week
Automatic Direct Debit (5 th and 20 th each month)	\$27,441
Mailed in and stock donations	\$7,838
Total for the week	\$41,406
<small>*Based on Collection Counters Reports prior to bank confirmation</small>	
Fiscal Year (7/1 to 6/30)	\$1,071,001
Weekly Average 7/1/2019 to date	\$35,700
Offertory Goal Year to date	\$1,010,673
Over/short of goal to date	\$60,328
Goal for Fiscal Year 7/1 to 6/30	\$1,751,833
Percent of Annual Sunday Offertory Goal	61%
Remaining for Fiscal Year goal	\$680,832

This week, the Sunday collection is \$60,328 ahead of goal so far this year. Capital needs restricted gifts were \$8 this past week. We are grateful to those who recognize the need and responded.



This weekend we are preparing to start the Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal for 2021. In the next few weeks you will hear a plea to donate to this fund. You will hear what our parish goal will be. And you will hear what Diocesan programs benefit from this yearly collection. But why should you pledge a gift to CMAA?

You might have benefited from one of the programs that receives funds from the Annual Appeal. Do you have a connection to or have you been educated in a Catholic school in our Diocese? You certainly have had interaction with one or more of our Diocesan priests. Funds from the Appeal helps defray the cost of educating our Seminarians. The Diocese makes available counseling services and services for our veterans.

Pope Francis says, "It is not enough to receive the light, one must become the light." These and a host of other ministries are supported by CMAA, but we must use our gifts (this time our treasure) to assure these and other ministries continue. In a few weeks you will receive in the mail your pledge card. Please pray and act on what you can do to "become the light." Your fellow members of the Joliet Diocese and St. Thomas the Apostle parish thank you.

Smart Moves in Giving to St. Thomas

Some parishioners receive tax benefits from gifts to St. Thomas by donating stock or directing their IRA distributions to St. Thomas. Consult your tax adviser or broker/agent to see if these smart moves are right for you. We appreciate your support!

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!

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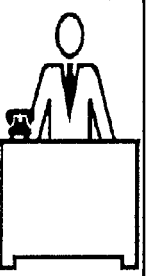
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