



St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

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

2nd Sunday of Lent • March 13, 2022



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

Reflecting on Transfiguration

Lent is not an end. It is a necessary transition, as it is every year, to the glory of life in Christ – in which we already share in some incomplete way. These dazzling white clothes of Jesus recall our own baptismal garments in which we were clothed in him. They remind us to imitate him in all we think and do and say.

- How does the glory of Christ dazzle me to reflect on _____?
- How does my Baptism strengthen me to do _____?
- To use Saint Paul's words, how will I stand firm in the Lord?

Creating some sacred space in our lives

While we have to be cognizant of our societal and personal responsibilities in this world, we can never lose sight of where our true citizenship lies — heaven. When we become too immersed in earthly things and too preoccupied with our temporal responsibilities, we can actually become numb to our faith. Becoming ambivalent about our faith, our belief in Jesus Christ and the promises of heaven become more a source of agitation rather than a source of promise and hope.

Jesus showed his disciples a glimpse of this destiny when he was transfigured before their eyes. In fact, Peter was so caught up in the brilliance, awe, and sacredness of these fleeting moments that he wanted to extend them as long as possible. Wonderful things happen when we leave our illusions and discover something that is true.

This is why creating some sacred space in our lives for reflection, prayer, renewal, refreshment, centering ourselves, and disconnecting from the noise is so important. It shows us how false and shallow our lives can be and what is really of importance. Do you create some kind of sacred space in your life? Lent is a perfect time to do so.



What Penance Is

Catholics sometimes get a bit of a bad reputation around town for being morose or a bit heavy-handed—always insisting that people do penance, guilting (or worse, shaming) people into abiding by the commandments of God, not allowing this and not allowing that... All that of course comes from a misunderstanding of the Church’s theology (what we believe about God) and anthropology (what we believe about the human person). I won’t even attempt to correct all of it in one bulletin article, but there’s something for our Lenten mindsets that I think would be pertinent to address.



Fr. Friedel,
Pastor

Penance, simply put, is not a punishment. Fasting is not—or at least shouldn’t be—depriving ourselves of good things just because some big, mean god in the sky makes us. Penance is rather the response of a joyful and grateful heart.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) talks about two types of penance: interior and exterior. Interior penance is conversion—it’s the turning of our hearts away from sin and toward God, trying to amend our lives as much as we can because of the hope that we have that God is merciful and will give us the grace to continue to grow in love and relationship with Him. Exterior acts of penance are what most of us probably think of: fasting, prayer, and almsgiving—the business of Lent. These are—or again, should be—acts that we perform out of our interior penance or conversion, outward manifestations of an inward reality. In other words, as I like to put it, it’s saying with our bodies what we believe with our souls.

What penance is decidedly not is an attempt to earn God’s grace. Grace is always and everywhere the free gift of God. God loves us freely and without coercion, and there is quite simply nothing that we can do EVER to change that, either in a positive or negative direction. God is unchanging, after all, so

His estimation of us does not change because we did or did not do something. Certainly, though, we can choose to receive or close ourselves off to that grace, to demonstrate our acceptance of that grace by our acts of charity and penitence or our rejection of that love by acts of sin.

Some of you may be thinking: wait, don’t we get assigned a penance after confession precisely to “make up for” our sins? Yes! That’s another sense of the word penance—but here again, it’s not a punishment for the sins we’ve done or even a way to earn the forgiveness that we’ve already received. The penance assigned to us in the confessional is a way of making “satisfaction” for our sins. CCC §1459 puts it this way: “Absolution takes away sin, but it does not remedy the disorders sin has caused [to the sinner, or his/her relationship to God and neighbor].” Penance here is again a response to (not a cause for) our forgiveness, an attempt to rectify the damage, not to satisfy God or convince Him that we’re worthy of the gift. We receive forgiveness for free... but our response, in gratitude and joy, is to do something to demonstrate our reception of that grace and to make up, in sorrow, for the damage that our sin has caused in the world.

So our penances, Lenten or otherwise, shouldn’t be viewed as punishments for sin—they’re not really something morose or guilt-ridden at all. They are a participation in the realm of grace with the free and undeserved gift of God. They are an acknowledgement with our bodies that we want to receive this grace. It’s our free offering back to God, acknowledging that we are weak and that we are prone to turning away from Him. But by these penances, we speak our desire to live not in rebellion to His goodness, but in humble acceptance of His manifold goodness. our affliction.

Keep spreading joy!

Fr. Friedel

Host the Vocations Crucifix

Please sign up today! The church needs your prayer. The signup sheet is on a table in the gathering area of church. Families and individuals are encouraged to sign up to host the Vocations Crucifix and pray for the week. God bless you!





	Collected	Budgeted
March 6	\$5,560.	\$5,000.
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Year-to-Date:	\$179,302.	\$180,000.
Short/Ahead:	- \$698.	
R/M Donations		\$130.
Sister Parish Donations		\$305.
Ash Wednesday		\$525.
Assistance to the Needy		\$120.
Catholic Charities		\$105.
Church of Central/Eastern Europe		\$220.
Catholic Relief Services		\$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:



- Sunday, March 13
10 am – **Pat Hayes †**

- Monday, March 14
5:15 pm – **Elmer and Alice Rosentretter †**
- Tuesday, March 15
No Mass – Diocesan Priests’ Spring Retreat
- Wednesday, March 16
5:15 pm – **James Hertel**
- Thursday, March 17
5:15 pm – **Arnold Metzger †**
- Friday, March 18
No Mass
- Saturday, March 19
No Mass
- Sunday, March 20
10 am – **Jerry and Marge Hertel, Janet and Jerry Hill, and Peter Schumacher †**

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

- Isabelle Blakeman, Irene Crotser, Kevin Henry, Polly Hensley, Jim Hertel, 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, Carolyn Thorpe, Roz Sandage, Brenda Sullivan, Virginia Thompson, JoAn Wayne, Pete Wayne, Vern Wilson, Tami Wittenauer

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

Prayer Shawls Are Available

Do you know someone who is ill or grieving a loss? Perhaps they would enjoy the comfort of a prayer shawl that was created by women of the Prayer Shawl



Group. The shawls have been blessed at Mass. Call Deacon Kevin at the parish office or speak to him after Mass to arrange to pick out a prayer shawl for someone.

Reporting Allegations of Child

Sexual Abuse To report allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by clergy or other church personnel—even if it is in the past—individuals are encouraged to call the Diocese's Child Abuse Reporting and Investigation number at 217.321.1155. Individuals may also contact Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Child Abuse Hotline at 1.800.25.ABUSE.

PRAYERS FOR THE UKRAINE

Pope Francis has called for us to pray for those suffering the effects of war. So many people are affected by this invasion. The envelope in your packet for aid to central and eastern Europe will benefit those in need from the Ukraine. The Holy Father has asked the faithful to pray the Rosary or other prayers each day for peace.

Your prayers and financial help is needed in Ukraine where there are already more than 2.9 million people in need of assistance. There is great risk of additional suffering both within Ukraine and for those who may flee to neighboring countries for safety. **Catholic Relief Services** and its partners need immediate support to meet both ongoing needs, as well as those related to families forced to flee their homes as the situation intensifies.

CRS and Caritas partners on the ground are preparing across Ukraine and in bordering countries, ready to provide safe shelter, hot meals, hygiene supplies, transport to safe areas, counseling support and more.

Please visit <https://support.crs.org> to help.



Lenten Schedule

OLPI

Stations of the Cross

Fridays at 3pm at St. Thomas, 5:30pm at OLOL

Reconciliation

St. Thomas: Sunday 9:15 am, Tuesday 4:15 pm

OLOL: Thursday at 12pm, Saturday at 11am

Fish Frys

OLOL: March 11, 18, and 25 from 5-7pm

Holy Family: April 1, Call 217-423-6223

Decatur Wide Penance Service

March 20 at 2pm at Holy Family

Candlelight Adoration at OLOL

March 27 at 7pm

PASSION NARRATIVES

Presented by Fr. Friedel

OLOL on March 24, 31, April 7 at 7pm

STATIONS of THE CROSS at ST. THOMAS

Fridays at 3pm

March 11 Praying with Saint Theresa of Calcutta

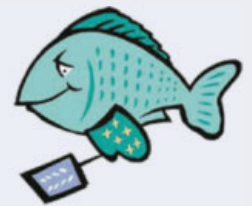
March 18 Praying the Stations for Older Adults

Our Lady of Lourdes

Lenten Fish Fry

Our Lady of Lourdes school gym — Mar. 11, 18, and 25, from 5-7 pm.

Call orders in at 4:30pm to 877-4408. Take out and dine in.



Catfish, Baked Cod, or Walleye, Shrimp Dinner \$10. includes: French fries or baked potato, coleslaw, bread and soft drink or tea. Children's meals: walleye or hot dog, fries, and soft drink, \$5.

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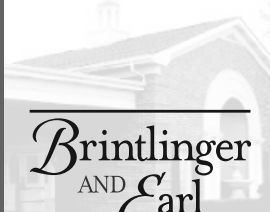


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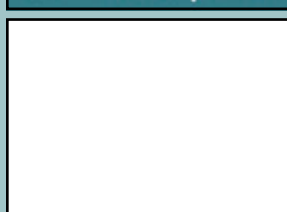
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