

December 25, 2020



## THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



“For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you  
who is Christ and Lord.” - Lk 2:11

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

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**MASS TIMES:**

Saturday: 5 pm

Sunday: 8 am 9:30 am 11:00 am

Daily: Tuesday-Friday- 9 am

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

By appointment only 425-743-2929

Sign up for Masses is open

Monday- Friday evening at [www.stmp.org](http://www.stmp.org)

Solemnity of the Mother Mary, January 1, 2020, 10  
am

*Merry*   
*Christmas* 

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD CHRISTMAS

**December 25, 2020**

*The mission of the St. Thomas More Parish community is to become the real presence of Christ through prayer,*



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Parish Office Hours: 9am-5pm M-Th, Friday 9am-1pm

School Office Hours: 8am-4pm M-F | Ph: 425-743-4242, Fax: 425-745-8367 | [www.stms.org](http://www.stms.org)

***We have been asked why we need to register for Mass on a weekly basis:***

*We are required to have a list of attendees for every mass for contact tracing purposes. If someone tests positive for Covid-19 we must have a list of anyone that may have been in close proximity to the individual and make that list available to the Snohomish County Health Department. The lists must be kept for a minimum of two weeks.*

*Due to Covid-19 restrictions our use of all facilities have been severely restricted. We can accommodate about 88 people in Dalton Hall for Mass. We do not want to turn anyone away ever so it helps us to better manage attendance and prepare the Hall for the 6' separation guidelines.*

#### **PARISH STAFF**

Pastor: Fr. Stephen Okumu-x104/  
[fathero@stmp.org](mailto:fathero@stmp.org)

Interim PAA-Ed DosRemedios- x 107/  
[eduardod@stmp.org](mailto:eduardod@stmp.org)  
Bookkeeper-Fadia Kassab x  
[fadiak@stmp.org](mailto:fadiak@stmp.org)

Pastoral Assistant for Faith Formation:  
Sharon Guerrero- x114/[sharong@stmp.org](mailto:sharong@stmp.org)

Pastoral Assistant for Youth Ministry:  
Kelly Orozco-x106/[kellyo@stmp.org](mailto:kellyo@stmp.org)

P. A. for Parish Engagement & Involvement:  
Violeta Juzon- x111/[violetaj@stmp.org](mailto:violetaj@stmp.org)

Administrative Assistant:  
Cathy Bellande- x100 /[cathyb@stmp.org](mailto:cathyb@stmp.org)

Maintenance Supervisor:  
Gary Dawes- x105/ [garyd@stmp.org](mailto:garyd@stmp.org)

Pastoral Assistant for Music:  
Debra DeMiero/[debrad@stmp.org](mailto:debrad@stmp.org)

#### **ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL**

Principal: Ann Leichter- x202/  
[ann.leichter@stms.org](mailto:ann.leichter@stms.org)

Office Manager: Ann Vandewark-x201/

Office staff: Sandra McLaughlin-  
Office Assistant- x200

**CHURCH IS OPEN FOR MASS  
WITH 88 CAPACITY/MASS.  
SIGN UP ON THE WEBSITE**



**OUR WEEKEND MASS IS RECORDED  
AND AVAILABLE ON THE  
WEBSITE: [WWW.STMP.ORG](http://WWW.STMP.ORG)  
FB: <https://www.facebook.com/stmplynnwood/>**

#### **CONSULTATIVE BODIES**

Pastoral Council Chairs:  
Ann Ayson-[ayson1@comcast.net](mailto:ayson1@comcast.net)  
Karen Austin- [cr8balance@gmail.com](mailto:cr8balance@gmail.com)  
Finance Council Chair:  
Richard Pyle-[dick\\_pyle@hotmail.com](mailto:dick_pyle@hotmail.com)  
Stewardship Commission Chair:  
Laura Piispanen-[laurapii@comcast.net](mailto:laurapii@comcast.net)  
Faith Formation Commission:  
Vy Lai-[vyphanlai@gmail.com](mailto:vyphanlai@gmail.com)  
Maintenance Commission Chair: Vacant  
Intercultural Commission Chairs:  
Eddie and Ellen Abellera-  
[emabellera@comcast.net](mailto:emabellera@comcast.net)  
School Commission Chair:  
Bridget Azel-[bridgetlobo@hotmail.com](mailto:bridgetlobo@hotmail.com)  
Liturgy Commission Chair: Kevin Norris-  
[kenorris@psfinc.com](mailto:kenorris@psfinc.com)  
St. Vincent de Paul-425-355-3504

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD CHRISTMAS**

December 25, 2020

## Christmas Greetings from Fr. Okumu

Dear St. Thomas More Parishioners,

*Glory to God in the highest and on Earth Peace to His People: Advent greetings to you all as we look forward to celebrating Christmas. A wonderful time of the year when families come together to welcome baby Jesus in our world, families and our community.*

*I salute you all for remaining faithful members of this community even with the spike of corona virus, which has kept us far from each other. You have all demonstrated your faithfulness to STMP with your continued moral, spiritual, and financial support. In his 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Thessalonians, 5:16, St Paul, the Apostle says, "Brothers and sisters rejoice always. Pray without ceasing." Meaning if we pray and put our trust in the Lord, this coming year, life may return to normal.*

*I wish to also share the good news regarding the remodeling of our house of worship. For those who have been following Sunday Masses online, I wish to let you know that we have made huge progress and as of now, we are through with a little over half of the work, and God willing, we may have the Church for Easter. I wish to say a big thank you to our Finance Council chair for putting in a lot of hours making sure that all is well with the remodel. Asante.*

*Lastly, dear friends, I know and understand that we are all going through tough times and many of us may be struggling financially, which I am hopeful will pass. I wish to remind everyone of the Archdiocesan wide "Called to Serve as Christ Capital Campaign" which is still ongoing, with the pledges being spread out over a three year period. I encourage you, STMP families, to prayerfully soul search and resolve to participate. Let me take this chance to say a big thank you to those who have already made their pledge. Thank you also, for letting us rollover over your 2020 Stewardship pledge into 2021. For those who increased their pledge for 2021, we appreciate your commitment to STMP.*

*Parish staff, councils, commission, and committee members, as well as all volunteers, you are good people, may the good Lord reward you greatly for the ministry you provide to STMP. May the joy of the shepherds lift up your own spirits this Christmas and throughout 2021. Jesus, be born in us, be born in our world. Glory to God in the highest and Peace to His People on Earth.*

Fr. Stephen Okumu, Pastor



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## PRAYER & WORSHIP

### GOSPEL MEDITATION ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

#### The Nativity of the Lord

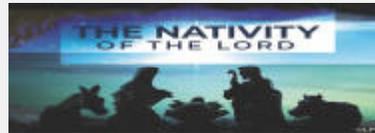
If the salutation, "Merry Christmas," is more than just the expected greeting we use today, then what is the "more" really all about? Today is a sacred day and the birth of Christ has changed not only history but how human beings perceive and relate with God. God has become one with humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ. All of these truths remain just pious sentiments unless they take flesh in the heart and soul of each one of us. We need to absorb and immerse ourselves in what is meant by these truths so that we can be changed by them. Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord!

A woman once recounted her journey with poverty and how she went from "doing" for the poor to "being with" the poor. It's transforming and life changing. It's easy to simply give alms to those in need, and yet another thing to be with them in their poverty and become poor ourselves. A change of the axis from vertical to horizon puts a whole new twist on things. Our souls understand the experience in ways that our minds simply cannot. Christmas requires this same change of axis.

It is one thing to sing out the words, "Joy to the World," and quite another to experience that joy ourselves. Many have not experienced the full impact of that first Holy Night because they choose to keep the manger at a distance rather than make a home with the Holy One who resides there. The birth of Christ levels the playing field of life and we have to allow ourselves to be leveled. There is no way to truly be human unless we understand that God is with us and blesses every fiber of the human experience. We cannot be truly human unless we listen to the words of the Word Made Flesh and work so that justice and peace can be realized by all, and God's sacred earth cared for and nurtured.

The axis of Christmas begins to shift when we realize it's not about, "I and me," but, "we and us," and there's an order and purpose to how God fashions and sustains things. The world hasn't really given Christ a full shot yet to understand that Truth has been born in our midst. We pick and choose what suits us in the message and leave the rest behind.

What needs to change about you so that Christ can truly be born in you? ©LPI



## THE GIFT OF FAMILY

What a year it has been! How will we speak of these times a decade from now? As time goes by, our impressions of this past year will certainly change. How we feel today about dealing with a killer virus and all the chaos surrounding that is still fresh for all. I would assume that most of us right now are also holding those we love a little closer and hugging them a little harder. Hopefully, even if the fears and concerns of 2020 dissipate in the future, the way we feel toward our family should never leave us.

Stewardship is certainly about everything. God has given us so much, great and small, profound and common. One of the greatest gifts that all have received is family. Families take all shapes and sizes and some look very different than others. For some, family is a

caretaker or temporary guardian. For others it is a friend when everyone else seems to have vanished. The bottom line is that, to quote a song from many years ago, "people need people."

When God gave the world His only Son, the Incarnation did not come on a cloud or with a flash of light. He was born into a family. Jesus understood the gift of family all his life. Do you think that if having a family wasn't important God would have still included this in the plan of salvation?

As this year draws to a close, remember your stewardship many days begins and ends with the people closest to you. Don't misuse or take for granted this precious gift. God gives us gifts on purpose, even to His only begotten Son.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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## **EDUCATION**

### **Children's Christmas Eve Mass**

We love our traditions especially during our Children's Christmas Eve Mass! This year is unique, though. We had to figure out how to celebrate our special liturgical events with COVID-19 on the guest list! And, with the renovation of our church building, we had to re-think and re-design those events to accommodate our parish community, at the same time follow pandemic protocols and limited seating capacity in the Hall.

Just like any special holiday, Christmas is a very special season that draws people to church to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. At the

Children's Christmas Eve Mass, the big bump is the opportunity that many of our families will surely miss this year! We will be celebrating our nativity presentation pandemic-style, with limited main characters like Mary, Joseph, Archangel, and of course Baby Jesus! Let us not be discouraged. May the Lord use these heartaches, disappointments, and sadness in our hearts to build endurance, hope, patience, and peace.

May the spirit of Christmas fill your home with love, joy and strength in Christ!

-Sharon Guerrero  
Pastoral Assistant for Faith Formation



TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AT ST THOMAS MORE PHOTO TAKEN 2015

**ST THOMAS MORE SCHOOL  
ANN LECIHLEITER, PRINCIPAL**

Many children will be a bit happier this Christmas due to your generous donations to the annual Toy Drive. The toys were delivered to Catholic Community Services. Thank you so much for your gift of stewardship this Christmas.

A big THANK YOU to all parents who helped with the Pixie Gift Shop last Thursday. Students love shopping on their own for their families! A special thank you to Margie Jimenez and Sharon Geyer for organizing all our elves.

School was dismissed at noon on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> for Christmas Vacation. We will have a school-wide Zoom Prayer Service.

School will resume on Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. The students will be learning remotely.

Before you know it, it will be Catholic Schools Week! January 31 - February 5. There will be many activities taking place. Watch for service hour opportunities!



The staff and students of St. Thomas More School wish you a blessed Christmas. May you all experience the joy and hope of our Saviors' Birth!

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## PARISH LIFE AND STEWARDSHIP

### Greetings from the Music Ministry!

We have loved seeing so many of you returning to Mass. We continue to have just one singer behind a plastic screen for each Mass - **15 different cantors from five choirs**. **Ed Bill** adds his talents on guitar some Saturdays, while **Emil Parappuram** and **Josh Concepcion** play guitar for some of the Sunday Masses. **Judi Tourigny's** violin joins us at some of the 8am Sunday Masses. While we are not yet able to safely sing together in choirs, it is wonderful to have so many different voices involved in our ministry - thank you to all. We look forward to when we can sing together again.

### Have a blessed Christmas!

**Debbie DeMiero, Pastoral Assistant for Music**

### Financial Report to the Parish

We are 5 months into our Fiscal Year and in spite of the restraints from Covid-19, we are tracking fairly well with budget.

We continue to see a drop in our income. Offertory Income is \$44,647 down from last year. Fortunately expenses were also lower, and overall, we are down \$17,683 from last year and \$4,447 against budget. We will continue to diligently work to keep our expenses down.

In keeping with the Holiday Season, we wish to thank all of our faithful parishioners for their continued support and wish everyone a Merry Christmas with hopes for a better year in 2021. -**Ed DosRemedios , PAA**

### SURVIVING COVID 19 PANDEMIC SAFELY AND HEALTHY AT ST THOMAS MORE



### Violeta Juzon, Pastoral Assistant for Parish Engagement and Involvement

**SOCIAL DISTANCING and MASKS** have been a part of our lives since we opened the church in this pandemic times. It has been a challenging year to say the least. We practiced flexibility, adapted to changes in the Liturgy, reserved our seats to attend Mass, and scheduled our weekend morning to watch

Fr. Okumu's recorded Mass. Zooming and other social media have been our ways to keep our lives going. We all made it happen. I truly enjoyed and appreciate the STMP staff and dedicated volunteers who have been working hard every weekend to keep our community safe.

**WE ARE ALL IN IT TOGETHER- MASKS-SANITIZE-SOCIAL DISTANCING and a SMILE**

**UNDER THE MASKS!** We love you all! God is good!

May the **BLESSING OF CHRIST** Be with you **ALL** especially this **CHRISTMAS and the NEW YEAR 2021!!!**

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD CHRISTMAS**



**THE  
NATIVITY  
OF THE  
LORD**



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