



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC CHURCH

535 Rucker Road
Alpharetta, GA 30004
P: 770-475-4501
F: 770-772-0355
www.sta.org

December 19, 2021



4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT 4^o DOMINGO DE ADVIENTO

*Thank you for
Joining us at Mass!
Let's keep in
touch!*

*!Gracias por
celebrar la misa
con nosotros!
¡Mantengámonos
en contacto!*

Name: _____

Contact Information

E-mail: _____

Phone Number: _____

I am interested in:

- registering at the parish
- receiving the electronic newsletter
- knowing more about ministries at STA

**Please tear off this form
and place it in the
offertory basket and
someone will contact you
within a week.**

Nombre: _____

Información del contacto

Correo electrónico: _____

Número de teléfono: _____

Estoy interesado en:

- registrarme en la parroquia
- recibir el boletín electrónico con las noticias de la parroquia
- recibir más información sobre los ministerios en Santo Tomás de Aquino

**Por favor arranque esta
sección con sus datos y
colóquela en la canasta
de la ofrenda, alguien se
pondrá en contacto con
usted durante la semana.**

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

Office Hours / Question of the Week

CLERGY



Msgr. Daniel Stack
Pastor



Fr. Jaime Rivera
Parochial Vicar



Fr. Paul W. Berny
In Residence

FOLLOW US



**GIVE ONLINE
DONAR EN LÍNEA**

MASS SCHEDULE

MASS TIMES

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

- Noon - English*

Wednesday:

- Noon - English - Senior Mass (62 and older) *

Jueves

- 7 p.m. - Misa en español*

Saturday Vigil/Vigilia:

- 5 p.m. - English
- 7:30 p.m. - Español

Confessions are held on Mondays from 3- 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 3 - 4 p.m. All confessions take place in the confessionals.

Las confesiones se realizan los lunes a partir de las 3 - 4 p.m. y sábados a partir de las 3 - 4 p.m. Todas las confesiones tendrán lugar en los confesionarios (dentro del Templo a la izquierda).

Sunday/Domingo:

- 8 a.m. - English
- 11a.m. - English*
- 2 p.m. - Español*
- 5 p.m. - English

**Mass is livestreamed through our Facebook page and posted on our website and YouTube following each Mass.*

** La misa se transmite en vivo a través de nuestro pagina de Facebook y se publica en nuestro sitio web y en YouTube después de cada misa.*

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

OFFICE HOURS

Parish Office: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday - Friday

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Faith Formation: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday - Thursday

HORARIO DE OFICINA

Oficina Parroquial: 9 a.m. a 4 p.m. Lunes a viernes.

Formación de fe: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lunes a Jueves

La Oficina de atención al público en español:

3 p.m. - 7 p.m. Lunes a jueves

Question of the Week

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

This Advent season, how do I recognize the Spirit's stirrings in me and others?

Each week, members of the staff gather to study and reflect on the upcoming Sunday's Gospel, and from that study and reflection they prepare the Question of the Week. Refer back to today's Gospel to reflect on your personal response. [Luke 1:39-45](#)

PREGUNTA DE LA SEMANA

En este tiempo de Adviento, ¿Cómo puedo reconocer cuando el Espíritu se mueve en ti y en los demás?

Cada semana, miembros del personal se reúnen para estudiar y reflexionar en el próximo evangelio del domingo y en base de ese estudio y reflexión ellos preparan la Pregunta de la Semana. Usa el evangelio y las lecturas para encontrar tu respuesta personal a la pregunta. [Lucas 1:39-45](#)

BEYOND OUR 40 ACRES

St. Thomas Aquinas extends its outreach far beyond these 40 acres. In this new section, you will find some of the many ways we are actively giving back to our communities. If you participate in any active charities, let us know by e-mailing us at STAreplay@sta.org.

Nuestra Parroquia de Santo Tomás de Aquino se extiende mucho más allá de los 40 acres que la forman. En esta nueva sección del boletín, encontrará información de algunas de las muchas formas en que estamos apoyando activamente a las comunidades que tenemos a nuestro alrededor. Si usted participa en alguna organización de beneficencia que esté ayudando/apoyando a alguna comunidad, háganoslo saber para que podamos compartir esas buenas noticias con el resto de la comunidad. Envíe ésta información a través de un correo electrónico a STAreplay@sta.org

SERVING THE HOMELESS

Multiple times each month, a group of STA Parishioners travel to downtown Atlanta to distribute items of necessity to the homeless. These items include, food, socks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, masks, etc.



If you would like to contribute necessities for this group, please drop them off at the Parish office.

SIRVIENDO A LAS PERSONAS SIN HOGAR

Varias veces al mes, un grupo de feligreses de STA viaja al centro de Atlanta para distribuir artículos de necesidad a las personas sin hogar. Estos artículos incluyen comida, calcetines, cepillos de dientes, pasta de dientes, mascarillas, etc.

Si desea contribuir con las necesidades de este grupo, déjelas en la oficina parroquial.

UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTIONS

- Dec. 13 | Retired Religious Fund
- Dec. 19 | St. Vincent de Paul - STA
- Dec. 21 | Christmas Donations
- Dec. 27 | Catholic Charities
- Jan. 1 | Solemnity of Mary

Donations for second collections may now be placed in the white drop box in the Narthex.

Yellow envelopes in the pews are available for your second collection donations and can be placed in the collection basket or in the dedicated box in the Narthex.

SVdP FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

- Canned chicken
 - Canned fruit
 - Pasta sauce
 - Cereal
 - Rice
- Crackers
- Please note that expired food will not be accepted. Thank you for donating!

JOB NETWORKING MINISTRY

Job seekers, recent graduates, or those looking to further their careers are invited to join our free job assistance session on Tuesday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. in Room 202. If you need assistance in your job search or know someone who does, you are welcome to join us.

Parishioners, we are in need of one more volunteer who have a background in business leadership, human resources, or recruiting.

For more details, please e-mail Bob Volz at bvolz_atl@yahoo.com.



DOT MINISTRIES - THE 2022 WHITESVILLE MISSION TRIP

After a two year pause due to the pandemic, DOT Ministries is excited to bring back this amazing, fun-filled, and spiritually enriching mission trip, designed specifically for high school teens. This week-long experience will enable participants to put their faith into action. The 2022 Whitesville Mission Trip is June 18 – 26 and is open to all high school teens. Teenagers must be a rising high school freshman for the 2022 / 2023 school year.

For all interested teens and their parents, there will be a mission trip information and signup meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 11, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Signups begin at 7:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 8 p.m. Spots are limited, so please plan on attending this meeting with a \$75 deposit to secure your place on the trip. For more information, please visit dotministries.org.



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

For your safety and comfort, we have added **OUTDOOR** Masses this Christmas*

Friday, December 24:

- Noon - Mass in English - Tents*
- 4 p.m. - Mass in English - Church
- 7 p.m. - Mass in Spanish - Church
- 10 p.m. - Mass in English - Church

Saturday, December 25:

- 10 a.m. - Mass in English - Under the tents* and in the Church
- Noon - Mass in Spanish - Church

HORARIO DE LA MISA DE NAVIDAD

Para su seguridad y comodidad, hemos agregado Misas **AL AFUERA** esta Navidad*

Viernes 24 de diciembre:

- 12 p.m. - Misa en ingles - Afuera*
- 4 p.m. - Misa en ingles - Templo
- 7 p.m. - Misa en español - Templo
- 10 p.m. - Misa en ingles - Templo

Sábado 25 de diciembre:

- 10 a.m. - Misa en ingles - Afuera* y Templo
- 12 p.m. - Misa en español - Templo



COMING SOON: CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM

An Introduction to the Faith and Practices of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

In today's world, knowing something about what other religions believe and practice can be essential to making sense of the daily news – around the globe and within our own community. **How would you rate your religious literacy?**

If you're one of those people who have said, "Someday, I'd like to learn more about" (name the religion of your choice), then this study is for you!

Class size is limited. Registration is OPEN NOW @ ignatiushouse.org

Tuesday evenings from 7-9 PM - 13 weeks, beginning Jan. 18 at Ignatius House Jesuit Retreat Center. For more information, contact Kathy Hoffman at kdhoffman53@gmail.com.



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

The Parish Office will be closed Thursday, Dec. 23, at noon and will reopen on Monday, Dec. 26, at 9 a.m. The Parish Office will be closed starting Thursday, Dec. 30, and will reopen on Monday, Jan. 3, at 9 a.m.

The Faith Formation Office is closed from now until Tuesday, Jan. 4, at 10 a.m.

La oficina parroquial estará cerrada el 23 de diciembre al mediodía y volverá a abrir el lunes 26 de diciembre a las 9 a.m. La oficina parroquial cerrará nuevamente el jueves 30 de diciembre y volverá a abrir el lunes 3 de enero a las 9 a.m.

La Oficina de Formación en la Fe estará cerrada desde ahora hasta el martes 4 de enero a las 10 a.m.



SMALL FAITH COMMUNITIES

Whatever else Catholics know, they must know that they are loved by the people of the Church. We at St. Thomas Aquinas have been working to create a smaller, more personal experience of church for every member of our Parish. We call these Small Faith Communities.

Small Faith Communities are groups of 8-12 adults who gather in homes to share their experiences of faith and love. Hundreds of adult parishioners participate in Small Faith Communities at St. Thomas Aquinas.

Won't you come join us? Contact Terry Zobel at tzobel@sta.org for more information.



SVDP WALMART GIFT CARD COLLECTION

This Advent, St. Vincent de Paul STA will continue its tradition of collecting Walmart gift cards for our sponsored families to purchase Christmas gifts. Walmart cards will be collected from now until Dec. 19. You can drop gift cards at the Parish Office or in the collection basket.

Our Vincentians will be collecting gift cards and monetary contributions after mass. Look for the Blue Santa hats! For added convenience, there is an online option on the Parish donation page at www.sta.org where you can make your contribution.

COLECCIÓN DE TARJETAS DE REGALO SVDP WALMART

Este Adviento, St. Vincent de Paul STA continuará su tradición de recolectar tarjetas de regalo de Walmart para que nuestras familias apadrinadas compren regalos de Navidad. Las tarjetas de Walmart se recogerán desde ahora hasta el 19 de diciembre. Puede dejar las tarjetas de regalo en la oficina parroquial o en la canasta de recolección.

Nuestros vicentinos recolectarán tarjetas de regalo y contribuciones monetarias después de la misa. ¡Busque los sombreros azules de Santa! Para mayor comodidad, hay una opción en línea en la página de donaciones de la parroquia en www.sta.org donde puede hacer su contribución.



Christmas Flowers



If you would like to contribute to our Christmas floral decorations in honor of or in memory of a loved one, please attach this coupon to your gift of \$15 or more. You may place your donation in the collection basket or drop it off at the Parish Office during business hours.

Checks can be made payable to: *St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church.*

Si desea contribuir a nuestras decoraciones florales navideñas en honor o en memoria de un ser querido, adjunte este cupón a su regalo de \$ 15 o más. Puede colocar su donación en la canasta de recolección o dejarla en la Oficina Parroquial durante el horario comercial.

Los cheques pueden hacerse pagaderos a: *St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church.*

In Honor of Memory of / En honor a la memoria de: _____

Donated by / Donado por: _____

Thank you for your generosity! / ¡Gracias por tu generosidad!

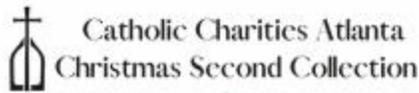


DISCIPLES AROUND YOU

Parish News

SUPPORT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Please answer the prayer for help this Christmas by contributing to the 2nd collection in support of the work of Catholic Charities Atlanta.

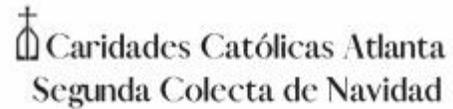


Answer the prayer for help this Christmas

Please make a contribution to the Second Collection in support of **Catholic Charities Atlanta** on December 27th.

CARIDADES CATÓLICAS DE ATLANTA

Por favor, responda a la oración de ayuda esta Navidad contribuyendo a la segunda colecta en apoyo del trabajo de caridades católicas de Atlanta.



Responda a la petición de ayuda esta Navidad

Haga una contribución a la Segunda Colecta apoyando a **Caridades Católicas Atlanta** el 27 de diciembre.

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE

Read one of the following Scripture passages aloud:
Titus 3:4-7 or Ezekiel 17:22-24

Blessing of a Christmas Tree

Lord our God,
we praise you for the light of creation:
the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.
We praise you for the light of Israel:
the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the Scriptures.
We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:
He is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace,
who fills us with the wonder of your love.
Lord God,
let your blessing come upon us
as we illumine this tree.
May the light and cheer it gives
be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
May all who delight in this tree
come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
AMEN

From Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers



GOSPEL MEDITATION
December 19, 2021
4th Sunday of Advent



St. Augustine tells us that a “Christian is a mind through which Christ thinks, a heart through which Christ loves, a voice through which Christ speaks and a hand through which Christ helps.” As we look around and out at the world, we do not have to search too far before we come face to face with inequity and injustice. There is so much unfairness, prejudice, anger, hatred, violence, and want. The stories of human heartache, people being hurt, deprived of life’s necessities, loneliness, and sickness are far too commonplace. For many of the world’s ills, the vices of greed, lust, pride, gluttony, and jealousy are clearly among the more significant root causes.

Why doesn’t God just step in and fix this mess? After all, God created this world, and one would hope that he would step up and take some measure of responsibility for it! Once we sit with this thinking for a while, we can begin to realize just how flawed it really is. God did take responsibility and God did fix the problem! God sent us Jesus Christ as the divine solution to the world’s ills. It is not God who has shirked responsibility, we have. We are the ones who continually fail to set our own personal needs, wants, and securities aside so that One more powerful than us can use us.

Mary had to set her needs aside in order for the Son of God to come into the world. Put simply, Mary listened and believed. Having opened herself to being an instrument of the Divine, God could use her as his mind, heart, voice, and hand. She became God’s vessel so that God’s greatness could reach the ends of the earth and peace could come upon the world. God’s fix for the world’s difficulties is you and me. We are the ones who confess that Jesus Christ came into the world as the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, and herald of justice. All we have to do is believe, as did Mary, that what has been spoken to us by the Lord will be fulfilled. Then, we can step aside and be the Christians we claim to be. What a difference it would make if every person who professed to be Christian truly understood that their one and only vocation is to be God’s instrument. What a beautiful, equitable, and just world it would be.

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MEDITACIÓN DEL EVANGELIO

19 de diciembre de 2021

4º Domingo de Adviento

Tomar decisiones siempre es difícil; por muy simples que sean, lleva su tiempo de discernimiento. Hoy, la Liturgia se centra en María, y el Evangelio nos dice que: "Por entonces María tomó su decisión y se fue, sin más demora, a una ciudad ubicada en los cerros de Judá" (Lucas 1:39). Hacer la voluntad de Dios, como lo hizo la Madre del Señor, no fue cosa fácil. Al pronunciar su "sí", trajo consecuencias de fidelidad y servicio. "¿Cuáles eran sus pensamientos durante los meses de espera?" La respuesta proviene del pasaje de la visita de María a su pariente anciana, Isabel. "Entró en casa de Zacarías y saludó a Isabel". María estaba feliz por su maternidad, y a su vez, Isabel saludó a María diciendo: "¿Cómo he merecido yo que venga a mí la madre de mi Señor?" (Papa Francisco 12-23-2018).

Un diálogo de amor, entre estas dos mujeres, estalla en las montañas de Judea por el Mesías esperado. María acudió con prontitud, no con ansiedad, sino actuando como una verdadera discípula a su corta edad. La visita de María a su parienta Isabel debe ser un ejemplo vivo para prepararnos a vivir una Navidad de dinamismo, fe y servicio hacia el más necesitado. Un encuentro de alegría auténtica, que manifieste la compasión y la ternura de Dios hacia los que nos rodean a través de nosotros. ¿Cuán-

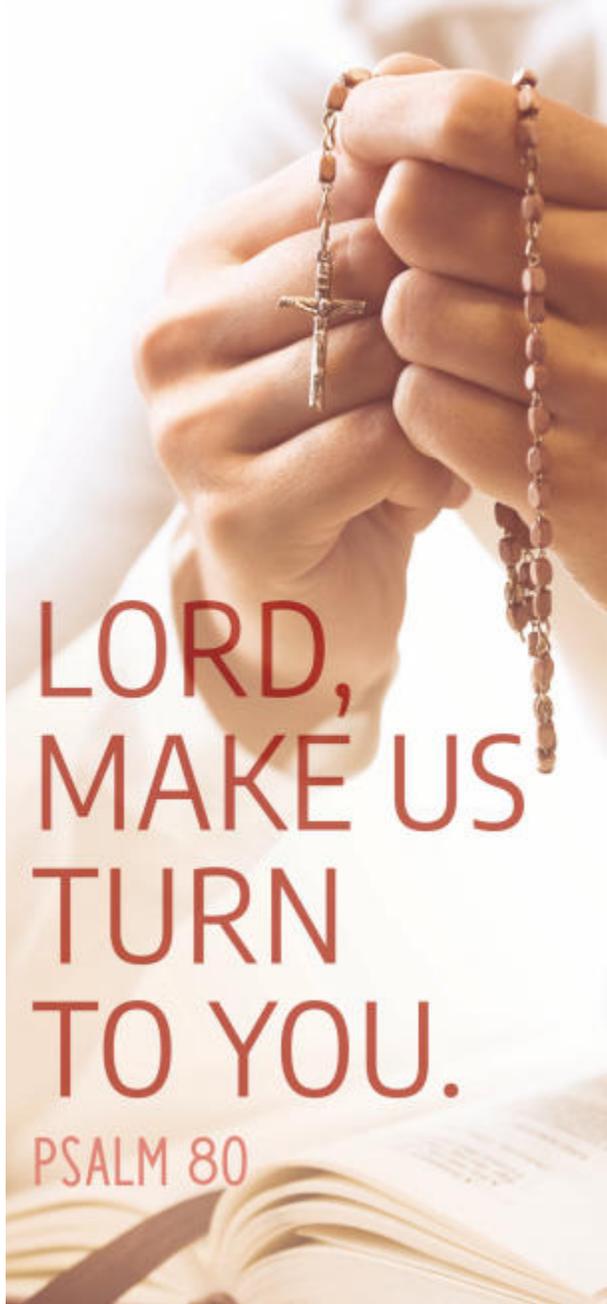
tos miembros de la familia sufren por falta de una visita, de un saludo? A tan solo unos días del nacimiento del Salvador, es el momento oportuno para las obras de caridad. ¡No pierdas la oportunidad! Camina presuroso al encuentro del Señor.
©LPi



RECONCILIATION/RECONCILIACIÓN

Confessions are held on Mondays from 3 - 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 3 - 4 p.m. All confessions take place in the Confessionals.

Las confesiones se realizan los lunes a partir de las 3 - 4 p.m. y sábados a partir de las 3 - 4 p.m. Todas las confesiones tendrán lugar en los confesionarios (dentro del Templo a la izquierda).



**LORD,
MAKE US
TURN
TO YOU.**

PSALM 80

Mass INTENTIONS

Monday, December 20

Noon (+) Mary Adams by FOM & Bereavement Ministry

Tuesday, December 21

Noon (+) Mary J. Pristavec by Claire & Ed Dravis
(L) Elizabeth Papetti and Baby Mary by Ellen Hoover
(L) Juan Antonio Perez by Lorena Perez

Wednesday, December 22

Noon (+) Howard Angione by John Dearie

Thursday, December 23

Noon (+) Deborah Joan (Fleck) Nagataby FOM
(+) Mary Roberts by FOM
All Souls by Dhabliwala
7p.m. (L) José Antonio De Miguel by Martha Zamorano
(L) Don & Sheila Nadeau by Nadeau Family
(L) Marlin & Ivan Varela by Marlin Varela

Friday, December 24

Noon Christmas Eve Mass - English - Tents
4 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass - English - Church
7p.m. Christmas Eve Mass - Spanish - Church
10 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass - English - Church

Saturday, December 25

10 a.m. Christmas Day Mass - English - Church and Tents
Noon Christmas Day Mass - Spanish - Church

Sunday, December 26

8 a.m. (L) Caryn Teresa Sudduth by Tom Gump
11 a.m. (+) Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Gagne by Maureen Rutherford
2 p.m. For the Intentions of the Parish Family
5 p.m. (+) Kevin Masterson by Ann Masterson



REMEMBER
in your prayers

PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Fabio Alvarez
Rose Marie Barnes
Lynn Brady
Ellen Reuland Coons
Sally Clark
Regina Flaherty
Peter Gallagher

Philip Garcia
Deacon Ed LaHouse
Lucretia Hart
Winifried Hofmann
Kathy Hudon
Tashone Hypolite
Bob MacPhee

Marqarita Munoz
Peter Quintana
Sandy Soltan
Roxanne Spillett
Deacon John Strachan
Bill Wickham

This list of those suffering illness is a ministry of Forever Young Friends and is updated at noon on Thursday every week. To be listed for six weeks, removed or extended, contact Marianne Fronek at mariannefronek@gmail.com.



An Incarnate Christmas

A trip to Bethlehem inspired me to purchase a Nativity set hand carved from the wood of olive trees grown in the Holy Land. That set brings a piece of the traditional birthplace of Jesus into my home.

Since 1223, when St. Francis of Assisi assembled a Nativity scene with a live ox and donkey in a cave in central Italy, Christians have depicted Christ's birth in the manger in settings in churches, towns, and homes. Whether simple or elaborate, the scenes bring comfort and joy, for they tell of the birth of a child and the fulfillment of God's promise.

The Order for the Blessing of a Christmas Manger or Nativity Scene in the *Book of Blessings* articulates the story of the Incarnation. It is a story of how God loved his people so much he sent his Son to be with them:

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Savior was great
you sent your Son to be born of the

Virgin Mary.

To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,
bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise up our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,
and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

This blessing reveals how Jesus came for all, and that through our Savior, all are connected. It reveals, too, that the coming of Christ was part of God's plan from the beginning of creation. Listening to these words, the faithful may understand that if the Messiah came through a humble person such as Mary, God can break through ordinary lives and can come in ways surprising and wondrous. When people surrender, like



Christmas celebrates that God became flesh and lives with us.

Mary, to God's will, they can bear Christ, becoming a vessel of joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Christian lives can bear Christ even during a chaotic time where peace seems to be distant. Jesus was born into turbulence. He was conceived in an unmarried woman, at birth was placed in a feeding trough for animals, and soon was hunted by a jealous king. Despite these circumstances, God chose to be born anyway. Knowing this can strengthen people to bear witness to God's presence even when uncertainty marks their lives.

May we who adorn our homes and churches with Nativity sets remember that Christmas is not only about the celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus two thousand years ago, but that God became flesh and lives with us now, today, forever.

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