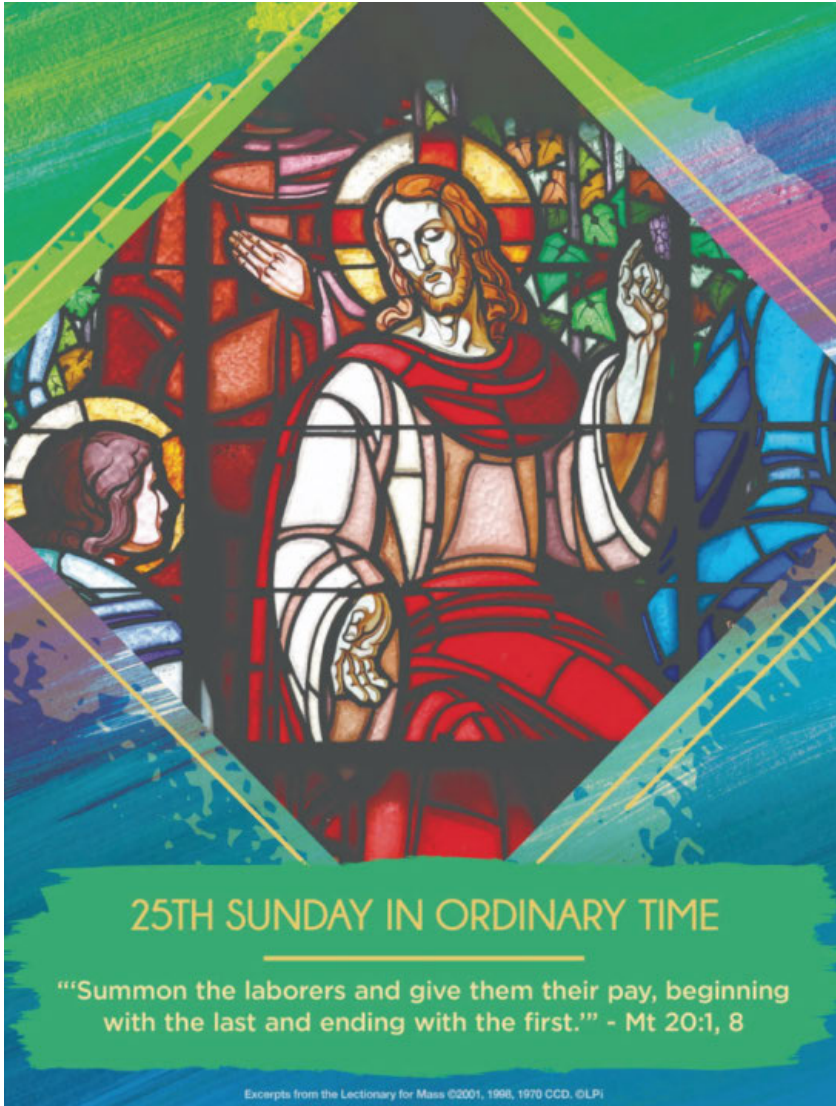


25th Sunday In Ordinary Time • September 24, 2023



St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

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



The Invitation to the Vineyard

I have been working since I was 17, and in that time, I've encountered my fair share of bosses who don't like being, well, fair. There was the retail gig that paid me less than the official minimum wage because I was a minor and scheduled me for long shifts because it meant cheaper labor. There was the unpaid internship with the editor who had no sense of work/life balance.

Most of us work hard for what we have in this life, and so we make the mistake of thinking we deserve the good things that come our way. That's all right and good when we're talking about a just wage. But sometimes we get our lines blurred and we begin to think we deserve, or have done something to earn, the salvation offered by Christ. I am not the laborer who has borne the heat of long hours in the sun. I am the straggler, the lost one, the idler at the marketplace as the day draws to a close. "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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

Once I gave my three-year-old niece a certain toy for Christmas. When she opened it, she was happy. Shortly thereafter her five-year old sister opened another present from me: the same toy, along with some play jewelry. The three-year-old cried out: "That's not fair! Why'd she get the jewelry, too?!"

Let's face it: there's something about God's grace in our religion which bugs us. We love to look at others' blessings and cry out: "That's not fair!" Catholicism is not fair in the sense that it is a religion founded on God's grace which is unmerited favor. God pours his mercy, love, and divine life upon us not because we're good but because He is infinitely good.

If you think the "not fair" quality of grace is easy to accept, consider how typically angry we get when we hear the parable of the workers who get paid way more than they deserve. The hyper-generous landowner says to the indignant hard workers, "Are you envious because I am generous?" Well, yes, they are, and so are we! Therefore, we have to reckon with this painful truth in order to move into the divine sphere of gifts, which is the world of Christ and his Church. Then we are able to move beyond a tit-for-tat world and into one where gifts are poured forth on those who don't deserve it — namely, upon us.

— Father John Muir



A WORD FROM FR. PETER

The Man I Love and Why!

In last week's bulletin article, I discussed how every Saint is known for something great. While some are known for just one or a few things, others are known for many things. This week, I want to reflect briefly on one of the things many people (including myself) know about Venerable Fulton J. Sheen. As a man, a Christian, and a priest, I deeply admire the person and life of Fulton J. Sheen. I learned of Fulton Sheen through the first of his books I read as a young missionary in the Philippines some years ago. This book is *The Priest Is Not His Own*.



Fr. Peter Chineke,
Parochial
Administrator

In that book, Fulton Sheen explains in an intense and profoundly spiritual way the meaning of the priesthood and the priest's relationship with Jesus Christ as Christ's "alter Christus." After reading this book, I was compelled to look up Fulton Sheen and explore his quotes and other writings. Later, I would read his *The Power of Love*, copies of which I gave to at least ten of my students and young friends.

In *The Power of Love*, Fulton Sheen presents the various aspects of love in such a way that any Christian who is intentionally working to become a disciple of Christ can read it and be stirred to a deeper embrace of the fact that love is the only credible thing that exists. Love alone is credible, and anyone who possesses this love and allows it to possess them will spend the rest of their lives discovering their gifts and using them in the most fulfilling ways. Hence, the saint exclaims:

"God has given different gifts to different people. There is no basis for feeling inferior to another who has a different gift. Once it is realized that we shall be judged by the gift we have received, rather than the gift we have not, one is completely delivered from a false sense of inferiority." – Fulton J. Sheen

Besides the impeccable spiritual audacity with which he lived his priesthood even amidst the

challenges he suffered, the quote above drew me closer to the person and life of Fulton J. Sheen. How beautifully articulated! We need to understand how God blesses each of us uniquely. We need to know that we can only account for the gifts we receive from God. When we do this, we will have no room to feel inferior to any human being or be threatened by their gifts and talents. That way, we create more room to love and be loved by the love that has loved us.

—Fr. Peter



Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, September 24
10 am – **Pat Hayes †**

Monday, September 25
8:15 am – **Bernadine Metzger**

Tuesday, September 26
8:15 am – **Deacon Kevin Richardson**

Wednesday, September 27
8:15 am – **Colleen Richardson**

Thursday, September 28
8:15 am – **Cindy Balance**

Friday, September 29
8:15 am – **Joe Brown**

Saturday, September 30
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 17	\$ 3,986	\$5,000
Year-to-Date:	\$ 47,459	\$60,000
Short/Ahead:	- \$ 12,541	

R/M Donations\$ 85
 Sister Parish Donations\$ 80

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 Event Blessing of Animals on the Feast of St. Francis



When: October 4, 5:30pm
 Where: North parking lot
 Please keep your pets under control. Thank you!

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

PRAYER REQUESTS

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.



"The late Archbishop Fulton Sheen once addressed the National Prayer Breakfast at which President Jimmy Carter was in attendance. The archbishop greeted the audience, addressing them as, 'Fellow sinners.' He turned to President Carter and said, 'And that includes you.' Everyone present, including the president, roared with laughter. They could laugh because it was a playful reminder of an obvious truth that we sometimes forget: we are all sinners, and that includes popes and presidents, clergy and laity." — Bishop Paprocki, *Catholic Times*, February 9, 2013.

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 (pop-top cans are best)
- canned vegetables, fruit, soup, and stew
- instant potato packets
- peanut butter, jam and jelly, cereal
- canned beans, 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/decatour to learn more, register and sign up.



BIBLE STUDY

Why attend Mass? Our very lives depend on it! It's the summit of God's plan for our salvation. So where do we find the Mass in the Bible? What's the relationship between the two?

Parousia: The Bible and the Mass, an interesting and informative 10-lesson video-study featuring Scott Hahn, answers these questions and more.

Sign up for this Bible Study hosted by Catholic Spirit Radio. It begins Thursday **October 12th at 6:30pm**. Attend in-person at Catholic Spirit Radio (108 Boeykens Place in Normal) or participate using "Zoom" program. \$25 materials fee. Contact Tony Pecora (309-750-9062) for registration and to pay by September 30.



Quotes About God and Man

“Therefore the activity of God, which surpasses all others in blessedness, must be contemplative; and of human activities, therefore, that which is most akin to this must be most of the nature of happiness.”

—Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*,
Book X, Chapter 8, Circa 340 B.C.

“Hence it is according to his intelligence and reason, which are incorporeal, that man is said to be according to the image of God.”

—St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*,
Part I, Q. III, A. 1, Reply Obj. 2, 1266-1273

"The greatest gift that in his largess God
Creating made, and unto his own goodness
Nearest conformed, and that which he doth prize
Most highly, is the freedom of the will,
Wherewith the creatures of intelligence
Both all and only were and are endowed."

—Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, Canto V
(Beatrice), Circa 1300

"What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable; in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god: the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals..."

—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*,
Act 2, Scene 2 (Hamlet), 1599-1601

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

— *Declaration of Independence*, July 4, 1776

[Note: This is the most famous reference to God in the Declaration. There are 3 others. Do you know them?]

Encyclical Quote of the Week

“It is well known how highly the Church regards human reason, for it falls to reason to demonstrate with certainty the existence of God, personal and one; to prove beyond doubt from divine signs the very foundations of the Christian faith; to express properly the law which the Creator has imprinted in the hearts of men; and finally to attain to some notion, indeed a very fruitful notion, of mysteries.”

— Pope Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, 1950



FREE AD DESIGN
with purchase of this space

CALL 800-950-9952

Here with *you.*



HSHS St. Mary's Hospital

ADT-Monitored Home Security
Get 24-Hour Protection From a Name You Can Trust

- Burglary
- Fire Safety
- Flood Detection
- Carbon Monoxide

ADT Authorized Provider | SafeStreets | **833-287-3502**



Graceland/Fairlawn

www.gracelandfairlawn.com
217-615-0769

Moran & Goebel

www.moranandgoebel.com
217-615-0793

Lisa Coffman

BROKER ASSOCIATE REALTOR®

CELL: **217-433-5081**

GLENDIA WILLIAMSON REALTY



LET'S GROW YOUR BUSINESS
Place Your Ad Here and Support Our Parish!

CONTACT ME
Brandy Stivers

bstivers@4LPi.com
(800) 950-9952 x2609

B & W II
ASPHALT PAVING & SEALCOAT CO.
877-8362
P.O. Box 448 Forsyth, IL

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS!

NEVER MISS OUR BULLETIN!



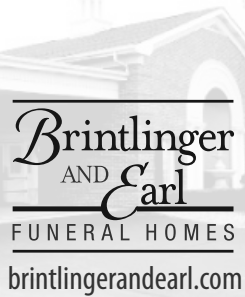
SUBSCRIBE

Have our bulletin emailed to you every week.

Visit www.parishesonline.com

A service as unique as your loved one.



Honor the life of your loved one with the experts at helping you say goodbye.



Brintlinger AND Earl FUNERAL HOMES
brintlingerandearl.com

LOOKING FOR A DOCTOR? LET ME HELP.

Contact our patient advocate today.
Kim Schneider
844-520-8897
Kimberly.Schneider@hshs.org

HSHS Medical Group

WE APPRECIATE OUR ADVERTISERS!

WE'RE HIRING!
AD SALES EXECUTIVES

BE YOURSELF. BRING YOUR PASSION. WORK WITH PURPOSE.

- Paid training
- Some travel
- Work-life balance
- Full-Time with benefits
- Serve your community



Contact us at careers@4lpi.com or www.4lpi.com/careers

Place Your Ad Here and Support our Parish!

Instantly create and purchase an ad with

AD CREATOR STUDIO




4lpi.com/adcreator