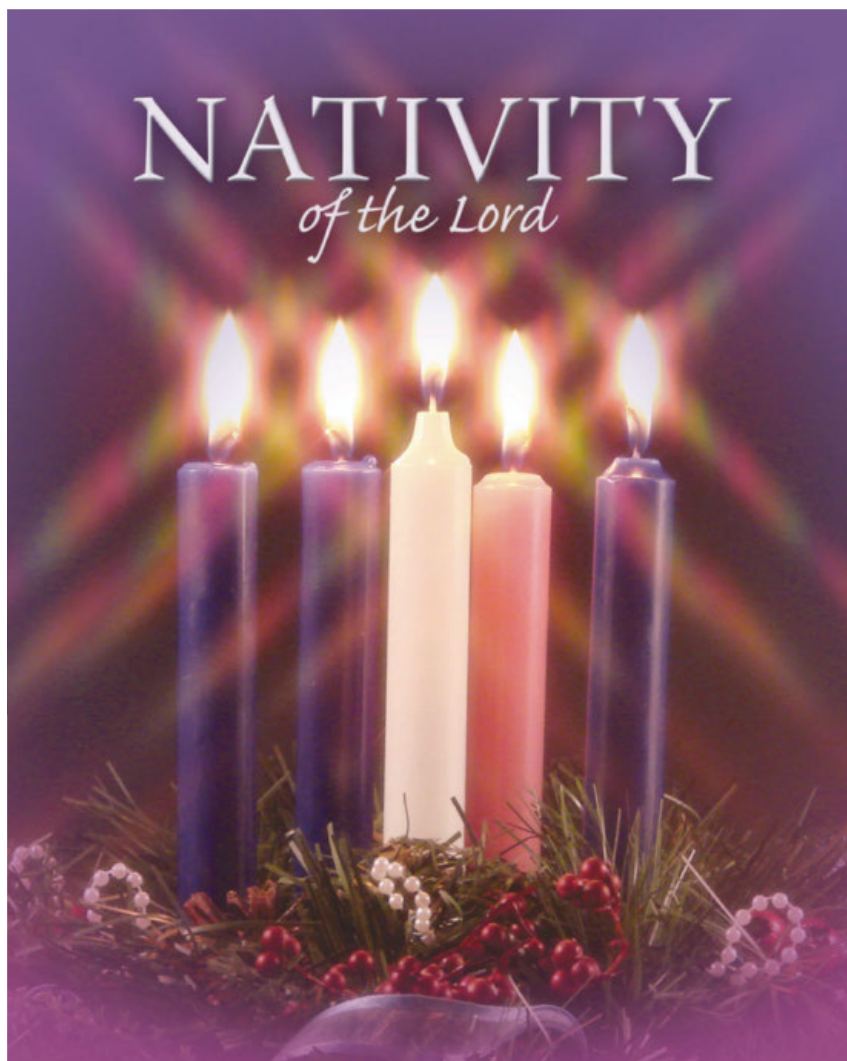




St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

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

Feast of the Holy Family • December 26, 2021



NATIVITY *of the Lord*

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

This Child Is Blessed

Every parent knows a child is a blessing who is filled with innocence and wonder and grace.

Grandparents know this, too, perhaps in renewed and deeper ways.

It is their hope that every child will grow strong, be wise, and be favored. Even the pre-teen Jesus astonishes and worries his parents as they fret over their child!

Those of us who are parents know this stress. But all of us, even us aged ones, are still children of God, dearly loved and called to be obedient.



Look to the Holy Family for inspiration.

While families come in all shapes and sizes and no two are the same, they all need a common focus and grounding. Families provide us with lessons about relationships and communication and the unconditional acceptance and love we so desperately crave. The center of every family is faith. We discover the windows to God Himself in His gifts of faith, hope, and love. Because our families struggle with weakness and sin, we have to come back to the Holy Family often for inspiration and guidance. In the bond of love that they shared, they clung to the anchor of God Himself and endured challenges far greater than many we will ever face.

Keep the Christmas Celebrations Going!

Merry Christmas! While the secular culture begins to put away their Christmas trees (probably because they're tired of seeing them since Halloween!), we Catholics—who have been immersed in our Advent preparations—just begin the season of Christmas. Like Easter, Christmas is one of those major solemnities in the life of the Church that we celebrate with an octave, or eight days of solemn celebration (meaning that December 26 through January 1, even though they carry their own feasts, all rank as high on the Church calendar as Christmas Day itself). But even at January 1, the Church's celebration of Christmas doesn't end. Christmas extends, liturgically speaking, to the Baptism of the Lord, which we commemorate this year on January 9. So I encourage you all to keep Christmas alive at least until then!

Historically speaking, though, the Christmas season was understood to last until 40 days after Christmas, on the feast of "Candlemas," or the Presentation of the Lord, which would have been the day when Jesus was first introduced to the Temple. So if you want to show the world what Christmas really means, then keep up your decorations (and your celebrations!) until then!

I'd like to share with you all a beautiful and ancient Christmas homily by St. Leo the Great (who died in 461). It's traditionally the second reading in the Office of Readings for Christmas Day (part of the "Liturgy of the Hours," prayers that priests and religious promise to pray worldwide for the Church). It's a beautiful reminder of why Christ came into our world—to save us!—and how we as Christians are called to receive that great gift! Enjoy!

"Dearly beloved, today our Savior is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.



Fr. Friedel
Pastor

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: Glory to God in the highest, and they proclaim peace to his people on earth as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvelous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, and when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ, so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ."

Keep spreading joy!

Fr. Friedel



	Collected	Budgeted
December 19	\$5,322.	\$5,000.

Year-to-Date: \$120,309. \$125,000.

Short/Ahead: -\$4,691.

R/M Donations	\$30.
Sister Parish Donations	\$30.
Christmas Offering	\$1,065.
Retired Religious	\$60.
Catholic Children's Home	\$31.
Tornado Relief Collection	\$1,264.

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/stthomasdecatu>



Sunday, December 26
 10 am **Mary Kraus †**

Monday, December 27
 5:15 pm -

Tuesday, December 28
 5:15 pm - **Austin Nichols †**

Wednesday, December 29
 5:15 pm -

Thursday, December 30
 5:15 pm -

Friday, December 31- New Year's Eve
 5 pm -

Saturday, January 1 - New Year's Day
 8:30 am -

Sunday, January 2 - Feast of the Holy Family
 10 am - **Bernie Custin †**

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**

Martha Wayne Cooper, Irene Crotser,
 Kevin Henry, Polly Hensley,
 Brian Hill, 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, **Shelia Wayne**,
 Norma Wilson, **Vern Wilson**, Tami Wittenauer,
 Rev. David Zimmerman



Blessed New Year!

2022 is here. We moved through much pain, suffering, and challenges in 2021 and finally the new year is upon us. Each year brings new hope, new opportunities, new changes. May we know

the blessings of the Lord in our lives as we begin this new year. The Lord will always be with us in every opportunity and change that may come our way.

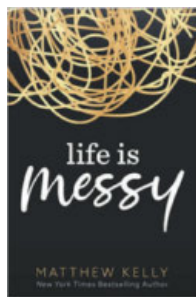
Today we celebrate the **Feast of the Holy Family**. The Feast presents the Holy Family as the model for all Christian families. Our family life becomes sanctified when we live the life of the Church within our homes.

This weekend during the Masses, we pray and ask God to grant each of our families — and our larger parish family — a special blessing, and to open our hearts to His grace to live our lives following the loving example of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus.

Happy Feast of the Holy Family, and a Blessed New Year to all!

A Special Christmas Gift for You!

Pick up a copy of Matthew Kelly's newest book, *Life is Messy*, from the table in the back of church. It's a special Christmas gift for you from **a generous parish family**.



Based on his own heart-wrenching personal journals, in *Life is Messy* Matthew Kelly shares how the worst three years of his life affected him, by exploring this question: Can someone who has been broken be healed and become more beautiful and more lovable than ever before?

The answer will fill you with hope. There has never been a more urgent need for us to attend to what is happening within us.



BLESSED CHRISTMAS

Next Saturday, the world celebrates the Birth of Christ. It is the celebration and remembrance of Christ coming into the world as man to bring all of us the promise of salvation.

What a Gift we have received! No one else could ever have given us this gift. The gift was given to us by a loving Father who wants all of His children to live with Him forever in heaven. So He sent His Son as a baby to bring that promise of salvation to all.

As we open gifts on Christmas we will receive many different things from many different people. Always Remember—This day is being celebrated because of the Birth of Christ.

We as Christians always need to keep this in mind. No other gift we will ever receive is as great as the gift we remember and celebrate today.

Mary, the Holy Mother of God

If you are planning your New Year's schedule, here is the Mass schedule:

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
(Not a Holy Day of Obligation this year)

Friday, Dec. 31, New Year's Eve

- 6:30 pm at OLOL

There is no 5:15 p.m. Mass at St. Thomas

Saturday, Jan. 1, New Year's Day

- 8:30 a.m. St. Thomas
- 9 a.m. at OLOL
- 11:30 am at OLOL (in Spanish)

Regular Saturday Evening and Sunday Mass Schedule at OLOL and St. Thomas on Jan. 1/2



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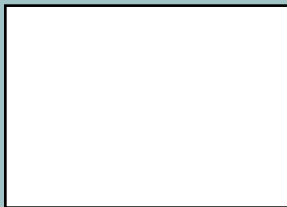
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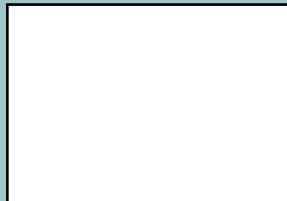


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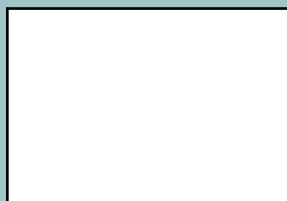
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