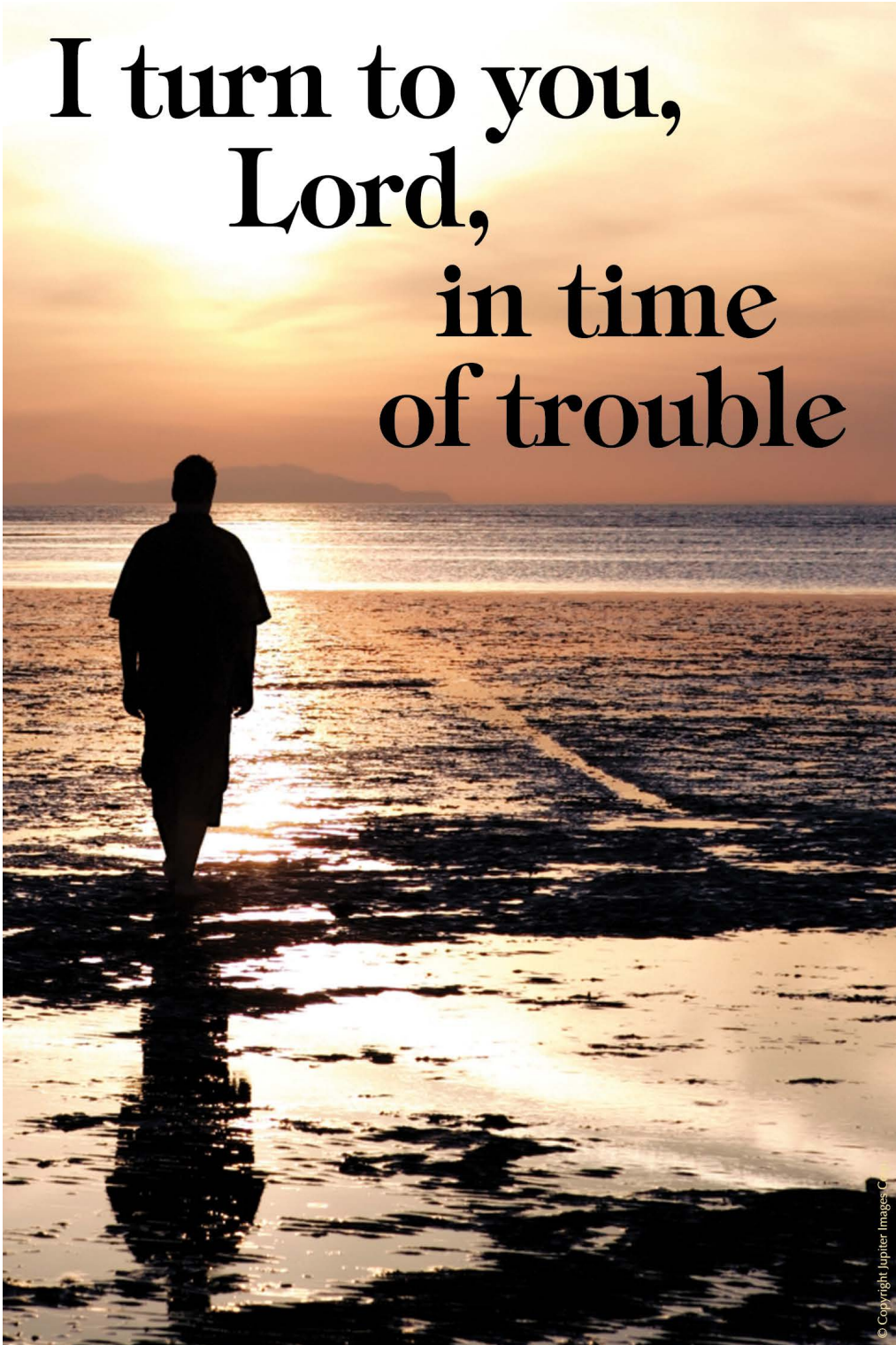


St. Thomas

FEBRUARY 14, 2021 — SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

I turn to you,
Lord,
in time
of trouble



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

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

Jim (Mary Jo) Breen — 630.486.3133, jimb4853@gmail.com

Joe (Carolyn) Cuzzone — 630.355.8980, x224, DeaconJoeCuzzone@gmail.com

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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Samantha Delke, *Associate Director of Liturgy and Music*, x120, sdelke@stapostle.org

Faith Formation

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Peggy Goralski, *Director of Middle School Faith Formation*, x123, pgoralski@stapostle.org

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Mary Wright,* *Evening/Saturday Receptionist*

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Sue Sportiello,* *Financial Asst.*, x143, ssportiello@stapostle.org

Bob Hartmann,* *Facility Manager*, x133, facility@stapostle.org

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,

Both today's first reading and gospel have to do with people suffering from leprosy. The first reading describes that someone with leprosy had to shout "unclean, unclean" so that others would avoid him/her. Though Jesus did not have leprosy, He would eventually become someone whom others would try their best to avoid.

In the beginning of His ministry, people could not get enough of Jesus. We heard how it was impossible for Him to enter a town and that He had to spend time in deserted places. Everyone wanted to be near Him. Everyone wanted to touch Him. Jesus was the great healer, taking away all their illnesses, with no strings attached.

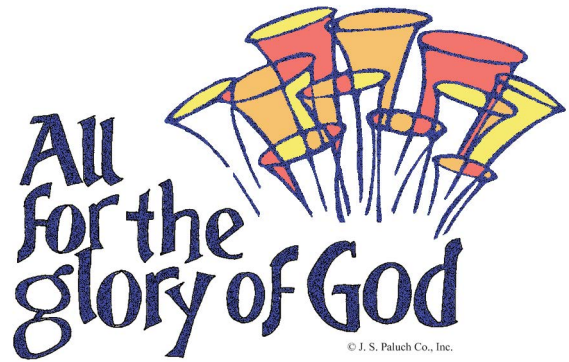
You wonder how many began to be turned off when Jesus started teaching about such things as turning the other cheek, of forgiving others, of going out of your way to care for someone who cannot stand you. Jesus would become such a turn off, such an untouchable, that they killed Him.

But even though humanity decreed that the Son of God was untouchable, His resurrection showed us who believe that He is so much more than someone we can touch. Jesus is the One whom we believe we can embrace, and who embraces us, because he is the One who cleanses us to prepare us for life with Him.

On this Commitment Weekend of our Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal, I ask you to please be as generous as you are able to respond to the needs of our diocese, to shine the Light of Christ, in our loving support of God's holy people.

In the Word,

Fr. Danaher



Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 14, 2021

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

— 1 Corinthians 10:31

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

Benjamin and Melissa Keller

Kate Caputo-May

Jerry and Melissa Nunez

Neil Seguin

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

Just over a month ago, we were still celebrating the Christmas season. In another few days, we will begin the season of Lent. This section of Ordinary Time is quite compressed, but it gives us enough time to complete the first chapter of Mark, which we do today. We meet the leper who, cured of his leprosy, cannot keep quiet about what Jesus did for him! He provides an example of the believer testifying to Christ's power. How can our compassion lead us to break barriers and bring healing to others, thereby giving glory to God?

~ adapted from Pastoral Patterns, J.S. Paluch Co.

Readings for Today

First Reading — The leper will dwell apart, making an abode outside the camp (Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46).

Psalm — I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation (Psalm 32).

Second Reading — Do everything for the glory of God; be imitators of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:31 — 11:1).

Gospel — The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean (Mark 1:40-45).

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 4:1-15, 25; Ps 50:1, 8, 16bc-17, 20-21; Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday: Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10; Ps 29:1a, 2, 3ac-4, 3b, 9c-10; Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday: Jl 2:12-18; Ps 51:3-6ab, 12-14, 17; 2 Cor 5:20 — 6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday: Dt 30:15-20; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 9:22-25

Friday: Is 58:1-9a; Ps 51:3-6ab, 18-19; Mt 9:14-15

Saturday: Is 58:9b-14; Ps 86:1-6; Lk 5:27-32

Sunday: Gn 9:8-15; Ps 25:4-9; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15

Presider Schedule February 20–21

Saturday, February 20

4:30 pm – Fr. Philip Danaher with Fr. Michael Trail

Sunday, February 21

9:30 am – Fr. Michael Trail with Deacon Joe Cuzzone

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 15, 2021

8:30 am †James Malone, by Dick and Adela Auskalnis

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

8:30 am †John Egermann

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

7:00 am Prayer Service

8:30 am Mass

12:00 pm Prayer Service

4:30 pm Prayer Service

7:00 pm Mass

Thursday, February 18, 2021

8:30am †Bill Mann, by Mary Wright

Friday, February 19, 2021

8:30 am

Saturday, February 20, 2021

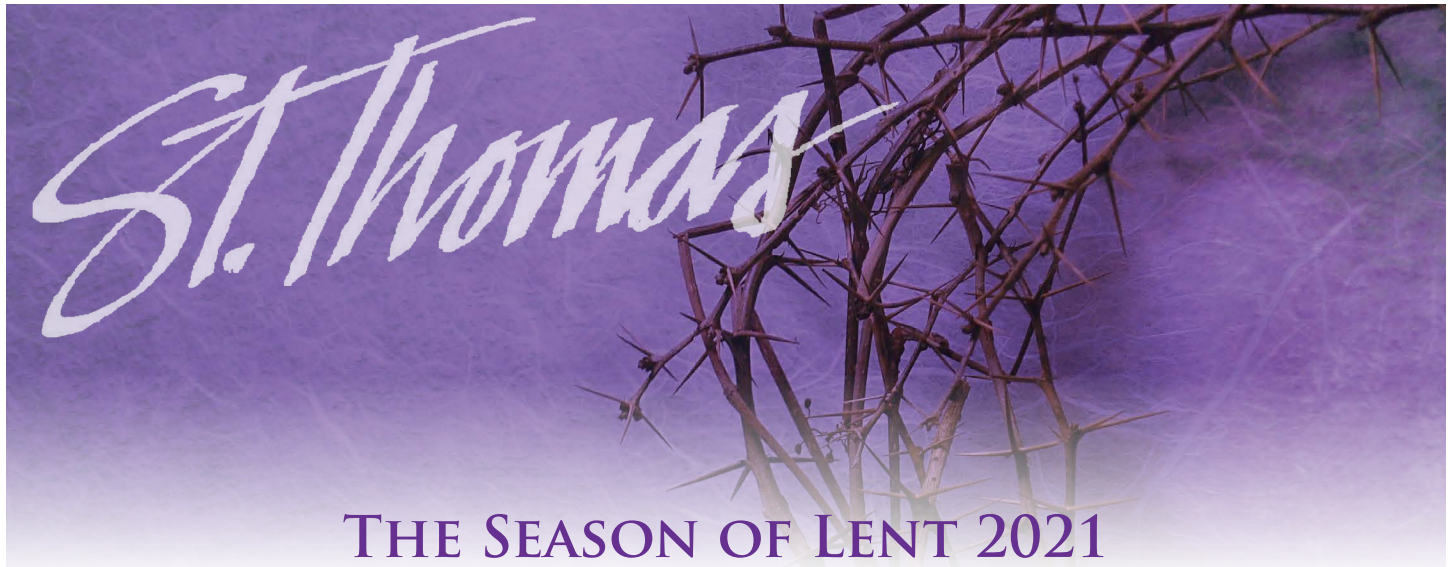
4:30 pm *Mass of Anticipation*

Sunday, February 21, 2021

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:30 am †Catherine Theresa O'Brien, by Mary O'Brien Glatz

† Tom Dowling by Ann Mitchell



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. No preregistration is required for the events listed above but contact tracing forms are required. To save time, download, print, complete and bring the form with you when you come to St. Thomas. Forms will also be available at St. Thomas. Download the form [here](#). Maximum capacity at each event is 125.

Stations of the Cross

Fridays of Lent

7:00 pm in the Church

The Way of the Cross has always been a powerful and popular part of the faith tradition and devotional life for Catholics throughout the ages. The early practice of Christians attempting to retrace and walk the path of Jesus has always been a treasured way to commemorate the Passion and Death of Christ.

To maintain safety guidelines for our community members, Stations of the Cross will take on a different form this year. While all are invited to pray in the church space, there will not be a procession to each station. All gathered will remain socially distanced in their pew, with projections assisting the faithful in going through each station and providing verbal responses. Music will not be included.

Preregistration is not required but you will need to fill out a contact tracing form. You may fill it out upon arrival at St. Thomas or save time and download it [here](#) and bring it with you. Maximum occupancy is 125.

February 19, March 5, March 19

Through the simple, intimate, yet powerful words of *Everyone's Way of the Cross*, those on the journey are invited to grow closer to Christ by embracing the mystery of suffering in the world.

February 26, March 12, March 26

The *Scriptural Stations of the Cross* are based on those celebrated by Saint Pope John Paul II on Good Friday in 1991. They are an alternative to the traditional stations as a way of more deeply reflecting on the Scriptural accounts of Christ' Passion.

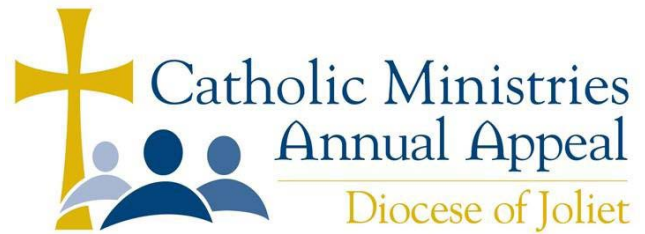
For information and a schedule of all activities and services during Lent from Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday at St. Thomas, please check the St. Thomas website for the Season of Lent 2021 brochure.

Pledge Your Gift to the CMAA

This is Commitment Weekend for the 2021 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal (CMAA). Please prayerfully reflect on how you can best support our annual appeal and help our parish reach its \$174,100 goal.

Because not all of us have returned to worshipping in person, our pastor is mailing a packet to parishioners this week. Included will be the envelope many of us use to make a gift at Mass, as well as more information on how the CMAA shines the light of Christ not only in our parish, but across the diocese.

Seventy percent of any amount we raise over our goal will be returned to our parish, for our needs. To make a gift, complete and return your pledge envelope in the mail, visit jolietdioceseappeal.org or text DONATE to 815.205.1949.



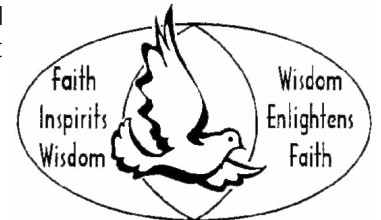
Faith and Formation Commission — Adult

C.A.R.E. CORNER

St. Paul picked up on Jesus' examples of inclusion as well. In Galatians 3:28, Paul wrote that within the Body of Christ, all seeming differences were of no account. It didn't matter if you were male or female — both were welcome. It didn't matter if you were a Jew or a Greek gentile — you were still welcome. And it didn't matter

if you were a slave or a free person — you could still be a member of the Christian community since “you are all one in Christ Jesus.” All these stood in stark contrast to the social norms of all other groups who were putting pressure on the Christians to conform to their ways of thinking and acting.

In Paul's day, slavery was a cultural reality. Slaves were considered to be the property of their masters. But Paul wrote a personal letter to a man by the name of Philemon, urging him to forgive his runaway slave Onesimus and to release him from his status as a slave. Why? Because Onesimus had become a brother in Christ. That was the attraction of so many who joined a Christian community. Many of the early Christians were people who were considered to be of little value and who were seen as a drain on society.



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.

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.

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.

Sister Antona Ebo

Elizabeth Louise Ebo (1924–2017), later known as Sister Mary Antona Ebo, became the face of Black Catholicism and Religious Life during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and beyond. As one of 48 religious leaders of varying faiths who gathered in Selma after Bloody Sunday to march, she told the press: “I’m here because I’m a Negro, a nun, a Catholic and because I want to bear witness.”

Sister Ebo’s life was filled with hardship from an early age. Her mother died when she was 4 years old, and her father had to send her and her siblings to a Colored Children’s Home after losing his job in the height of the Great Depression. However, as Ebo said, God’s providence was with her. A family friend gave her a home and access to Catholic education, leading to her conversion and Ebo being the first African-American graduate of her high school in Bloomington, IL. The beginning of many firsts in her long life — most due to the racial barriers Ebo would break.

After high school, she was denied admission to Catholic nursing schools. Eventually Ebo enrolled at St. Mary’s (Colored) Infirmary Training School and became a nurse. By 1946, the Sisters of St. Mary lifted their ban on Black members, allowing Ebo to become a novitiate, along with three other Black women. They went through a separate novitiate program and were restricted access to shared spaces in accordance with segregation trends. Even Ebo’s ceremony in which she professed her religious vows was a segregated, separate event from that of her white sisters. Her fight for racial justice in religious life started in her own community and spread throughout the country over many decades — with her voice often being the only one representing Black religious life in sacred and secular contexts. Understanding the need for large, impactful, continual progress, she helped found the National Black Sisters Conference and served as its president. Sister Ebo also was the first African-American woman to administer a hospital in the United States of America. During a standing ovation when she was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of St. Louis (one of six awarded to her in her lifetime), she said: “Give your glory to God. Give your prayers to me.”

As St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church continues to work for Racial Justice through our parish wide initiative, we reflect on the life of Sister Antona Ebo. She was a voice for the excluded and worked within the Catholic faith to expose our own brokenness. Sister Antona Ebo was a face of Christ.

National Black Sister’ Conference Mission Statement:

As women religious and associates, we draw strength and courage from God, support one another in the faith; and hold our elders in high esteem. We study, speak and act on issues that impact the social, educational, economic and religious milieu of the United States and the world community. We promote a positive self-image among ourselves, and all African Peoples. We believe that through the power of the Spirit working in and through us we can be witnesses of Jesus Christ in the communities where we live and serve.

<https://www.archstl.org/obituary-sister-mary-antona-ebo-fsm-1499>

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/11/22/sister-antona-ebos-lifelong-struggle-against-white-supremacy-inside-and-outside>

<https://www.slu.edu/news/2017/november/sister-antona-ebo-obit.php>

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, 2021, at 9:30 am. Please bring your families. Remember to sign up Thursday, March 18, 2021, to reserve a seat. Please reserve a seat for each person coming to the Mass. Please bring cereal or macaroni and cheese for the Care Pantry collection.

First Reconciliation Services Information

Reconciliation services for fourth and fifth graders and their parents will be Saturday March 13, 20 and 27 at 1:00 pm at St. Thomas. Due to safety issues, only two parents and the child(ren) receiving Reconciliation may attend. Online reservations for the date of your Reconciliation service are requested. Please contact the Faith Formation Office or Lorraine Katz at lkatz@stapostle.org or 630.355.8980, x109, if you have any questions with reserving your date.

We ask the St. Thomas community please pray for these children and their families that they may always know the love and forgiveness that God offers through this sacrament. May we too, know the joy of forgiveness that comes with this sacrament. Please contact the Faith Formation Office for more information about the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Third Grade Thanks

On February 6, 2021, the third grade RE children participated in a Mass. Special thanks goes to:

- Third grade coordinator and catechist: Paul Reichel
- Catechists: Theresa Abecia and Samantha Miles
- Aides Emma Miles, Amy Paul and Bella Delgado

They prepare our children to be disciples of Jesus at every RE class. Thank you to our third graders Isabella Freeman, Don Henry Smith and Carmen Pecoraro who read during the Mass. Thank you to all who participated in the Mass and for the donations to the Care Pantry.

Scouting Day of Recollection

The Joliet Diocese Catholic Committee on Scouting (JDCCS) invites you to their annual Day of Recollection "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.

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

Important Dates for Elementary RE

Saturday

February 20 — RE Classes meet

Tuesday

March 2 — RE Classes meet

Question of the week ...

How will you show your love
to others this week?



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.

Ash Wednesday Playlist

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, the Church embarks on a 40-day journey of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as a way to heed the call to change our hearts. If you are searching for a way to begin the journey, check out some of the resources on the Ash Wednesday playlist, *Signed with Ashes*. The playlist contains links to videos, articles and activities to make the start of Lent more meaningful for you and your family. Check it out on the St. Thomas website.

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.

Important Dates for Middle School Religious Education

February 22, March 8, 15, 22 — Monday middle school RE classes meet

February 20, March 6, 13, 20 — Saturday middle school RE classes meet

Note: The February 20 and 22 classes will be held in the worship space at St. Thomas.



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.

Service Commission — Pastoral Care

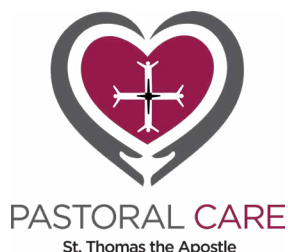
From the Office of the Parish Nurse Responding to Life's Challenges that are Out of Your Control

Unanticipated situations arise when we come face to face with the stark reality and frightening reality of uncertainty. Our world can seem shaken in the threat of the unknown and the vulnerability of not being in control. The choice eventually to surrender willingly and gracefully in peaceful resignation is within our power.

- **Living Life with Resilience** – It is within our power to develop attitudes that strengthen our resilience and sustain us through life's ups and downs.
- **Cultivating a Hopeful Attitude** – As we encourage and support one another in opening our eyes and hearts to both the blessings and the challenges, together we will strengthen resilience.
- **Living Gracefully** – Life happens in the present. Never is it helpful to be stuck in the past, mentally toying with "if only." What best prepares us for whatever the future holds is living well in the present.
- **Exploring Creativity** – Creativity provides a buffer that protects from the harmful effects of our analytical minds. A playful, creative spirit is a resilient spirit.
- **Practicing Gratitude** – Living with a thankful heart enhances well-being; we benefit physically, mentally, socially and spiritually. Express thanks, remember blessings and gifts during difficult times.
- **Staying Close** – Having a support system of loved ones can provide a network of comfort and security when other aspects of life are beyond our control.

We have the capacity to choose wisely the behaviors and attitudes that nurture the human spirit. Carve out a space in your home and in your heart where you can rest peacefully in the embrace of our loving God.

Source: CareNotes by Diane Pharo, SCN



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.

Lose Weight with Mindful Eating

Mindful eating is an effective weight-loss strategy that encourages you to slow down and pay attention to your food, noticing each sip or bite you take. It helps focus your senses on exploring, savoring and tasting your food, and teaches you to follow hunger cues. Put mindful eating into practice with these ideas as you prepare and eat meals. It gets easier over time!

Practice acceptance. Be aware of critical or judgmental thoughts about food, your eating habits and your body. Concentrate on the moment. Accept your body as it is.

Make a conscious decision to eat. Before you eat, ask yourself, "How hungry am I right now? Am I eating out of hunger, habit, boredom or emotion?"

Reserve time for your meal. Don't eat on the run. If you're eating with others, involve them in preparing the food to make that time social.

Appreciate your food. Start your meal by taking a moment to express your gratitude for your food.

Breathe. Before and during your meal, consciously take a few deep breaths.

Use all your senses to fully experience your food and drinks. Observe the smells, textures, sounds, colors and tastes. Ask yourself how much you're enjoying the food and how appealing it is.

Choose modest portions to avoid overeating. Eat small bites, and chew slowly. Appreciate that your food fills you up and makes you healthy.

Of course, there will be times that you have to rush through a meal to get to an activity or an appointment. But if you can practice mindful eating on a regular basis, it can help you reach your weight-loss goals.

Resource: Adapted: mayoclinic.org/diet

From the Behavioral Health Ministry
March 1–7 is National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

Eating disorders are serious but treatable mental and physical illnesses that can affect people of all genders, ages, races, religions, ethnicities, sexual orientations, body shapes and weights. There is a commonly held misconception that eating disorders are a lifestyle choice. Eating disorders are serious illnesses that are associated with severe disturbances in people's eating behaviors and related thoughts and emotions. Preoccupation with food, body weight and shape may also signal an eating disorder. Common eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge-eating disorder. While no one knows for sure what causes eating disorders, a growing consensus suggests that it is a range of biological, psychological and sociocultural factors.



Eating disorders are serious, potentially life threatening conditions that can affect every organ system in the body. They are not fads or phases, and can have serious consequences for health, productivity and relationships.

There are many myths about the causes of eating disorders, how serious they are and who develops an eating disorder. The list below includes the truths about eating disorders:

Nine Truths about Eating Disorders

- Truth #1:** Many people with eating disorders look healthy, yet may be extremely ill.
- Truth #2:** Families are not to blame, and can be the patients' and providers' best allies in treatment.
- Truth #3:** An eating disorder diagnosis is a health crisis that disrupts personal and family functioning.
- Truth #4:** Eating disorders are not choices, but serious biologically influenced illnesses.
- Truth #5:** Eating disorders affect people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, body shapes and weights, sexual orientations and socioeconomic statuses.
- Truth #6:** Eating disorders carry an increased risk for both suicide and medical complications.
- Truth #7:** Genes and environment play important roles in the development of eating disorders.
- Truth #8:** Genes alone do not predict who will develop eating disorders.
- Truth #9:** Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible. Early detection and intervention are important.

Sources:

National Eating Disorders Association

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/blog-tags/understanding-eating-disorders>

National Institute of Mental Health

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/eating-disorders/index.shtml>



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.

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.



Choices for Life Are Always Possible

Video Available for Viewing

The Pro-Life Ministry in partnership with the High School Youth Office sponsored a “Choices for Life” workshop that was livestreamed on Wednesday, February 3, 2021. The 40 minute video is now available for viewing on the St. Thomas website.

Choices for life are always possible. It may not seem that way for many women, especially young women who are facing an unplanned pregnancy. There are alternatives. What would you say to a friend who was facing that situation and did not believe there was a choice for life for them?

- Parishioner Dr. Marie-Ange Ogoudou provided the keynote address.
- Deacon Joe Cuzzone spoke to the males who find themselves in an unplanned pregnancy relationship.
- Eileen McGleam, Pro-Life Ministry Facilitator, provided a call to action.

To read the talks from the workshop or watch the video, visit the homepage of the St. Thomas website.

Excerpts from Marie-Ange Keynote: “Pro-Life” and “Pro-Choice” Labels

“The black-and-white labels of ‘pro-life’ and ‘pro-choice’ pit people against each other, as if they’re on two different teams. There should be a shift from conflict to conversation about the sanctity of life.”

The Beginning of the Culture of Life

“I believe that the cause for life began at creation, when God made man and woman in His image. The sanctity of human life, the God-given dignity, wonder and worth of every single one of us, begins at conception. The four-year-old girl or the 46 year-old man (like George Floyd) are just as massively and beautifully precious to God as the boy or girl on the 10-week ultrasound.”

Womb to Tomb

“If we’re pro-life, we’re pro-life from the womb to the tomb. It means that we not only advocate for the social justice of the unborn, but we’re also on the right side of any social issues related to human dignity.”

Teenage Unplanned Pregnancies

“There’s about 350,000 U.S. teenagers under the age of 18 who become pregnant each year. Approximately 82 percent of these pregnancies are unintended. Fifty-five percent of pregnant teenagers give birth, 14 percent have miscarriages, and 31 percent have abortions. That’s a little over 100,000 abortions (Source: aclu.org). Overall, all ages included, approximately 1 in 4 pregnancies end in abortion.”

Mary and Joseph and Choosing Life

“Almost all the reasons why a woman would believe she needed to abort are found in the story of the nativity. . . . If you ever question yourself about God’s view on abortion just reflect on the birth of Jesus. All the circumstances of Jesus’s birth were awkward. The story of Christmas has all the most unrealistic circumstances together. Mary was not married yet. She could have been stoned to death. Joseph was poor. They found themselves in the middle of a census . . . they had to travel 90 miles on foot with a donkey. When they finally arrived to Bethlehem, Mary is about to give birth and there was no room in any inn and they finally found a stable. Baby Jesus was born with no help at all, in total loneliness, and then they had no other place to lay him down but in a manger. . . . I get emotional when I think about how Mary and Joseph could have felt. That was probably not their plan for their baby. From our human perspective, it absolutely doesn’t make any sense. But this is how our God decided to come into our world to bring us a new way of life, a new message of love, the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Real Choice Matters

“I believe the word ‘choice’ is a mistake in a world where women often feel that abortion is their only option. The Pro-life message is to give women clarity and control in their situation so they can choose what’s best for them based on their life and circumstances.”

Personal Story

“I have a personal story to share with you. In my training I had to go to a clinic where they performed abortions. I was not at all prepared for what I saw. Thank God it was only for two days but those two days were probably the most shocking of my whole training. In general, I have great memories of medical school but this was a traumatic experience for me, I still have flashbacks of it.”

There is Hope

“Mary and Joseph certainly found themselves in very unstable circumstances. Just imagine a world without Jesus! Now imagine a world without you! Every one of us born after 1973 could have been legally aborted, given any unstable circumstances. There’s always hope, even when the circumstances seem hopeless or out of control.”

Every life is sacred

“As Christians, we should feel compelled to love one another and defend life in all its forms, those inside and outside the womb. When a young woman becomes pregnant unexpectedly, she needs support and care to go through this difficult situation, and trust God with the beautiful plan He has for her own life and her child’s life. She should not be made to feel ashamed or embarrassed. It’s already stressful enough.”

Abortion Alternatives and Support Resources

There are alternatives to abortion.

Adoption: When you choose adoption, you give someone who can't have children the chance to raise a child. You give the child the opportunity to have a lifestyle or family you can't provide. You can focus on school, work or other needs if you aren't ready to be a parent.

Legal Guardianship: Like adoption, guardianship involves placing your child with another person or family and allowing them to raise the child. By choosing a guardian instead of an adoptive family, you keep some of your parental rights. Many people choose a close friend or relative to act as a legal guardian for the child.

When you choose legal guardianship, you can still see the child. You may have a say in some decisions, such as religion or healthcare. Guardianship can be temporary. Typically, you choose the child's guardian.

Parenting: Many people choose to parent. Sometimes it involves being a single parent but that doesn't mean you need to go it alone. Your parents, siblings, other relatives and even friends may want to be involved in and embrace the child's life. This kind of support can make a big difference and can help to mitigate the challenges.

Support Resources: There are over 100 pregnancy centers in Illinois. They are a first place to visit when facing an unplanned pregnancy. They provide direct services and they are aware of many other resources, depending upon your specific situation.

Waterleaf Women's Center, is nearby. They offer individualized medical and professional services at no charge and are completely confidential. They also provide pregnancy testing, medical and pregnancy consultation, ultrasound and referrals to other services including financial support. Their goal is to provide women with the information they need to feel empowered to make their own good decisions about their pregnancy.

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.*



Career Opportunity at Loaves & Fishes

I am currently the Director of Administrative Services at Loaves & Fishes Community Services. I am retiring soon and we are looking for my replacement. This current opportunity may be of interest to some St. Thomas parishioners who may have Human Resources experience. Loaves & Fishes is a great place to work and have an impact on the local community. St. Thomas and Loaves & Fishes have been partners in service for a long time. Applicants can refer to our website www.loaves-fishes.org for a more detailed description under "About Us/Job Postings".

~Libby Hoffman

The Director of Administrative Services (DAS) is responsible for three main areas of the organization:

- Human resources
- Office management
- Bank account management

The Director of Administrative Services (DAS) is responsible for all aspects of the human resource function of the organization. In addition, the responsibility of the DAS encompasses all administration aspects of Loaves & Fishes' facilities including: telecommunications, IT coordination, property maintenance, budget and insurance management. The DAS manages bank relationships and bank accounts and oversees office bill payment approval. The position includes supporting the President/CEO in developing strategic administrative plans and other projects. Reports directly to President/CEO.

Swaddling Project

Thank You from Birthright of Joliet

Birthright of Joliet received gift cards from the recent swaddling project initiative. Karen Hatfield, the organization's director, sent the following thank you note.

"Thank you for donating to Birthright of Joliet. Our mothers and babies are grateful for your assistance especially in these challenging times. We offer them hope and support in their pregnancy needs because of your generosity.

Along with our sincere gratitude for your gift of \$505 of gift cards, we pledge to use your contribution wisely as we continue to meet the needs of those who come to Birthright. Your partnership enables us to continue our life affirming work. May God bless you for allowing us to bless others. Each gift is a blessing to a mom in need."

Stewardship and Administration

The Week Ahead

Monday, February 15

President's Day — Offices Closed

Tuesday, February 16

10:00–11:00 am Care Pantry Food Distribution
7:00–9:00 pm PPC, Zoom Meeting
7:00–8:30 pm RCIA Team Meeting, Senior Center

Wednesday, February 17

9:15–11:15 am Wednesday Bible Study, Zoom
4:30–5:15 pm Family Faith Prayer Service, Church
6:30–7:15 pm RE Family Faith Event, Zoom

Thursday, February 18

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

Friday, February 19

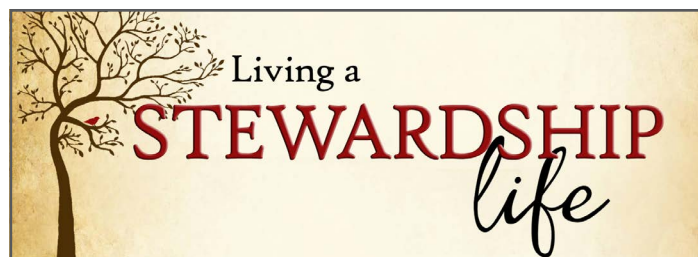
7:00–8:00 pm Stations of the Cross, Church

Saturday, February 20

8:30–11:45 am RE at All Saints Academy
8:30–9:45 am Middle School RE Presentation, Church
3:30–4:15 pm Reconciliation, Galilee

Sunday, February 21

9:00 am–12:00 pm RCIA, Senior Center
11:15 am–12:15 pm First Grade Mass, Church
12:30 pm–1:45 pm Journey 1 Classes, Ministry Center
4:30–5:45 pm Journey 1 Classes, Ministry Center
7:15–8:30 pm Journey 1 Classes, Ministry Center



In 1992, in their Pastoral Letter, *Stewardship: a Disciple's Response*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops stated, "sharing is not optional for Catholics who understand what being Church involves ... sharing is stewardship." This is a concept we should think about as we are asked to participate in this year's Catholic Ministries Appeal. Sharing our gifts should not stop at the boundaries of our parish, but be shared for the benefit of the entire Diocese of Joliet.

Our Diocese provides for our needy through Catholic Charities as they provide food for the hungry from various food pantries. Our Diocese provides shelter for the homeless through Daybreak Center. Our seminarians are trained to be sent to any of our parishes in the Diocese of Joliet. All Saints Academy is only one of 57 Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet.

Last weekend Father Danaher reminded us that we are part of Diocese of Joliet and that we should remember that when we discern what our gift to CMAA should be. Let us remember that "sharing is stewardship" as we consider our gift this year. We will all benefit in one way or another from the funds provided this year.

Last weekend's stewardship of financial gifts

Weekly Sunday Offertory

January 31, 2021	
Sunday Collection Offering*	\$6,974
Credit Card Online Giving	\$20,887
Automatic Direct Debit (5 th and 20 th each month)	none this week
Mailed in and stock donations	\$7,282
Total for the week	\$35,143
<small>*Based on Collection Counters Reports prior to bank confirmation</small>	
Fiscal Year (7/1 to 6/30)	\$1,106,144
Weekly Average 7/1/2019 to date	\$35,682
Offertory Goal Year to date	\$1,044,362
Over/short of goal to date	\$61,782
Goal for Fiscal Year 7/1 to 6/30	\$1,751,833
Percent of Annual Sunday Offertory Goal	63%
Remaining for Fiscal Year goal	\$645,689

This week, the Sunday collection is \$61,782 ahead of goal so far this year. Capital needs restricted gifts were \$160 this past week. We are grateful to those who recognize the need and responded.

Help Wanted

St. Jude Parish in New Lenox, Illinois, is looking for a full-time morning or evening maintenance person. For a complete job description please visit the St. Thomas website at www.stapostle.org.

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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GREAT LOYALTY - 41% of households do business with a company specifically because they are advertising in the church bulletin.

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





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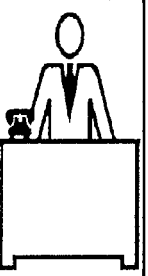
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