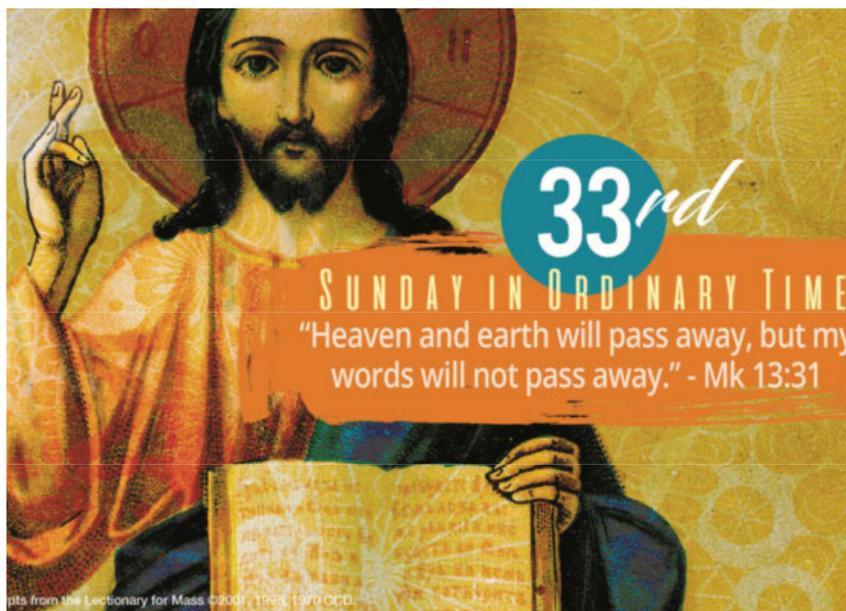




St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

2160 North Edward Decatur, IL 62526 (217) 877-4146 StThomasDecatur@gmail.com

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time • November 14, 2021



LITURGY SCHEDULE

Weekends

Sunday 10 am

Weekdays

Monday-Thursday 5:15 pm

Reconciliation

Sundays: 9:15 am - 9:45 am

Tuesdays: 4:15 pm - 5 pm

Eucharistic Adoration

First Saturday at 8:30 am

Decatur Catholic Radio

WDCR 88.9/96.5

CONTEMPLATE

Does Christ's return matter to us?

Every human being asks and answers a very important existential question. What happens to us when we die? The answer we provide will determine how we chart the course of our existence. It will also determine whether the Second Coming of Christ will be of any concern to us.

For many, life is simply a random occurrence with no significant intention or meaning about it. For these people, their eventual death, and the end of the earth as they know it, have little importance beyond their personal consequences.

But, for people of faith our natural death and the Second Coming of Christ have huge implications. It is to these things that our faith speaks volumes and can bring a keen understanding and direction that the secular world simply cannot provide.

This is where the call to vigilance and the primordial virtues of faith, hope, and love become useful and meaningful. We are works in progress who can either resist the inspirations of the Divine Artist or give into the wonderful surprising creativity of his will.

Is the End-Time Coming?

The liturgical year of 2021 ends in 14 days. These past weeks have kept our focus on living in the Kingdom of God and living for its completion. Who knows when this world will end. None of us! It will come when God is ready. We know it ends here for each of us at death. And then perdures for ever in the eternal presence of God. Rather than fret about when the end will come, let us behave rightly now.

- What will I do today to behave as God wants?
- What will I say today that is right and true and just?
- What mercy work will guide my week?

The Beauty of Marriage

At the end of October, I had the joy of marrying two very good friends of mine at Sacred Heart Church in Springfield. Their wedding Mass was absolutely beautiful, even if the weather that day was a little on the drab side: the couple was joyful and excited to enter into the Sacrament of Matrimony, there were eight priests in concelebration, and the choir was stunning. But besides all the external factors that made the day so remarkable, I was really struck by something deeper—namely, how remarkable it is that two young people, both with God at the center of their lives, were embarking on a life together by coming to the Church to receive God’s grace to live their marriage well.



That’s not such a common thing these days.

It’s led me to thinking: why don’t we see more young Catholics being married in the Church, especially here in Decatur? In the past several years (from before I even arrived here), I can count on one hand the number of weddings that have occurred in our parishes. I think that’s due to a multitude of factors, some of which have more to do with the demographics of our fair city than with any obstinate refusal to have a “church wedding.”

But a few things recently have made me realize: Catholics today don’t seem to know that it is a requirement for them to be married in the Church. Certainly, a civil marriage is enough for the government to recognize the contractual union between two individuals. But if a Catholic were to marry an individual outside of a Catholic Church (whether in a courthouse or in another church without permission), we in the Church consider that marriage to be invalid, which among other things, means that it is not sacramental.

But a good question is: why? The Church doesn’t “require” Catholics to get married in the Church just to be mean or to hold it over their heads if a couple went about it in the wrong way. As always, the Church upholds this standard (of being married in

the Church) because there is something supremely good about what happens when a couple stands before God and their fellow men and lays down their lives for each other. In that moment, the Catholic Church believes that a Sacramental union is formed between man and woman—and Sacraments, as you well know, confer grace (aka divine aid, the very life of God)! Marriage, as you all know better than I, is hard sometimes...and it’s even harder without the divine assistance that comes with being sacramentally united to one another.

The beauty of seeing my friends married was that I watched two people who were truly in love with God promise themselves to each other for the rest of their earthly lives. For both of them, it was their pursuit of God and His will that came first, and that pursuit brought them to each other. There was a real sense that what was happening that day was more than just what it looked like on the surface—it really was God bringing them together, completing what He had started, and in fact, beginning something altogether new and exciting. That’s what God wants to do in every marriage.

I’ll be the first to say, we haven’t done the best at promoting the good of marriage in the Church. Too often, the only thing that people know is that the Church has a lot of “rules” around this stuff. But the Church only makes rules in order to guard and protect what is sacred, and marriage is nothing short of a sacred bond.

If you are reading this and thinking: my married life has been complicated, or I don’t know if I can even be married again on account of a prior bond, or I don’t know how to get my marriage blessed, or whatever else it might be, I’ll say this: the Lord has a plan for your life, and for someone who is willing to work at it a little, the Church always has a way forward. The Lord never stops trying to pursue us with His life-changing love. Feel free to reach out and we’ll pray together to find that way forward.

The Lord, I think, really wants to restore and reinvigorate the beauty of the marriage covenant in the midst of our throw-away culture. Where there is brokenness, He wants to give us His grace. How can we work to promote the good of marriage here in Decatur, to revitalize and strengthen what we know is under attack in our culture today?

Keep spreading joy!

Fr. Friedel



	Collected	Budgeted
November 7	\$7,877.	\$5,000.

Year-to-Date: **\$94,175.** \$95,000.

Short/Ahead: **- \$825.**

R/M Donations.....	\$160.
Sister Parish Donations	\$230.
All Souls	\$185.
Christmas Flowers	\$235.
Decatur Calvary Cemetery	\$105.
Campaign for Justice and Hope.....	\$120.

Thank you for your continued generosity in supporting the church. Envelopes may be mailed to the parish office, or slipped through the mail slot on the office door.

Online giving is also available:

<https://parishgiving.dio.org/stthomasdecatur>



Sunday, November 14

10 am – **Chris Oberheim †**

Monday, November 15

5:15 pm – **Fr. Robert Porter †**

Tuesday, November 16

5:15 pm – **The JW Fawcett Family**

Wednesday, November 17

5:15 pm – **Dean and Elizabeth Cushing †**

Thursday, November 18

5:15 pm – **Austin and Leona Nichols †**

Friday, November 19

No Mass

Saturday, November 20

No Mass

Sunday, November 21

10 am – **For all parishioners**

Parish Office

Rev. Michael Friedel, Pastor

mfriedel@dio.org (217) 877-4404

Rev. Michael Trummer, Parochial Vicar

mtrummer@dio.org (217) 877-4404

Rev. Richard Weltin, Pastor Emeritus

Deacon Kevin Richardson

deaconkev@gmail.com (217) 877-4146

Vern Wilson, Plant Manager (volunteer)

Parish Office

Open Mon-Thurs., 9am-noon

2160 N. Edward Street, Decatur, IL 62526

(217) 877-4146

StThomasDecatur@gmail.com

<http://www.StThomasDecatur.com>

Office Hours: 9am-noon, Monday-Thursday



Please Remember in your Prayers

**All who are Ill at Home or in the Hospital
and their Families and Caregivers**

Irene Crotser, Kevin Henry, Polly Hensley,
Sawyer Dale Hunter, **Anonymous**,
Don Keefner, Kelly McLean, Trey McLean,
Lucia Molloy, Christina Mooney, Lucia Mounce,
Rev. Msgr. James O'Shea, Joe Perry,
Kay Russell, Roz Sandage, Renee Saunches,
Virginia Thompson, JoAn Wayne,
Norma Wilson, Tami Wittenauer,
Rev. David Zimmerman

Please call the parish office or email
StThomasDecatur@gmail.com to add or remove a name.

Catholic & Company

Want to hear relevant topics for your life? Tune into the new local show on WDCR Decatur Catholic Radio "Catholic & Company"! Hosts are **Father Chris Comerford & Dave Slade**; and the Ladies' Edition with **Sharon Schilawski & Katherine Smith**. Program airs every Thursday at 8:00 AM; encore at 5 PM and 10 PM. How do you listen?: On 88.9 or 96.5 FM; or WDCRradio.com (Podcasts are there, too, so you may listen whenever you like).



Night of Healing

Do you or anyone you know need prayers for healing? We are having another Night of Healing, a healing service offered for those who need prayers.

It is on **Saturday, November 20, starting at 6:30 p.m.** in the main Church at Our Lady of Lourdes. Feel free to stay for an hour or as long as you like. Bring a friend or two!

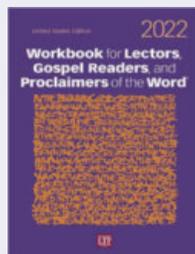
At the Night of Healing we will have prayer teams who can pray over/with those who want to receive prayer for healing. If you have not experienced it before, being prayed over is a very beautiful and powerful experience.

Our prayer teams will be wearing masks as we pray for others. Anyone is welcome to come, not just Catholics! Please feel free to share if you know anyone in need of prayers!

Lectors: Pick Up 2022 Workbooks

Lectors may pick up their copy of the *2022 Workbook for Proclaimers of the Word* please stop by the sacristy after Mass.

Thank you for your service as proclaimers of the Word!



Thank you for
your donations



CHRISTMAS Food Basket Project

St. Thomas will sponsor 25 Christmas Food Baskets for Catholic Charities this year.

Because of the health crisis, we will not be asked to shop for the food basket contents this year.

Instead, during the month of November, baskets in the back of church will collect donations to purchase Aldi gift cards. Thank you for your support and generosity!



This Weekend... baskets at the doors **Bread Sunday Second Collection**

We will have a “Bread Sunday” second collection this weekend. **See the marked baskets at the entrances to church.**



The Bread Sunday collection supports the Faith in Action program of Catholic Charities.

Faith in Action program volunteers provide transportation, friendly visits, letter writing and reading, minor home and yard maintenance, grocery shopping, occasional meal preparation and respite care to homebound seniors to help them maintain their independence, dignity, and quality of life within their home environment. Thank you for your generous support of this worthwhile program!



Please pray for our Sister Parish,
Immaculate Conception,
in Comapa, Guatemala,
as they pray for us.

FREE ESTIMATES



ROOFING SPECIALIST
(217) 424-8900
 LC 104.016085, 105.005542
promaxconstruction.com



Here with you.



Learn more at stmarysdecatur.com/herewithyou

ADT-Monitored Home Security
 Get 24-Hour Protection From a Name You Can Trust

- Burglary
- Fire Safety
- Flood Detection
- Carbon Monoxide

ADT Authorized Provider | SafeStreets | **1-855-225-4251**



DEL CARMEN'S PIZZA
 (217) 330-7485
 Order Online at DelCarmensPizza.com
 2855 N. Water St. • Decatur, IL 62526
 Tues - Fri 11am - 9pm
 Sat 4pm - 9pm • Sun - Mon Closed

AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME!

ADVERTISE HERE NOW!

Contact **Brandy Stivers** to place an ad today!
bstivers@4LPi.com or
(800) 950-9952 x2609

Graceland/Fairlawn

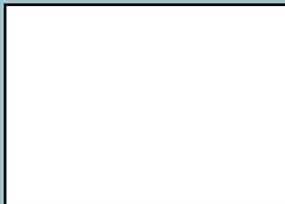
www.gracelandfairlawn.com

217-615-0769

Moran & Goebel

www.moranandgoebel.com

217-615-0793




SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL PARISH.

Buy a bulletin ad space today!

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS!



STAND OUT

with a **PREMIUM DIGITAL AD** on **PARISHESONLINE.COM**



CONTACT US AT 800-950-9952



A service as unique as your loved one.

Honor the life of your loved one with the experts at helping you say goodbye.



Brintlinger AND Earl FUNERAL HOMES
brintlingerandearl.com



B & W II

ASPHALT PAVING & SEALCOAT CO.

877-8362

P.O. Box 448 Forsyth, IL

We've Missed You!

Welcome Back to Mass



Stay connected to our faith community no matter where you are by signing up to get our bulletin delivered straight to your email!

www.ParishesOnline.com

WE'RE HIRING

AD SALES EXECUTIVES

BE YOURSELF. BRING YOUR PASSION. WORK WITH PURPOSE.

- Paid Training
- Some Travel
- Work-Life Balance
- Full-Time with Benefits
- Serve Your Community



Contact us at careers@4lpi.com
www.4lpi.com/careers




GROW YOUR BUSINESS WHILE SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL PARISH.



Purchase a bulletin ad today!