

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, JANUARY 22, 2023

PARISH MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

Mission (Purpose)

Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we the Catholic Community of St. Thomas More respond to our call to holiness.

Vision (Goals)

Empowered by Baptism, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and formed by the Word of God and the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, we live out our Mission by working together:

- To structure prayerful, vibrant, participatory, Sunday worship experiences.
- To provide Life Long Faith formation for all age levels.
- To care for the young, the old, the sick, the hurting and the needy, both inside and outside our parish.
- To promote faith sharing, prayer, support, learning and listening to one another as a model for nourishing and sustaining our faith community.
- To welcome back, with hospitality, those who have left our faith community.

VISITATION AND ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the parish office, 424-3212, if a family member is seriously ill or facing/recovering from surgery and would like to see a priest or receive the Anointing of the Sick. Holy Communion is also available to those who are homebound on an ongoing basis.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please make arrangements for Baptism in advance through the parish office. Parents and godparents are required to attend a preparatory session.

MARRIAGE

Couples planning to marry will attend a marriage preparation program called Living in Love. Call office for appointment.

RCIA

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a process of formation for full initiation into the Catholic Church. It is open to those never Baptized; those baptized in another faith; and Catholics who have not received First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

For more information, please contact Sister Ann Byrnes, RSM, Pastoral Associate, 424-3212 ext. 104.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Grades One through Eight - Sunday 9:30 AM—10:45 AM

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

New members are welcome in our community of faith. Please call, 424-3212, or come to the parish

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Please submit hardcopy and/or e-mail by 2 p.m. Monday.

CATHOLIC GRADE SCHOOL

St. John Paul II Regional School - (856) 783-3088
Principal: Mrs. Helen Persing

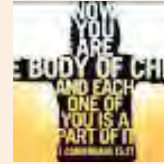


Welcome, everyone to St. Thomas More.

We are so glad you have chosen to join us today as we worship the Lord together and have fellowship!

The House of God is such a special place to be.

You may have heard people refer to a church congregation as “the body of Christ.” This is because the Bible explains us each as individual members of one whole body.



“If my people, who are called by My Name, **shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My Face, and turn** from their wicked ways; **then** will I hear from heaven, and will **forgive** their sin, and I will **heal** their land.” *2nd Chronicles 7:14*

The collection for Sunday, January 15, 2023 was: \$3697.00 from 78 donors. The budgeted amount for this week was \$8500.

A parish, like every family, runs on a budget. Money coming in must be greater than money going out. It is through the generosity of all of our parishioners that we are able to maintain a vibrant parish, keep up with maintenance, and plan long-term projects for the betterment of our parish buildings.
Thank You for your generosity.



Stewardship Corner: 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Stewards Follow

“He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed Him.” MATTHEW 4:22



Just as Jesus called the first apostles, He calls each of his **Stewards** to follow Him, too. Not everyone is called to leave their business or family behind, but **we are expected to put God first in everything.**

In gratitude to God, we should give our first and best of everything to Him: our time in daily prayer, our talent in participating in one of our parish ministries and our treasure to support the financial needs of our parish.



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners,

I have come to the conclusion that priests are a unique species. We come in all shapes and sizes. We can lean to the left or to the right theologically and politically. We minister with different levels of zeal and enthusiasm. We have varied gifts and talents: some can sing, while others should not; some can preach, while others can only be understood with much difficulty; some can teach, while others are more effective than Sominex.

We might be better termed an odd lot—something you could perhaps find available at a Big Lots store.

What do we all have in common? It's our vocation—our “calling from God.” Somehow, somewhere we all sensed an invitation from the Lord to be His priest: Come follow me! (see Mk. 10:21)

Our Priestly vocations were tested in the seminary and eventually confirmed by the laying on of hands by a bishop. At that time we begin to act in persona Christi (in the person of Christ). When a priest baptizes, it is Christ who baptizes. When a priest forgives sin, it is Christ who forgives sin. When a priest anoints a sick person, it is Christ who anoints the sick person. When a priest offers the Mass, it is Christ who is once again made present in the Holy Eucharist through the instrument of the priest. Christ does the work through the instrument of the priest.

While it is most important that a priest personally strives for holiness of life, the sacraments are not dependent on a particular priest's holiness. The simple reason is that it is not the priest (and his own talents or abilities) who is behind the act, but rather Christ. If we use the theological terminology, we say it this way: the sacraments occur *ex opere operato* (from the work itself being worked) and not *ex opera operantis* (from the person doing it or the work of the worker). The lack of holiness of a particular priest does not invalidate a sacrament. The sacraments are efficacious in and of themselves and are not dependent on the holiness of the minister.

Additionally, for us to receive the fruits or benefits of a particular sacrament, we should be properly disposed. We should be in the state of grace: not aware of any mortal or serious sin.

When we realize how the sacraments “work,” we need also to realize that priests don't automatically become “saintly” with ordination. (Probably, most parishioners are quite aware of this already!) We need continual conversion in our lives—until the day we die. Think about how Jesus (the Son of God) chose His twelve apostles. All were called by the Lord. Yet, Peter denied Him three times and Judas betrayed Him. They were far from perfect and even scandalous in their actions, even as they had closely accompanied Jesus throughout his ministry. (Was Jesus trying to prepare us for future priests who may be responsible for scandal in the church?)

I would hope that people come to the Church for the sacraments because through them we encounter Jesus and are filled with His grace. It's nice to have inspiring homilies, uplifting music and a sense of community in our churches. We should strive for that. Yet, even when these elements are absent, Jesus still works through the sacraments *ex opere operato*.

Please pray for your pastor and for all priests. There is much work ahead of us and only so many workers available for the seemingly endless tasks. When we fail or disappoint—in great things or in small matters—never give up on Christ. He remains ever present in His Church, continually at work, sometimes despite us.

Fr. Ed Namiotka, Pastor

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, JANUARY 22, 2023

Ministry Schedule for JANUARY 28/29, 2023

	Presider	Music	Extraordinary Minister	Lector	Altar Server
4:30 PM	Fr. Namiotka	Mena Julie	E. Beckman	K. McFadden	
8:30 AM	Fr. Namiotka	Julie	K. Glover	S. Oatway	E. Bresani
11:00 AM	Fr. Namiotka	Marta/Elena/ Choir Julie	J. Flynn	L. Flynn	S. Andino



The Stages of Spiritual Life:

Our relationship with GOD, or our way of living in this world hoping for a better life in the next one, brings along many struggles, doubts, incredulity and lack of courage. It should help us to remember that all truly spiritual people seemingly experienced the same struggles. They just continued on, believing and doing, not necessarily very famous things, but just everyday routine things. Their success depended on their persistence in FAITH, challenged by others, by persecution, punishment, derision, bullying. Many people remain adolescents in their spiritual life, which means the focus is more on themselves, than on those around them, or those who have gone before them, who are example and may show us how to move out of our adolescence. As we move out of our Spiritual Adolescence, we start to love God, not for what he does for us, but for who he is. As we focus more on God, we start to lose some of our selfishness. We more fully understand that all good things on earth are merely a foretaste of what is to come. “Eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.” — 1 Corinthians 2:9.



Accomplishing God’s will becomes our focus, understanding that if that is not the goal, that what is My Goal? How does it fit in with God’s own plan for me? And then I begin to work on it...that is, God’s own plan for ME. *Everything God made, he made with the purpose of pointing our hearts and minds back to HIM, our Creator. That is the whole reason we exist. These are very important points to talk and discuss with our children that they may cherish and develop a strong relationship with God.*

Resilient Grace in our Senior Years

Resilience is a grace...a gift of the Spirit that blesses our lives with insight and opportunities for deepening our relationship with ourselves, others, and God!
Resilience is part of the bedrock of “*optimal aging*” (yes, *that is a real term!*) During our time together we will explore the role spirituality plays in promoting and sustaining our resilience during our senior years.

**Sr. Mary Garvin, RSM
THIS Monday, 10AM
Parish Hall**

Join Bishop Sullivan and Fr. Hughes in Greece—October 20th—30th- \$4499ppdo (single supplement +\$949) from PHL. For more information or to register visit www.pilgrimages.com/frhughes

Sacred Heart Residence for Priests, on St. Mary Drive, is in need of a cook. This is a paid position. Please call 856-751-2010 for more information.

ALSO, occasionally a priest may need a ride to the Doctor. **Volunteers** are needed. Call 856-751-2010 to get on the list.

Parish Clothing Drive

The Cathedral Clothing Ministry in Camden is asking for used clothes in good condition for children, women, and men. They are in particular need of mens' pants sizes 32 to 38. **Our parish will collect this clothing next weekend January 28th and 29th.** We



will have a table in the Gathering Space for you to place the clothes you are donating. This Clothing Drive is sponsored by the Faith & Justice Team.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, JANUARY 22, 2023

Weekly Intentions



SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

4:30 PM Intentions of Marie Budroe
r/b Greta Tyrrell

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

8:30AM William Mayer r/b Pat Luchtman
11:00AM Sheila Mohan r/b Rodie Boyle

MONDAY, JANUARY 23

9:00AM John & Sheila Mohan r/b family
9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

9:00AM People of the Parish
9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

9:00AM Michael Mahon
r/b St. Vincent de Paul Society
9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

9:00 AM Bridget Namiotka
r/b St. Vincent de Paul Society
9:30 AM-12NOON Eucharistic Adoration—Chapel

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

9:00 AM James Monahan
r/b Dr. & Mrs. Paul Schneider
9:30 AM-12NOON Eucharistic Adoration—Chapel

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

4:30 PM Dorothy Cerone
r/b Bob & Toni Pellegrino

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

8:30 AM Sheila Mohan
r/b Dave & Ellie Mayfield
11:00 AM Chip Tagland r/b Mark & Liz DeYoung

**Pope Francis' January Prayer Intentions:
For educators**

We pray that educators may be credible witnesses, teaching fraternity rather than competition and helping the youngest and most vulnerable above all.

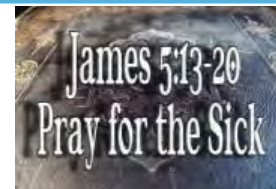
'They' are at it again

Please be aware that neither Fr. Ed nor any of the Parish staff will contact you by email or text requesting monetary assistance or gift cards for personal use.

If you receive such a notification, please call the Parish office. 856-424-3212.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: THE SICK...

Kristina Acevedo, Caroline Bancheri, Jim Beaney, Jim Beaney, Jr., Pat Beaney, Ray Chuisano, Elva Clark, Grace Cobin, Joseph Console, Marie Corcoran, Mary Cowan, Catherine Diana, Fr. George Donfurtang, Elizabeth Garber, Eileen Gerie, Eileen Goodwin, Marjorie Graham, Maureen Howe, Helen Kane, Marion Kapischke, Michael Kapischke, John B. Kennedy, John Lane, Bob Lento, Marie Manalo, Tina Petrone, Helen Protzman, John Ravena, Jacob Rivera, Jaxson Rivera, Eleanor Rizzo, Dom Sacca, Carlos Santiago, Teddy Shaffer, Jean Smyth, Claire Spence, Dick Spence, Dale Strack, Stacia Strack, Michael Suralik, Pat Suralik, Ann Vigrass, Sarah Warner.



PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE ARMED SERVICES...

SPC Jordan Beckman, Captain Patrick J. Bones, USMC, Major Anthony R. Cosentino, USAF, SSgt John P.

DeYoung, Lt. Nicholas G. Iannuzzi, SSgt. Kris Knaup, Lt. Christopher Mawn, Lt. (j.g.) Jacqueline A. McCabe, SN Christian Mele, PFC Sonny Morrison, Lt. Col. Louis J. Papa, Sgt. 1st Class Mark Rimbaugh, Sisi Tyrrell, USMC, SPC Nicole Williams, and *all those serving our country.*

NEXT ST MARY'S BLOOD DRIVE HAS REACHED 56-DAY CUTOFF DATE

American Red Cross Blood Drive at St. Mary Church (Parish Hall)

2001 Springdale Rd., Cherry Hill NJ 08003
Thursday, March 23, 2023 9:30am-7:30pm
The interval between whole blood donations is 56 days, and 112 days for Power Red Donors. Any regular whole blood donation made after January 26 (or may have already been made after December 1, 2022 for Power Red Donors) makes you ineligible to donate at this blood drive. Register at redcrossblood.org, using sponsor code 'Saint Mary RCC'. You may also register by contacting Tom Wakeley at 856-424-2085.

Save the Date:

**Sunday, March 5, 2023
3-7PM**

**Spring Benefit Dinner Dance
FMIJ Sisters**

More details next week!



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Small Christian Community Faith Sharing

Please note that we put the following week's Gospel passage in this space so you can prepare all week for Proclamation of the Gospel the following Sunday. Faith Sharing helps ordinary people connect their faith with everyday life experiences

Excerpt from the Gospel for the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, January 22, 2023 - Matt. 4:12-23

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him.

Commentary:

Imagine the scene in your neighborhood. Jesus walks down the street, calling all who hear his voice to follow him. And there go your neighbors one by one, abandoning their computers and television sets, gardening tools and supper preparations, cell phones and homework, to fall in behind a virtual stranger. Why do they do it? Some go because they hate what they were doing and are looking for any excuse to shirk their responsibilities. Some go out of curiosity because they are bored and yearn for something interesting to happen. Some go because they have felt neglected or ignored and are grateful to be asked. Some even go because they were startled by the call they heard, by the insistence in the voice that roused them to feelings they can scarcely name. For the best reasons and for the worst, lots of people leave everything behind and follow Jesus. And you know what? All of them are better off than the ones who never even looked up to see who just passed by.

Questions for Reflection and Sharing:

1. What is God saying to me in this Gospel passage?
2. What word or phrase in this Gospel speaks to me?
3. What word or phrase in the Reflection resonates with me?



Pro-Life Corner: What to do if you have an unplanned pregnancy 7 coping strategies (from Psych Central).

"When dealing with an unplanned pregnancy, it may help you to know you aren't alone. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Trusted Source reports that in 2008 over 50% of folks reported having an unwanted pregnancy. By 2011, the overall percentage dropped to 45%, but unwanted teen pregnancy remained at about 75%.

Unplanned pregnancy is common in partnered women. A study from 2017 Trusted Source broke down pregnancy intention into "planned", "unplanned/happy", "unplanned/ambivalent", "unplanned/unhappy".

At 9 months postpartum, the study reports that people who had "unplanned/unhappy" pregnancy experiences psychological distress at nearly double the rate of those who had a "planned" pregnancy.

**Sanctity of Life Mass
for New and Expectant Mothers
12:15pm Monday, Jan. 23, 2023
St. Mary Parish Hall
All are welcome to attend.**



The next **Consolation Ministry** meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, January 26 at 1 pm** in the **St. Thomas More Room**.



Recent US Immigration Laws Proposed

Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Migration, issued the following statement: "We welcome the announcement of new legal pathways to the United States, but it is difficult for us to consider this progress when these same pathways are contingent on preventing those forced to flee their native land from availing themselves of the right to seek asylum at our border. Under this approach, many of the most vulnerable will be excluded from relief and subjected to dangerous circumstances, contravening US and international refugee law, as well as Catholic Social Teaching.

Second Collection this weekend

"The Collection for the Church in Latin America is about changing lives – sometimes saving lives – and bringing people to Jesus. Your gift, no matter how large or small, will join with those of other Catholics to make a multimillion-dollar impact in places where people are praying for miracles," said Bishop Octavio Cisneros, auxiliary bishop emeritus of Brooklyn and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee on the Church in Latin America.



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