



St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

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

1st Sunday of Advent • November 28, 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

Be alert and attentive! The Lord is coming!

Staying awake can be a challenge, especially when we are exhausted. Life's demands have a way of zapping every last bit of energy out of us. When we are tired it affects us not only physically, but psychologically and spiritually as well.

Any human success requires vigilance. Opportunities and powerful moments of encounter can easily be missed when we are not attentive. It is all too easy today to live distracted and preoccupied lives. There is so much vying for our attention that it can be hard to be selective and really focus.

Caught up in this whirlwind of busyness and anxiety, we become tired and almost sleepwalk through life. Advent is a time to selectively focus. These beautiful four short weeks are a time to look backward and forward and be attentive to the human journey and God's revelation.

From the beginning of time, God has been seeking our attention. He constantly reminds us of the justice he desires to bring and the promise of his abiding unconditional love. Understanding and growing in these truths requires alertness so that we can be strengthened in our faith and prepared for whatever will come.

Ever hopeful

This is the thrust of Advent. We know Jesus came once; we believe, because of that, he comes again to bring the Reign and Kingdom of God to completion. We, now, are in between those two comings. How are we to live? Not dismayed or anxious. No, we are to be vigilant and strong, ever hopeful, full of right action, justice, and mercy. We stand erect because God does not abandon us.

- What dismays me about life today?
- What will I do to please God, trusting I am and we are not abandoned?
- What right actions, what works of justice and mercy



Awaiting a Savior

As we all know, the holiday season can quickly and sadly be filled with stress and different anxieties. From a quick Google search, I see that the American Psychological Association discovered that only 8% of people say they are happier during the holiday season. This means that 92% of the people they surveyed either feel the same as they do all year, or are more burdened and anxious during the holiday season.

The many things that cause extra stress this time of year can make it very hard to dive deep into the mystery of the incarnation. The complexity of our lives can make it difficult to appreciate the simplicity of God's arrival in our world as a baby.



Daniel McGrath
Seminarian

In our concern for material things, we can lose sight of the Holy Family's stark poverty. To remedy these pitfalls, many people find time each day to have some silence, and to read one of the many very good and helpful advent reflection books. Some time spent in quiet prayer each day is necessary. At the beginning of Advent, I would like to offer a brief reflection on the attitude of the church during this time.

As we enter into Advent this year, as in every year, we enter into a time of preparing for our savior. For hundreds of years before the coming of Jesus, God promised a savior to the people of Israel. We hear from the prophet Jeremiah, "The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah. In those days, in that time, I will raise up for David a just shoot; he shall do what is right and just in the land. In those days Judah shall be safe and Jerusalem shall dwell secure..." (Jer. 33:14-16).

The messiah, however, did not come right away. The Israelites knew their redeemer was coming, but when and how? More than anything else, this period of time was one of anticipation and waiting. As the people awaited a savior, you can imagine their hope

rising and falling with each uprising, each political upheaval. Will our messiah come now? Will God defeat the Persians? Will God defeat the Romans? God has promised us redemption, but through whom will this come? When will the messiah appear? Their prayer could have been that of the psalmist, "How long, Lord?" (Ps. 13).

The church during Advent is a church awaiting the coming of her king. True, the savior has come; Jesus Christ has redeemed His people. We now look forward to His second coming. This time in Advent serves to prepare for this second coming, and also to recall the time of waiting spent by the Jewish people before the coming of the Lord.

As we enter into this waiting, we look to Mary. She models the experience of the people of Israel in her own life. In her younger years, she learned of her people's hope for a messiah. She very likely heard the scriptures and the prophecies and reflected on them deeply in her heart (cf. Luke 2:19).

She was waiting in eager expectation for her God to fulfill His promise to His people. At the annunciation, and through her "yes," God fulfilled His promise in her. It was through her goodness and her trust in God's Word that she was able to "prepare the way" for her Lord in her heart. Jesus came into her poverty and into the life of the people of Israel.

Accordingly, we can have hope during this season that Jesus will come into our lives in a real way. He sees us in our stresses, our poverty, and our desire for peace and rest. With Mary, let us reflect on God's word and trust that he will come to us and bring the redemption he promises. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!



Advent is a season of waiting, patience and looking at our lives in preparation for remembering Christ's birth, but also His second coming. We need to take time during Advent to pray, celebrate the sacraments and read Scripture, meditation books, and

Advent-themed books. It is truly a beautiful season. Don't get caught up in the Christmas rush and miss the Advent season. Take the time to celebrate and feel the peace and joy of the Advent season. Blessed Advent! — Fr. Friedel

55+ Annual Christmas Luncheon

The annual 55+ Community catered Christmas celebration will be held on **Tuesday, Dec. 14** with Mass at 11:30 am in the Church, followed by our luncheon, light entertainment, and hopefully, a Christmas carol sing-a-long!

Since this event is catered, reservations should be submitted to the Church Office by Monday, Dec. 6. You can call to reserve your spot at 217-877-4404. All age 55 and over are welcome to attend!



Confession Schedule

St. Thomas:

Sundays: 9:15 am - 9:45 am

Tuesdays: 4:15 pm - 5 pm

OLOL:

Saturdays: 11 am - 12 pm

Thursdays: 12 pm - 1 pm



Rejoice in God's love and mercy! The Sacrament of Reconciliation allows you to experience the healing gift of God's love!

Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, November 28

10 am **Mary Kraus †**

Monday, November 29

5:15 pm – **Brian Ascheman †**

Tuesday, November 30

5:15 pm – **Jim Grant †**

Wednesday, December 1

5:15 pm – **Sanctity of Life**

Thursday, December 2

8:30 am – **Mary Kraus †**

Friday, December 3

No Mass

Saturday, December 4

No Mass

Sunday, December 5

10 am **Jane Welch †**

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



PRAYER REQUESTS

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.

Advent Activities

Christmas Card Lists

If you would like to mail Christmas Cards to our parishioners who are Homebound or in the Nursing Home, **a list is available in the back of church.** We will not be collecting the cards at church this year. Thank you!



Warm Hats, Socks, and

Mittens of all sizes can be brought in and placed on the Christmas Tree by **Sun., Dec. 12.** They will be dropped off at Catholic Charities and Oasis for distribution to adults and children in need. Thank you for your generosity.



Next Week:

St. Nicholas at Mass

Next weekend, at the Mass on the **Second Sunday of Advent, Dec. 5,** we'll welcome Saint Nicholas, the historic 4th-century saint and Greek Bishop of Myra. His feast day is Dec. 6. We'll learn about the true St. Nick and his radical love for Christ and his compassion for the poor. After Sunday Mass please join St. Nicholas in Angela Hall for a special treat and challenge for the children of all ages.



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!



***Holy Day on December 8:
Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary***

Wednesday, Dec. 8, is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a Holy Day of Obligation.

Mass schedule for the Solemnity are as follows:

Tuesday, Dec. 7 — 5:15p.m.
at St. Thomas the Apostle, and
6:30p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes

Wednesday, Dec. 8 — 6:30a.m.
at Our Lady of Lourdes and
5:15p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle

Please join us for one of the liturgies to celebrate our Blessed Mother.

Also on this day, **please remember in your prayers our sister parish in Comapa, Guatemala.** This is the patronal feast day for their parish, La Parroquia Inmaculada Concepción.



Lunch Bunch

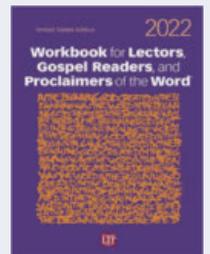
The St. Thomas Lunch Bunch will meet at the **New Moon Cafe**, 3755 E William Street Rd, Decatur, (near Footworks and Whit's End) on **Tues, December 7** at 11:15 a.m. Join us for food and conversation.

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.

New readings for Year C begin next Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent — on **November 28** (the Sunday after Thanksgiving).

Thank you for your service as proclaimers of the Word!



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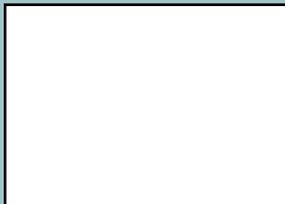
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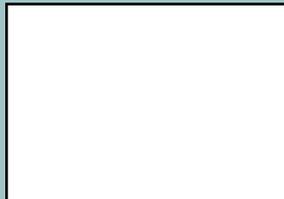


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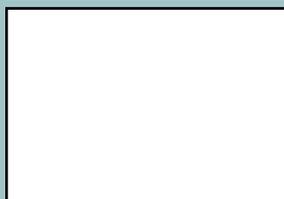
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