

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time • July 16, 2023



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

Decatur Catholic Radio

WDCR 88.9/96.5

SCHEDULE CHANGE

No Friday Masses

There will not be Friday morning Masses or First Friday all-day Eucharistic Adoration through Friday, July 28. Fr. Peter will be gone for his studies. Father has made arrangements for priests to cover our Sunday and weekday Masses until he returns.

MAIL for FR. PETER

Fr. Peter's Summer Address in Washington, DC:

Rev. Peter Chineke

Marian Scholasticate

3885 Harewood Road, NE

Washington, DC 20017

Mission Appeal for the Archdiocese of Kampala in Uganda this Weekend

This Sunday, **Fr. Dennis Kasule**, from the Archdiocese of Kampala, Uganda, East Africa will visit us to ask for your prayers and financial support for the mission work of the Archdiocese. Kampala is one of the 19 dioceses in Uganda, East Africa, covering 3,644 square kilometers. It has a total population of 4.9 million people, and 1.9 million (41%) are Catholics.

Fr. Dennis says that they are so grateful for your gracious and generous support for the Archdiocese. He looks forward to praying with us and making an appeal on behalf of the Archdiocese of Kampala.

The parishes in rural areas are not self-sufficient, and there is a need for funds to ensure a priests' monthly stipend. Many rectories need repair and renovation to install running water and sanitary facilities.



A WORD FROM FR. PETER

Our Dear St. Thomas Church – TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

In his private reflections (or soliloquies, if you prefer) on human life's painful and miserable nature, Mr. William Shakespeare exclaimed in utter despondency: TO BE OR NOT TO BE! In that so-called "nunnery scene" of his Hamlet, England's greatest poet of all time left the world with a phrase that has become recurrent in many movies, plays, and other works of art worldwide for over four centuries.

Since last week after Deacon Kevin announced his retirement from ministry at St. Thomas, this famous line in Shakespeare's Hamlet has appeared in various forms in the minds and hearts of many of our St. Thomas parishioners. Many of us are shocked at the announcement. Some are disappointed. Others are angry. Still, a good number of our parishioners possibly are shocked, disappointed, and angry at the same time. All these emotions are justifiable for many reasons.

Since his ordination as a deacon for our diocese in 2007, Deacon Kevin has been an essential part of St. Thomas parish. He has served St. Thomas as a deacon for all of this time and as a parish staff for some of it. For the most part, he has been a point of stability for the parish during many transitions from one priest to another – most of these times, with priests who do not reside at St Thomas. For these and many other reasons, some of us have developed excellent and cordial relationships with him as a father, friend, spiritual guide, and pastoral minister.

While I was still grappling with the reality of the retirement letter Deacon Kevin sent to Bishop Paprocki, I also received news about Vern Wilson's decision to retire alongside Deacon Kevin on July 28. For these two essential pillars of our St. Thomas parish to be retiring soon, and while I am still away for my summer studies, there is a reason to think or say – ST. THOMAS CHURCH, TO BE OR NOT TO BE?



Fr. Peter Chineke,
*Parochial
Administrator*

However, for those of us, who are shocked, disappointed, angry, or all the above, I encourage us to remember that our gaze and trust should remain on the person of Christ. Not on any person – deacon, priest, or bishop. And for those still wondering if St. Thomas is to be or not to be, I will refer you to one of the most common phrases in the scriptures – "DO NOT BE AFRAID." For those championing or spreading the rumor that the parish is about to be closed, I encourage you to desist from such false and harmful speculations.

My dear parishioners, please pray for Deacon Kevin and wish him well. He has labored for the Lord in our parish. May God reward him abundantly, especially as he retires to care for his health. Pray also for Vern Wilson, who has given so much of his time to St. Thomas in volunteer work as a maintenance manager for years. May God bless these men with many graces. Amen.


Fr. Peter

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!

St. Jude's Novena

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved, and preserved throughout the world now and forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us.
St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us.
St. Jude, help of the hopeless, pray for us. I will never forget thy graces and favors you obtain for me and I will do my utmost to spread devotion to you.

Pray an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.
Say this prayer 9 times a day for 9 days.

Thank you, St. Jude, for Prayers Answered.

Parish Giving

	Collected	Budgeted
July 2	\$4,110 .	\$5,000.
June 9	\$5,864 .	\$5,000.
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Year-to-Date:	\$9,974.	\$10,000.
Short/Ahead:	- \$26.	

R/M Donations \$340.
 Sister Parish Donations \$289.

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. Your bank then mails a check to the parish. If interested, you might speak to your bank about the option.

Online giving is also available:
<https://parishgiving.dio.org/stthomasdecaturn>

Mass Intentions for the Week

- Sunday, July 16
10 am – **Matthew Kirby †**
- Monday, July 17
8:15 am – **Eva “Happy” Luckenbill †**
- Tuesday, July 18
8:15 am – COMMUNION SERVICE
- Wednesday, July 19
8:15 am – **Pat Hayes †**
- Thursday, July 20
8:15 am – **Herb Kipp †**
- Friday, July 21
No Mass
- Saturday, July 22
No Mass
- Sunday, July 23
10 am – **Norman Hensley †**

† *Deceased*

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

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,, Ann-Marie Hillyer, Edwin Jones, Patricia Jones, Kelly McLean, Trey McLean, Lucia Molloy, Christina Mooney, Lucia Mounce, Tom Mounce, Rev. Msgr. James O’Shea, Joe Perry, Art Richard, Kay Russell, Roz Sandage, Libby Spainhour, Rev. Jason Stone, Ed Schanuel, Ron Shinall, Brenda Sullivan, JoAn Wayne, Pete Wayne, Jan Vandercar, and Tami Wittenauer

FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

Marriage Tip this Week:

Your family is a community. This means that when one person changes a behavior – for good or for ill – it impacts everyone. If you smile, do a favor, give a compliment, it lifts everyone’s spirits.

Fr. O’Shea’s Address

Fr. O’Shea has moved into assisted living in Springfield. He would love to hear from you, I’m sure. Let’s also continue to pray for him.

Rev. Msgr. James O’Shea
Illinois Presbyterian Home Communities
2005 West Lawrence Ave.
Springfield, IL 62704

Save the Date for Diocesan-Wide Celebration of the Eucharist

To celebrate the Year of the Eucharist and the 100th anniversary of the transfer of the See city of our diocese from Alton to Springfield, a Eucharistic Congress is taking place Saturday, October 28 at the BOS Center in Springfield.

This event will include talks from nationally recognized Catholic speakers, adoration, confession, and Mass. Stay tuned for how to get free tickets. There will be no Masses at parishes on Saturday, Oct. 28. You’re wanted in Springfield!

St. Thomas Parish has been given 25 tickets for our parishioners for the Eucharistic Congress in Springfield at the BOS Center on October 28.

These are available on a first come first served basis. Please contact the Parish Office to reserve your tickets. Please be prepared to share your name, email address, mobile phone number, primary language and any disabilities that may need accommodations.

A Note from Deacon Kevin

I announced last weekend after Mass that after a lot of reflection and prayer, I'll be retiring from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish at the end of July. Although this decision wasn't an easy one, I'm convinced it's the right step forward for my health.



It's been an absolute joy serving with you and being part of your lives in such special ways over the past 16 years. I've celebrated baptisms, joined you in matrimony, mourned at funerals, and witnessed countless other beautiful moments.

Each one has touched my heart deeply and left a lasting impression. I'm so grateful to all of you for allowing me to be a part of your spiritual journeys.

Our faith brings us together, like a big extended family. We learn from each other, support one another, and even in challenging times, we find solace together. Your trust and unwavering support for me have been just amazing.

Remember, our church extends beyond any one individual. It's a robust, loving community anchored in God's love. It's about all of us together, our shared faith, and God's love. I will always cherish the bonds we've formed, and I look forward to seeing how God continues to work in and through this incredible community.

Thank you for everything, my friends. Keep me in your prayers as I start this new chapter, and know you'll always be in mine.

Wishing you God's abundant grace and peace.

In His Love,

Deacon Kevin



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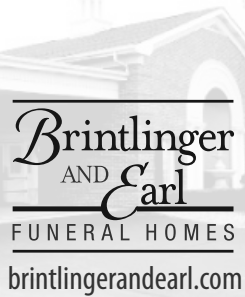
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