

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time • July 30, 2023



St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

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



17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

"Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous." - Mt 13:49-51

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. ©LPI

Like a Net Cast Into the Sea

The parable of the net cast into the sea teaches that the separation of the good from the wicked will be God's work, at the end of time. Often, we mistakenly assume this task is ours to undertake during our lives. This tendency leads us to make premature judgments about others, determining who is good or bad based on our limited perspective. Unfortunately, we tend to see the good in ourselves more easily than in others and the faults in others more readily than our own. Most importantly, we may overlook the potential for positive change in people with the help of God.

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

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

Following Christ and attaining the kingdom of heaven is of utmost value, to the point where one should be willing to give up everything they have in order to possess it.

Are we ready to give it all up to have a share of the Kingdom of God?

At the end of our lives, let us hope we can say truthfully that we sold all we had in order to purchase the field which contained the great treasure.



A WORD FROM FR. PETER

Holy Friendship – Jesus and the Siblings from Bethany

Yesterday, Saturday, July 29th, we celebrated the feast of the three siblings – Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Many of us, even those who rarely read or listen to the bible, know the story of these siblings and how their friendship with Jesus attracted an extraordinary miracle in the little village of Bethany. That miracle, though it happened in a little remote village, was one of the major miracles of Jesus and the only one that occurred among his personal friends.

One of the brightest minds the Church ever produced, St. Thomas Aquinas, described friendship as the unselfish, constant, and effective desire and effort to do good for another. Aquinas further explained that friendship is rooted in charity because charity, one of the three greatest/theological virtues, is the Holy Spirit dwelling in a person's heart. In other words, only the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person guarantees the virtue of charity. When this charity is present, a person can enter a genuine friendship with another.

In the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead in John 11:1-44, there abound loyalty, compassion, and empathy mutually between Jesus and his friends from Bethany. Jesus' unselfish, constant, and effective desire and effort to do good for his friends was unquestionable. Again, in Luke 10:38-42, we see these siblings, each in their best means, rendering unselfish acts of love to Jesus. The friendship of Jesus and Mary and Martha, with their brother Lazarus, is a holy friendship and a model of friendship for us all. In holy friendships, we look out for the good of our friends – help them, pray for them, and show them the love and affection they need when needed.

However, one of our more common human tendencies in friendships is making our friends hate whom we hate and love whom we love. As natural as this can be, it is unholy and uncharacteristic of the friendship we see between



Fr. Peter Chineke,
*Parochial
Administrator*

Jesus and the siblings from Bethany. Doing this and instigating lousy energy in our friends' hearts and minds against our enemies is simply a disservice to our friends. When we do such, we both exhibit unchristian attitudes and indirectly destroy our friends intentionally or unintentionally. The friendship that Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus had with Jesus was one of mutual love and respect where both parties genuinely and unselfishly desire and work towards the good of their friends.

May Christ inspire and instill the courage and grace to cultivate holy friendships as his sons and daughters, and may his friends from Bethany intercede for us. 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!



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

G U A T E M A L A



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 23	\$2,279.	\$5,000.
Year-to-Date:	\$16,397.	\$20,000.
Short/Ahead:	- \$3,603.	
R/M Donations	\$15.	
Sister Parish Donations	\$10.	
Missionary Cooperative - Uganda	\$1,433.	

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/stthomasdecatu>

Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, July 30
 10 am – **Margaret Hynen †**

Monday, July 31
 8:15 am – **Sister Joanne**

Tuesday, August 1
 8:15 am – **Juanita Rasgado**

Wednesday, August 2
 8:15 am – **Jim Ankrom †**

Thursday, August 3
 8:15 am – **Fr. Rick Weltin**

Friday, August 4
No Mass

Saturday, August 5
No Mass

Sunday, August 6
 10 am – **Cynthia Harding †**

† *Deceased*

PARISH OFFICE

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

Rev. Richard Weltin, Pastor Emeritus

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

Dear Friends and Beloved Parishioners,

To my St. Thomas family,
I extend my warmest
thanks for the outpouring
of support, love, and well
wishes showered upon me
last Sunday upon my
retirement. Your kind



words, thoughtful cards, and heartfelt prayers
have touched my soul deeply. The sincerity with
which you expressed your gratitude and good
wishes has truly moved me and reaffirmed the
incredible bond we share as a faith community.

It has been an immense privilege and honor to
serve as Deacon at St. Thomas. The love and
support I have received throughout my tenure
have been priceless and have made every
moment of my service truly rewarding. Though
my time here has come to a close, please know
that you will all remain in my thoughts and
prayers.

May our paths continue to cross, and may the
love of our Lord continue to bind us together as
a community united in faith.

With heartfelt gratitude and abundant blessings,
I remain, yours in Christ,

Deacon Kevin

Tickets Available Now 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. There will be no Masses
at parishes on Saturday, Oct. 28. You're wanted
in Springfield!

**Please contact the Parish Office to reserve
your tickets.** St. Thomas Parish has been
given 25 tickets for our parishioners for the
Eucharistic Congress in Springfield at the
BOS Center on October 28.

Celebrating Vern's Remarkable Legacy

With hearts filled with deep gratitude, we honor **Vern Wilson**, a true pillar of our parish, as he embarks on a well-deserved retirement after an awe-inspiring decade as our volunteer maintenance director and one of the devoted guardians of our sacred space.



Vern's unwavering dedication, incredible stamina, meticulous attention to detail and selfless service are truly appreciated by our church community. His presence has been a source of comfort and reassurance for our parish family.

Vern's contributions extend beyond the realm of maintenance. For 15 years, he has shared his faith with our parish family, portraying the historical Bishop Nicholas of Myra on the first Sunday of December, bringing to life the inspiring example of St. Nicholas. Through his portrayal, Vern has modeled the values of compassion, generosity, and love for others, embodying the true spirit of the season, and of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

As Vern steps into retirement, may his next phase be filled with well-deserved rest, happiness, and the knowledge that his selfless and humble contributions have left an enduring mark on our hearts and our community.

With sincere gratitude and love,

Your St. Thomas Parish Family

Request a Mass Intention

If you would like to have a weekday or weekend Mass offered for a deceased loved one or friend, or for another intention, please call the **parish office at 877-4146.**



The typical offering for a Mass intention is \$10. Mass Intention Envelopes are now available on the table with the Rosaries in the back of the church.



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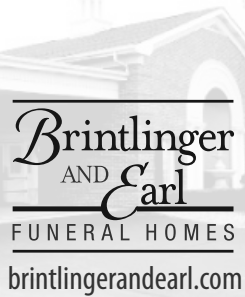
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