SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH

A PARISH FAITH COMMUNITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD

MARCH 14, 2021 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

47 Pine Street, West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089-2817 (413) 739-4779

PARISH STAFF

Rev. John K. Sheaffer
Pastor

Rev. Matthew V. Barone
Parochial Vicar

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In Residence

Mr. Joseph W. Kielbasa, Jr.
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Mr. James H. Marcus
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Religious Education Coordinator

Mrs. Frances E. DeMont
Religious Education Secretary

Mrs. Barbara A. Boudo
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Organists

Mr. Thomas M. Coburn
Choir Director

Mr. Mirek Pietras
Cemetery Superintendent

ST. THOMAS SCHOOL

Sister Patricia A. Hottin, SSJ
Principal

Mrs. Joan M. Whitehead
School Secretary

An Old Irish Blessing

*May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back, the sunshine warm upon your face. May the rains fall soft upon your fields, And, until we meet again, may **GOD** hold you in the palm of his hand.*

ST. JUDE NOVENA
Tuesdays - 7:00 PM (*Church*)

HOLY DAYS
Vigil: 4:00 and 6:30 PM *(Church)*
Day: 8:00 AM and 12:10 PM *(Church)*

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE
Saturday 4:00 PM *(Church and School Gym)* and 5:30 PM *(School Gym)*
Sunday 8:00 *(Church and School Gym)*, 9:30, 11:00 AM and 12:15 PM *(School Gym)*

DAILY MASS SCHEDULE
Monday - Saturday 8:00 AM *(Church and Online)*
Civil Holidays - 9:00 a.m.

www.stthomaswestspringfield.org

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
3:00-3:45 p.m. Saturday in the school foyer (face to face) across from the handicapped ramp at church or by appointment.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM
Celebrated the fourth Sunday of the month except for May and November and it is the third Sunday of the month. No baptisms the month of December. Pre-registration is required at the parish office one month before the Baptism. Parents must be registered and participating members of the parish. Parents must also attend a Baptismal Preparation Class held on the second Wednesday of the month and conducted by the Deacon.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE
Please contact the parish office one year prior to the marriage date.

HOSPITAL AND HOME VISITS
Kindly inform the parish office if you or someone you know would like to receive the sacraments.

PARISH CEMETERY
All the arrangements are to be made through the parish office.

PARISH BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS
All items must be presented in writing to the parish office by Monday at 12:00 PM. Thank you.

PLEASE NOTE: If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, or if there is a delay, ***please make sure to check your local TV station to see if Mass has been cancelled.*** *However, Mass will be celebrated online each and every day, no matter what the weather conditions are.*

Parish Offertory Gift - March 6/7	$16,168.87
Renovation - March 6/7	$ 857.00
Take & Eat Ministry - March 6/7	$ 1,515.00

Thank you for your generous response to the needs of our parish. Please remember that we rely on your commitment of weekly stewardship.

BAPTISMS Next baptisms will be on ***Sunday, March 28, 2021.*** Parents must be registered, participating members of the parish. To make arrangements, please call the parish office at 739-4779.

Phone and Email:

Parish Office:……..……..739-4779
Fax……..739-1608
School Office:……..739-4131
Religious Education Office:……..…..737-8267
Cemetery Office……..……..739-4779

Parish: ***stthomassecretary@comcast.net***
Religious Education: ***stthomasccd@comcast.net***
School: ***phottinssj@comcast.net***

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

SATURDAY, MARCH 13
4:00 PM *Church* — + J. Ralph Thompson - 31st Anniversary requested by his Daughter, Jean
4:00 PM *School Gym*
5:30 PM — + Alan Guimaraes - Birthday Remembrance requested by his Wife and Children

SUNDAY, MARCH 14
8:00 AM *Church* — + Ralph G. Sheaffer - 120th Birthday Remembrance
8:00 AM *School Gym*
9:30 AM — + Sr. Joseph Michael
11:00 AM — + Amedeo Manser - 2nd Anniversary requested by his Family
12:15 PM — + Frederick Traggio

MONDAY, MARCH 15
8:00 AM — + Joseph Schufreider requested by his Family

TUESDAY, MARCH 16
8:00 AM — + Thomas Jerard, Jr. requested by his Family
7:00 PM — St. Jude Novena

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17
8:00 AM — + Brenda Simons requested by her Family

THURSDAY, MARCH 18
8:00 AM — + George R. Savaria requested by Chris and Tom Thompson

FRIDAY, MARCH 19
8:00 AM — + Colin Smith - 16th Anniversary requested by his Mom
7:00 PM — Stations of the Cross

SATURDAY, MARCH 20
8:00 AM — + Edmund W. Bowler requested by his Family
3:00 PM — Confessions
4:00 PM *Church* — Good Health, Graces and Blessings for Richard Keith Johnson requested by his Sister, Marilyn Barbour
4:00 PM *School Gym*
5:30 PM — + Bill Sullivan - 30th Anniversary requested by his Wife and Family

SUNDAY, MARCH 21
8:00 AM *Church* — + Armand and + Emilina Larochelle requested by the Larochelle Family
8:00 AM *School Gym*
9:30 AM — Good Health, Graces and Blessings for Richard Keith Johnson requested by his Sister, Marilyn Barbour
11:00 AM — + Thomas Jerard requested by his Family
12:15 PM — + Esther V. O'Neill - Birthday Remembrance requested by her Family

March 14, 2021

Dear Parishioners,

This coming week will mark a year since we were forced into lockdown due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Fortunately, we were able to open two months later. However, it has been a long and challenging and, sometimes, extraordinarily difficult year, especially for those who have been sick or have lost loved ones.

It has also been difficult to worship and to feel comfortable while worshipping. I know some people have expressed frustration with all the procedures we have to follow, and some people have expressed frustration that some folks are not following those procedures.

As I did last Spring, I ask for everyone's cooperation, patience, and understanding. I know it is sometimes difficult to do so, but I believe it is what we are called to do to get through all of this. So, a few reminders of our procedures:

- Please wear a mask and make sure it covers your nose or, at least, a face shield.
- Please use hand sanitizer; it is available at the entrances of both the gym and the church.
- Please follow the guidance of both our ushers and the signs in our worship areas.
- Please maintain a safe distance.
- Please do not rearrange the chairs in the gym; if seating is a problem, please see an usher.
- Please exchange the Sign of Peace with a wave or other sign that does not involve touching people from different households.
- Please do not remain in the church or the gym after Mass; each space must be disinfected after each Mass and that requires time.

I thank all of our ushers and those who have been disinfecting our church and gym after each Mass. Most of them volunteer for more than one Mass each week, and I am grateful for their dedication. Please thank them.

Let us pray for those who have been sick, for those who have died, for their families, for those whose work puts them on the frontlines of dealing with the pandemic.

Finally, let us pray for each other and for patience and understanding of the difficulties each person is experiencing as we deal with the crisis, and may it come to an end soon.

God Bless,

Fr. Jack

ONLINE masses

SATURDAY, MARCH 13
4:00 PM

SUNDAY, MARCH 14
8:00 AM + Peggy Heitz requested by her Husband, Jim

MONDAY, MARCH 15
8:00 AM Good Health and Birthday Blessings for Josephine Gandionco requested by her Husband, Hernando

TUESDAY, MARCH 16
8:00 AM Health and Blessings for Don and Nancy Krieger requested by Deb Kubic

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17
8:00 AM + Leo Loera requested by his Brother, Ernie

THURSDAY, MARCH 18
8:00 AM + Nestor Ucab requested by his Wife

FRIDAY, MARCH 19
8:00 AM + Maria Leon requested by her Daughter, Rosalie Fowler

SATURDAY, MARCH 20
8:00 AM + Maria Lee
4:00 PM

SUNDAY, MARCH 21
8:00 AM + Alexander Joseph Dalessandro - 1st Anniversary requested by his Father

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ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE SCHOOL

Preschool - Grade Eight
2021 - 2022 School Registration

Registrations are now being accepted for September 2021. Please call the school at 739-4131 or email us at *jmwevan50@comcast.net* for more information.

We look forward to a happy, healthy new school year and the opportunity to meet your family.

THE SANCTUARY CANDLE

is donated this week for a

Special Intention

from Paul and Jeanne Trinque

Please call the Parish Office, 739-4779, to donate the candle. The donation is $15 per week.

OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CCD REGISTRATION – The Office of Religious Education is currently holding office hours on Monday and Wednesday from 9-3 and Friday 9-2 for the 2020-2021 CCD year. Please call the office at 737-8267 for any questions/concerns.

Registration for the CCD year 2021-2022 will begin in March. All forms will be emailed to you. If you have any questions, feel free to contact our office at any time.

CCD CLASSES: ***Grade 2/Double Sacrament*** - Small group classes will be held in the church to begin instruction on receiving First Communion. Emails will be sent with schedules for classes and dates. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Religious Education Office.

HOMEWORK HOUSE is offering free virtual after school tutoring services to elementary school children in need of extra academic support. Students in Holyoke as well as surrounding communities can take advantage of this individualized support at no cost. This service will be provided for students in 1st to 6th grade. All tutoring is provided in a safe virtual environment with qualified tutors. To make an appointment for tutoring, or for more information about the program, please visit HomeworkHouseHolyoke.org, contact Angel Coriano, Director of Programs at 413-887-2012, or email him at acoriano@homeworkhouseholyoke.org.

Join us for Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in the church. Bring a friend. All are welcome!

LENTEN REGULATIONS

1. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of abstinence from meat as well as days of fast, when only one full meal is allowed. On days of fast, two other meatless meals may be taken according to one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal.
2. The other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat.
3. The obligation to abstain from meat commences at fourteen (14) years of age.
4. The obligation to fast commences at eighteen (18) years of age and ends at fifty-nine (59) years of age.
5. Although the faithful may excuse themselves for a just cause from these laws of fast and abstinence, there is an obligation to substitute another penance and no Catholic should lightly excuse himself/herself from this obligation in the Lenten season.

ST. THOMAS SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP

St. Thomas parishioners, who have students in our parish school (preschool exempt) can have St. Thomas sponsor the student. Sponsorship is determined by participating in weekly Mass along with an annual envelope contribution of $750, the prior calendar year.

2021 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL Walking in the footsteps of our risen Lord means we are ***"Sowing the Seeds"*** of our faith in the world. Please consider making a donation or pledge to the 2021 Annual Catholic Appeal and become the face of the Catholic Church to your neighbors in need. Your combined contributions reach the unborn, children at risk, the sick, the elderly, the dying across Western Mass. You help to feed the hungry, clothe those in need, and reach beyond the prison bars to share our faith. Send in your one-time contribution, make a pledge using the donation card you received in the mail, donate online through www.diospringfield.org/aca or call 413-452-0670. Every contribution makes a difference. Thank you.

PASCHAL CANDLE We are accepting donations in memory of loved ones to cover the cost of the new Paschal candle. The candle is lit for the first time at the Easter Vigil Mass. It symbolizes Jesus, the Light of the World, the Resurrection and Life. Whoever follows this light will never die in darkness. Please send your donation to the rectory along with the name/names of your loved ones the donation is in memory/honor of by Palm Sunday, March 28.

COLORING CORNER

Tuesday, March 16th, is Giant Panda Bear Day! This is one of the most adorable and loved animals on the planet. A symbol of the International World Wildlife Federation, the Giant Panda is endangered. There are only about 2,000 of them left in the wild.

Color the adorable picture.

Serving the greater West Springfield community.

TAKE & EAT MEALS MINISTRY At this time, we will be preparing Take and Eat meals on the third Saturday of each month. Our next meal offering is being planned for Saturday, March 20th. If you are aware of someone in the community who may have difficulty preparing meals for themselves without assistance, or if you yourself are in need of a meal on the weekends for similar reasons and would like to receive a meal through the Take and Eat Ministry, please contact the Parish Office, 739-4779, and let us know. We will be happy to help.

Through March 28th, you're invited to join Christians and other people of good will for *40 Days for Life* - 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. You're also invited to stand and peacefully pray during a 40-day vigil in the public right-of-way outside Planned Parenthood at 3550 Main Street, Springfield, MA, and also to help spread the word about this important community outreach. If you'd like more information, especially if you'd like to volunteer to help, please contact: Tim Biggins at (413) 342-0403 and/or 40daysWM@gmail.com.

LOAVES AND FISHES The March meal will be distributed on Tuesday, March 16th, at the soup kitchen at South Congregational Church at 45 Maple Street in Springfield. The menu is a meatball grinder, vegetables, chips, and cookies.

Donations can be dropped off at the school cafeteria entrance in the back of the school on ***Monday, March 15th, between 5-6 p.m.***

For pick up, contact Paul Marai by phone at 413-333-2191 or email paulmarai66@yahoo.com or Barb Morin at 285-7819 or email barbarian24@yahoo.com.

Until the threat of the virus subsides, there will be no contact with the patrons. Staff will assemble the meal in containers that will be distributed to patrons at the entry door.

Monetary contributions are welcome. Checks should be made payable to ***Loaves and Fishes at St. Thomas Parish*** and can be submitted at church in a plain white envelope or mailed to St. Thomas Parish, 47 Pine Street, West Springfield, MA 01089.

Thanks to all those parishioners who contribute to this ministry with donations of food, time, and monetary contributions. Each contribution makes a difference.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CEMETERY

Christmas logs, winter decorations, artificial flowers and all remaining religious articles and other memorabilia must be removed from the cemetery this by Monday, March 15, 2021. ***No artificial flowers are allowed at any time in the cemetery.***

THANK YOU SO MUCH, YOU HAVE KEPT SO MANY WARM! Sacred Heart Parish Center at 1061 Springfield Street in Feeding Hills, MA, has been collecting donations of white socks, hats, scarfs, gloves, and gently used and washed coats since January. We have so far made five truck loads to the South Congregational Church in Springfield where the donations are sorted and made available to those in need. Thanks to your enormous generosity we have been able to fill their needs. The donations for the remainder of the month will be going to the Springfield Rescue Mission. The drive will continue through the end of March 2021. There will be a basket in the entry way just as you come through the first set of doors at the Parish Center where you can leave your donations. If you have any questions, please call our Pastoral Minister, Deb Briancesco, RN, at 786-8200, ext. 3.

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES COLLECTION MARCH 13 AND 14

Your support of this collection serves ***Jesus*** *in the guise of the poor and vulnerable* in some of the most marginalized communities in our world. Sailors, fishers, harbor workers, and their families have unique pastoral needs because of mariners' long periods away from home. In addition to access to the Mass and sacraments on ships, seafarers also need hospitality and pastoral care in port cities as well as assistance with errands such as shopping and medical appointments. For the past hundred years, Stella Maris—also called Apostleship of the Sea—has ministered to the pastoral needs of mariners through chaplaincies and centers in port cities. This apostleship currently serves the community with more than 100 chaplains and lay ministers in 48 ports across the United States. Apostleship of the Sea is one of the PCMRT ministries funded through The Catholic Relief Services Collection. When you give, you help to support this valuable ministry. Your support of this collection makes a difference for so many around the globe. Please prayerfully consider how you can support it this year. To learn more about the collection and the people who benefit, please visit www.usccb.org/catholic-relief.

PRAYERS FOR DECEASED - Gerald J. Carney and Ellen M. Steinmez. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE: Your mask must cover both your face and nose and must remain on at all times while you are in church and/or the school gym. Also, as soon as Mass ends, both in the church and school gym, you must exit the buildings immediately. You must not congregate in or outside the buildings at any time. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding as we all try and keep each other as safe as possible during these unprecedented times we find ourselves living in.

WEST SPRINGFIELD RESIDENTS ONLY *Weekend Mass is now available on Sunday mornings at 8:30 a.m. on the Town of West Springfield's Public Access Channel 15.*

WEST SPRINGFIELD COUNCIL ON AGING

FUEL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE Fuel Assistance (also known as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) helps eligible households challenged by the high cost of home heating fuel pay a portion of their winter heating bills. This program provides assistance through a fixed benefit amount for the cost of the primary source of heat, which includes, but is not limited to: Oil, Electricity, Natural Gas, Propane, Kerosene, Wood and Coal. Those who have heat included in their rent and meet income and residence eligibility may be eligible to receive a subsidy for a portion of their monthly income from November to April. Those who have heat included in their rent and have a subsidy must pay over 30% of their income towards rent in order to be eligible. Those who live in public housing are not eligible as they are already state or federally aided. To get more information or assistance in applying, call the Council on Aging at 263-3264.

EASTER PLANT SALE The West Springfield Lions Club and the Friends of the West Springfield Senior Center are co-sponsoring an Easter Plant sale to be held at the Santa's House in Mittineague Park on Friday, April 2, and Saturday, April 3, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. or until all plants are sold. Pansy bowls, a variety of colorful tulips, daffodils, and Easter lilies will be sold. Prices will range from $5 to $8. Cash or check only. All proceeds to benefit the Friends & Lions Club.

SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD AVAILABLE TO WS RESIDENTS Did you know? Groceries are available at no cost for qualifying individuals in need at the Parish Cupboard located at 738 Main Street in West Springfield. Call the Parish Cupboard at 734-7969 on a weekday morning to sign up and schedule a pickup. Note: Proof of residency and income are required.

FREE FILE OF LIFE CARD Do you live alone or does someone in your household have multiple or complex medical issues? Our File of Life Card is something you or your loved one should have. The File of Life is a card you fill out with medical information for you or your loved one; it is then placed in a magnetic holder for you to place on your refrigerator. In the event of a medical emergency, first responders will look for the File of Life on your refrigerator and can save precious time during an emergency. The card is good for all ages. Please call 263-3264 for more information. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our staff are happy to mail residents a File of Life card and magnetic folder.

Every man is called to be a father….Does God want YOU to be a priest or the father of a priest? Come and pray. A Mass and Holy Hour for Vocations will be celebrated on Thursday, March 25, 2021, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, by Bishop William Byrne at St. Michael's Cathedral. Mass will begin at 6:30 p.m. with Holy Hour to follow, concluding with benediction at 8 p.m. Confessions will be available. Unable to make this event? Thinking about the priesthood? Call Fr. Jon Reardon, Director of Recruiting, at 413-248-7034 or email *vocations@diospringfield.org*.

EASTER FLOWER ENVELOPES are at the doors of the church and gym, as well as in your church envelope packet. Those who would like to make a donation and/or in memory of a loved one, please return them in the collection box or at the rectory by Palm Sunday, March 28.

DINNER WITH THE SAINTS St. Patrick and St. Joseph Saturday, March 20, 4:30-6:00 p.m. *Take-out only!* at Sacred Heart Parish, 1061 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA. Full corned-beef and cabbage dinner, Irish soda bread and dessert. Cost is $16.00. Reserve your dinner by calling Dan at 786-0489. Cut-off date is March 15, 2021. Please make checks payable to: St. Martha's Guild and mail to the Parish Center, drop in basket at Mass or stop by.

EXODUS: CALLED TO FREEDOM Do you want to experience true freedom? Have you ever wondered what freedom means and how to find it? Exodus is often seen as the defining moment in Israel's history when God called Israel out of slavery in Egypt to freedom. The story of Exodus isn't only Israel's story; however, it's also our story. *Exodus: Called to Freedom* looks through the lens of Christ and the Church to show how God ultimately desired to free us from the deadly grip of sin so that we could have authentic freedom. St. Mary's in Westfield will begin a ten-week Bible study *Exodus: Called to Freedom* on March 24th from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Participants will meet every week to view an engaging video presentation followed by a time of lively group discussion and fellowship. This study is free, the study set is $27.00. You can join this study either in person or zoom classes. For more information or to register, please contact Joanne Bagge at 568-1127 or *jbagge@stmsaints.org*.

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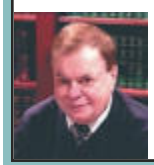

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