

Third Sunday of Advent • December 11, 2022



St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

2160 North Edward Decatur, IL 62526

(217) 877-4146

StThomasDecatur@gmail.com



LITURGY SCHEDULE

Weekends

Sunday 10 am

Weekdays

Monday-Thursday 8:15 am

Reconciliation

Sundays: 9:15 - 9:45 am

Wednesdays: 7:30 - 8:10 am

Eucharistic Adoration

First Friday from 9 am - 5 pm

Decatur Catholic Radio

WDCR 88.9/96.5

CONTEMPLATE

Look to what God can make right!

We can often feel parched, desolate, lifeless, and dark. Even though we still engage in the business and demands of life, we find ourselves somewhat detached, disengaged, and removed. We lack joy, wonder, awe, and zest.

Rather than being an experience of freedom and excitement, life holds us captive. We are tethered to systems, agendas, protocols, regulations, and expectations that go against the grain of what it means to be God's child. We find ourselves in a desert.

Jesus came to release us from all of this negativity and desolation. John the Baptist announced the arrival of the One who embodies healing, reconciliation, freedom, and life. Stop complaining about what you don't have.

All times and seasons of our spiritual and liturgical lives lead us to three virtues: faith, hope and love. Stop complaining about what is wrong and look to what God can make right!

Prepare for the arrival of the remedy to life's despair. Be strong, fear not! Christ will save us from life's distortions, illusions, and disappointments. Be patient. With proper time and care, all will be well.

What Gives You Joy?

Joy is stumbled upon when we see our newly born child for the first time, get caught up in the vastness of a mountain landscape, or are lovingly present with someone when they are vulnerable and in need.

Did you know that all authentic, profound, and memorable moments of joy mirror the eternal joy we desire from God?

You will know moments of true joy by paying attention to your response to the experience. You will find yourself rejoicing and saying thank you.



A WORD FROM FR. PETER

Serving Our Parish Family

St. Thomas the Apostle Church is our parish. We have no other place to call "our church" but St. Thomas. So, we must do whatever we can to protect it. How?

Churches are not-for-profit organizations and faith communities where people are welcomed irrespective of their skills, talents, and financial contributions. Because of this, churches thrive with their members' volunteer work and generous support. When church members begin to withdraw their support (financial contributions and volunteer work) for their church, the church begins to die slowly. Sometimes this happens directly or indirectly. Directly when people leave their church for other churches or stay but decide not to give any support. Indirectly when members begin to be less generous with their time, skills, and contributions.



Fr. Peter Chineke,
*Parochial
Administrator*

Our parish is getting older every day. We have a few young people. We also have had fewer parish activities over the years for many pastoral and practical reasons. Because of these reasons, there have been speculations that the diocese is about to close our dear St. Thomas.

As your priest now and having met our bishop many times since he sent me to you four months ago, I want to assure you that no one is closing our parish. Stop the speculations. Stop the rumors. When you hear them, ignore them!

All I want you to do is **BE GOOD STEWARDS OF YOUR GIFTS AND TALENTS!** Each of us has something to offer. And to keep our parish open, we must offer whatever we have – including volunteer work.

Right now, we need people to serve our parish as ushers, altar servers, choir members, lectors, and homebound and nursing home communion ministers. We also need volunteers for maintenance works for the church and rectory.

I am available to talk with you anytime about any of these opportunities. I know we all can help because we all have something to offer. So, let me know how you might want to help.

ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. **THIS SUNDAY:** St. Thomas Parish Day of **Recollection Sunday** 12/11 at 4:00 pm
2. **City-Wide Confessions** at St. Patrick's Church on Sunday 12/18 at 2:00PM (all Decatur priests).

Lunch Bunch

The St. Thomas Lunch Bunch will meet at **Pop's Place on Tues, Dec. 13** at 11:15 a.m., 4335 W Main St, Decatur. Join us for food and conversation!



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



We are so grateful to our parish family for the prayers, food, cards, phone calls, texts and visits after the passing of our wonderful mother, Polly Hensley. Your kind words of support have helped immensely during this sad time. Thank you.

— *Kent Hensley, Barb Preston, and Vickie York*

Dolores "Polly" Hensley (94), died on Nov. 24, at Hickory Point Christian Village. She and her late husband Norm were longtime St. Thomas Parishioners.

May God shower her family with His peace and comfort, and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.



Parish Giving

	Collected	Budgeted
December 4	\$10,247.	\$5,000.

Year-to-Date:	\$115,211.	\$115,000.
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Short/Ahead:	211.	
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R/M Donations.....	\$230.
Sister Parish Donations	\$305.
Christmas Flowers.....	\$10.
Christmas Donation	\$65.
Christmas Basket Donation.....	\$1,995.
Retired Religious.....	270.
Catholic Children's Home	\$115.

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.

Bill Pay is offered through many banks. You can schedule a weekly or monthly payment that comes from your checking account.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, December 11
10 am – **Norma Wilson †**

Monday, December 12
8:15 am – **Isabelle Blakeman †**

Tuesday, December 13
8:15 am – **Polly Hensley †**

Wednesday, December 14
8:15 am – **Lenore “Shug” Lee †**

Thursday, December 15
8:15 am – **Guy Gard Jr. †**

Friday, December 16
No Mass

Saturday, December 17
No Mass

Sunday, December 18
10 am – **Everette and Marie Ryan †**

Parish Office

Rev. Peter Chineke, Parochial Administrator
pchineke@dio.org (217) 877-4146, ext. 20

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**

Betty Althoff, Rachel Flick,
Kevin Henry, Jim Hertel, **Darlene**,
Ann-Marie Hillyer, Sawyer Dale Hunter,
Anonymous, Amber Johnson, Edwin Jones,
Patricia Jones, Kelly McLean, Trey McLean,
Lucia Molloy, Christina Mooney, Lucia Mounce,
Rev. Msgr. James O’Shea, Joe Perry,
Andy Richards, Kay Russell, Carolyn Thorpe,
Roz Sandage, Ed Schanuel, Ron Shinall,
Brenda Sullivan, Virginia Thompson, JoAn Wayne,
Pete Wayne, and Tami Wittenauer

Christmas and New Year's Mass Schedule

If you are planning your Christmas and New Year's schedule...



Mass for Christmas Eve

Sat., Dec. 24 — 5 p.m.

Mass for Christmas Day

Sun., Dec. 25 — 10 a.m.

Mass for New Year's Day

Sun., Jan. 1 — 10 a.m. — Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Host the Vocations Crucifix

Praying for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life is a great way to pray together as a family during the week. Why not sign up to host the Vocations Crucifix in your home for a week in the back of church.

The Knights of Columbus Council 577 Sunday Breakfast

Please join us on **Sunday December 11** from 8:30am until Noon at the KC Hall located at 520 E. North St. behind St. Patrick Church. The **All You Can Eat** Menu will consist of Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Sausage, Pancakes, Biscuits & Gravy, Hashbrowns with Coffee, Orange Juice & Milk. Adults \$10, Children under 12 \$5 and free for children 5 and under. No Carry Outs or To Go Orders.



The Knights of Columbus Council 11582 — Mt. Zion Breakfast with Santa

Council 11582 will be holding an **All You Can Eat** Pancake & Sausage Breakfast with Santa on **Saturday, Dec. 10th**. Serving times will be from 7:00am to 11:00am in Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Parish Hall. Everyone is invited. Adults \$6, Children 5-12 \$3 and free for children 5 and under.



Advent Activities

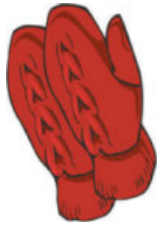
THIS WEEKEND: **Traditional Blessing of the Baby Jesus Figurines**



This Sunday, Dec. 11, we celebrate the beautiful tradition of the Blessing of the Christ Child figurines that will be placed in the nativity sets in our families' homes. **Please bring the Christ Child** from your home nativity set and have it blessed at the end of Sunday Mass.

THIS WEEKEND: **Warm Hats, Socks, and Mittens**

of all sizes can be brought in and placed on the Christmas Tree by **Sun., Dec. 11.** They will be dropped off at Catholic Charities and Oasis for distribution to adults and children in need. Thank you for your generosity.



BRING NEXT SUNDAY **Christmas Cards for Homebound**

If you would like to send Christmas Cards to our parishioners who are Homebound or in the Nursing Home, **a list is available in the back of church.** You can place them by **NEXT Sun., Dec. 18** in the Christmas bag with the person's name on the table in the back of church. Thank you!



Confession Schedule

St. Thomas Church:

Sundays: 9:15 - 9:45 am

Wednesdays: 7:30 - 8:10 a.m.

Citywide Penance Service:

St. Patrick Catholic Church

December 18 at 2 p.m.

5 priests will be available for confessions



Rejoice in God's love and mercy!

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