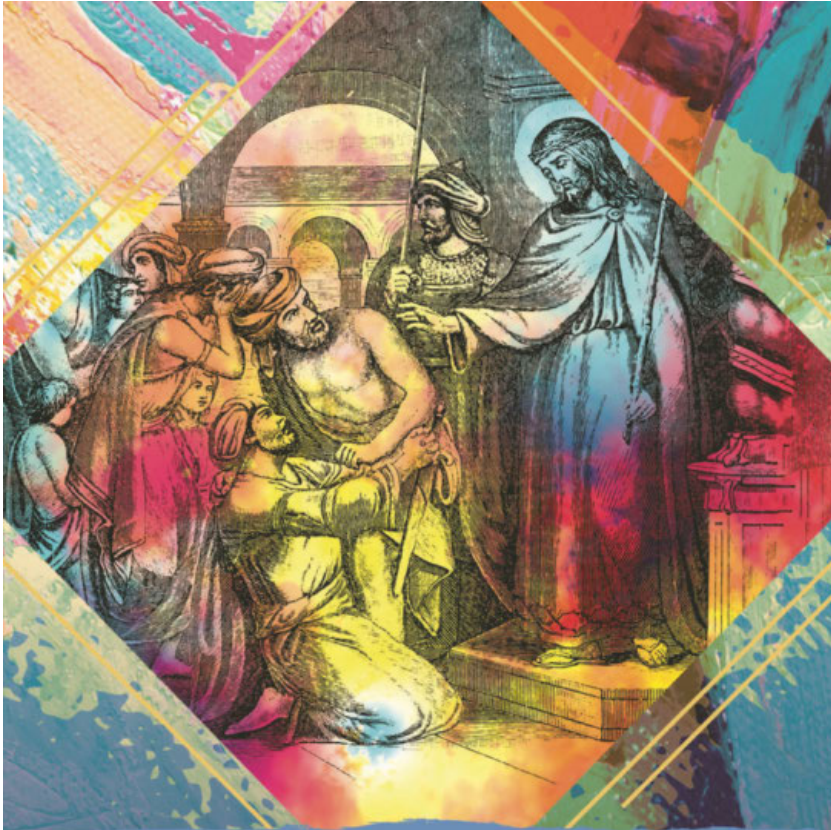




St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

2160 North Edward Decatur, IL 62526 (217) 877-4146 stthomasdecatur@dio.org



24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

“Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?”
- Mt 18:33-35

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

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Life is not always easy on us and it can be hard to figure out the next step to take in our journey. I think of the song, “Should I Stay, or Should I Go,” as a mantra for many times in my life.

Discerning the will of God is not easy either. Rarely do we understand God’s calling clearly at first. God’s calling is always more easily discerned within a community of faithful disciples. What gifts or talents are needed for the task at hand? Where do I fit best into God’s plan? Where is God leading me? No one should have to decide the answers to these questions alone. We need to always lean on the Body of Christ to help us see the path that God has laid before us. Without a little help along the journey, over time we might find ourselves stuck in the same place where we started.

—Tracy Earl Welliver

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Weekends

Sunday 10 am

Weekdays

Monday - Friday 8:15 am

Reconciliation

Sundays: 9:15 - 9:50 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

When I was in second grade, my prized possession was a metal *Star Wars*-themed lunch box. After school one day, another student ripped it from my hands. I helplessly watched in horror as my classmate threw it to the ground and violently stomped it into an unrecognizable heap of junk. I came home covered in tears of shame and rage. After a few months, I never thought about it again until I was almost thirty years old and on a retreat to prepare for ordination to the priesthood. That childhood memory — and the attendant outrage — came back afresh. My spiritual director helped me through the grace of Jesus, to forgive the debt. Almost immediately I felt a new peace.

We see this week in Jesus’ parable a servant who is forgiven much but then commands another servant: “Pay back what you owe!” He can’t forget or let go of how he was wronged. He remembers — and he becomes a monster because of it. If only he had remembered not only the debts owed to him, but also his greater debt owed to — and forgiven by — his master. It’s natural for us to remember what others owe us. But when we contextualize those offenses in Jesus’ mercy toward us and them, we’re free to be merciful like the Master and less like a monster who never forgets.

— Father John Muir



A WORD FROM FR. PETER

Blessing of Animals on the Feast of St. Francis

Every canonized saint is known for something. While some are known for just one or a few things, others are known for many things. These can be objects that they were fondly associated with, expressions they used, books they read or wrote, places they lived or traveled, their favorite persons in history, the animals they had or loved, what they studied, their favorite arguments in defense of the faith, the holy and courageous actions that made them stand out, how they impacted the lives of the people around them, their devotion to duties, and their dispositions towards suffering.

Every saint has one or more of these things associated with them.

In the case of St. Francis of Assisi, he is known for a special love for animals among many other things. Given this love for animals, a tradition developed many years ago to bless animals on the Feast Day of St. Francis – October 4th. While the Church is not against this tradition, it does not oblige any priest to observe it. For this reason, you will see some parishes where the priest blesses animals privately or publicly on the Feast of St. Francis.

When I arrived in the United States as a missionary student to continue my seminary formation seven years ago, I encountered this tradition of blessing animals on the Feast Day of St. Francis. Like many other experiences I had in my first year here as a missionary, it was new to me, but I thought it was cool. However, like the Church, I am not against it, nor do I think I have to do it. So, being a priest for three years now, I have never privately or publicly blessed animals on the Feast Day of St. Francis nor have I been asked to do it. But then, I know that there is a first time for everything.

A few Sundays ago, during one of our donut gatherings after Mass, one of my favorite parishioners, young Lydia Worsham, candidly instructed me to plan to bless her pet on the Feast of St. Francis this year. Lydia was one of our graduates from the parish this year. She is now a freshman at Teresa High School. Lydia loves Jesus



Fr. Peter Chineke,
Parochial
Administrator

and attends Mass at her favorite Church every Sunday with her family. By the request of Lydia, I am announcing the BLESSING OF ANIMALS here at St. Thomas on the Feast of St. Francis, October 4, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. The blessing will take place at the parking lot by the north main entrance of the Church.

I look forward to this animal blessing ritual and encourage everyone who plans to bring their pets to keep them under control. You can invite your friends and family to bring their animals, hoping they start attending Mass afterward.

Blessings.

—Fr. Peter



Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, September 17

10 am – **Margaret Hynen** †

Monday, September 18

8:15 am – **Juanita Rasgado**

Tuesday, September 19 to

Thursday, September 21

No Mass – Convocation

Friday, September 22

8:15 am – **Ann Midden**

Saturday, September 23

No Mass

† *Deceased*



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.



	Collected	Budgeted
September 10	\$ 2,211	\$5,000
Year-to-Date:	\$ 43,473	\$55,000
Short/Ahead:	- \$ 11,527	
R/M Donations	\$ 75	
Sister Parish Donations	\$ 75	

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>

St. Thomas Events Sept-Oct 2023



- 9/24 Donut Sunday, after Mass
- 10/4 Blessing of Animals, 5:30pm
- 10/6 First Friday Adoration, 9am- 5pm
- 10/28 Bus to Eucharistic Congress, 10am

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.

PARISH OFFICE

- Mrs. Cynthia Hinkle**, *Parish Secretary*
- Mr. Richard Harding**, *Maintenance Manager*
- Mr. Joe Snow**, *Business Manager*
- Mr. Chris Hoffman**, *Communications Coordinator*
- Rev. Richard Weltin**, *Pastor Emeritus*
- Rev. Peter Chineke**, *Parochial Administrator*

Open Mon-Fri, 8am-noon
 2160 N. Edward Street, Decatur, IL 62526
 (217) 877-4146

Email: stthomasdecatu@dio.org
 Website: <http://www.StThomasDecatur.com>
 Facebook: St. Thomas the Apostle Church,
 Decatur, IL



Please Remember in your Prayers All who are Ill at Home or in the Hospital and their Families and Caregivers

Stan Rothenbuecher, Carol Dilbeck, 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. Please call the parish office or email stthomasdecatu@dio.org to add or remove a name.

Quotes About Love

- "The law of divine love is the standard for all human actions." — St. Thomas Aquinas
- "Without love, deeds, even the most brilliant, count as nothing." — St. Therese of Lisieux
- "True love is love that causes us pain, that hurts, and yet brings us joy. That is why we must pray to God and ask Him to give us the courage to love." — Mother Teresa
- Lex Cordis Caritas* (The law of the heart is love)— motto of The Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, Bishop of Springfield, IL

Food for the Hungry



Just a reminder that we have a Food Drive for Catholic Charities every weekend of the year. A few cans and boxes of food make a big difference to people who may otherwise go hungry (put items in the basket by the coat rack).

Here are some ideas:

- dry pasta, macaroni & cheese, jars of pasta sauce
- canned fish and meat (salmon, tuna, ham, chicken, turkey - pop-top cans are best)
- canned vegetables, fruit, soup, and stew
- instant potato packets
- peanut butter, jam and jelly, cereal
- canned beans, and pork & beans

Thanks for your caring and generosity!

40 DAYS FOR LIFE.

From September 27th through November 5th, you are invited to join other Christians for 40 Days for Life – 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. You are also invited to stand and peacefully pray during the 40-day vigil across the street from the local abortion clinic – Planned Parenthood at 3021 N. Oakland Avenue. If you would like more information or to volunteer, please call Cecilia Kehoe at 217-412-0063 or email her at prayersforyou8384@gmail.com. **Please visit the campaign website** at www.40daysforlife.com/en/decatu to learn more, register and sign up.



Signup is also available on the sheet in the St. Thomas gathering area in back of the church.

Encyclical Quote of the Week

“God does not demand of us a feeling which we ourselves are incapable of producing. He loves us, he makes us see and experience his love, and since he has ‘loved us first’ love can also blossom as a response within us.”

— Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, 2005

“Perhaps Love”



“Perhaps Love” is a duet by Plácido Domingo and John Denver. It is featured on Plácido’s 1981 album *Perhaps Love*. The song was dedicated to John Denver’s wife, Annie Martell while they were separated and planning to get divorced. The producer on the album, Milt Okun, suggested that Plácido Domingo pair with John on the song and he worked hard to get it promoted. Eventually, a radio station in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania began playing it every hour on the hour. The song peaked at #59 on the Billboard Hot 100 and #22 on Billboard’s Adult Contemporary Tracks chart in 1982.

This is the song Fr. Peter sang in his homily on September 10.

[Verse 1: Plácido Domingo]

Perhaps love is like a resting place, a shelter from the storm
It exists to give you comfort, it is there to keep you warm
And in those times of trouble when you are most alone
The memory of love will bring you home

[Verse 2: John Denver]

Perhaps love is like a window, perhaps an open door
It invites you to come closer, it wants to show you more
And even if you lose yourself and don't know what to do
The memory of love will see you through

[Bridge: Plácido Domingo, *John Denver*]

Oh, love to some is like a cloud, to some as strong as steel
For some a way of living, for some a way to feel
And some say love is holding on and some say letting go
And some say love is everything, some say they don't know

[Verse 3: Plácido Domingo & John Denver, *John Denver*]

Perhaps love is like the ocean, full of conflict, full of pain
Like a fire when it's cold outside, thunder when it rains
If I should live forever and all my dreams come true
My memories of love will be of you



WDCR NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

“MOTHER TERESA –
NO GREATER LOVE”

Thursday, September 21st

6:30 p.m. Avon Theatre

Tickets will be sold after Mass on

Sunday, September 17th

Tickets are \$5 each or 4 for \$15

Or call WDCR (217) 464-1099

Or download a ticket form wdcrradio.com



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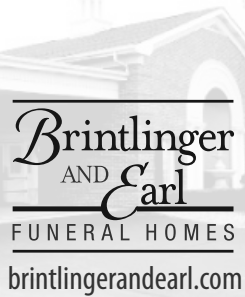
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