

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 18, 2024

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



Blessed are you, God of Creation,
for you have placed us in a world of
wonders and then sent your Son to redeem
us and teach us your wisdom.
Help us to use your gifts as you intend.
Be with us when we face temptations.
Give us the strength we need
to remain faithful to you.
Draw the "Elect" preparing to join
the Church this Easter, and all of us,
closer to you during this season.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen



"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, February 11, 2024, was \$ 7766.19. The budgeted amount was \$8500. We've all heard it before: nobody's perfect. And it's true. As humans, we are fallible and so far from perfect. But through being generous, we can experience a kind of perfection afforded to us by Jesus. Giving generously to others brings us closer to perfection in the eyes of God. Meditate on what your offerings mean and how those offerings might bring you closer to Jesus.



Stations of the Cross will be held in the Chapel at 7:00 PM every Friday during Lent. All are encouraged to take part in this Lenten Devotion.

Stewardship Corner: 1st Sunday of Lent Stewardship Lifestyle

"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God...." - MARK 1:14

Have you ever thought about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to go to Galilee, knowing that John had just been arrested for teaching the same message that He was proclaiming. It took great love and trust for Jesus to do what the Father had sent Him here on earth to do. In the same way, **living a Stewardship lifestyle takes great love and trust from us. We must be willing to surrender completely to God, trusting that He will always give us all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.**

From the Pastor's Desk
How Seriously Will You Take this *Lenten Season*?

Dear Parishioners,

Typically, **Ash Wednesday** is a crowded day in our church. People annually come to “get ashes.” Despite the fact that the day is not a holy day of obligation in which we are *required* to attend Mass—*psst*, please don't tell anyone!— people are here throughout the day looking for those ashes. Sometimes, they have even come to the rectory door at all odd hours because they don't want to be without those blessed ashes.

If I look at this phenomenon from a positive angle, I hope and pray that people see the need for **repentance** and a **change of life**. I pray that they heed the call to **conversion**. I pray also that they truly *open their lives to Jesus* and want to *turn away from sin*.

The logical follow-up during the Lenten season would then be a desire to attend Mass more frequently. There should be an increase in the use of the *Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation* (confession). Time for prayer and meditation needs to grow. Certainly, we should see increased generosity, kindness and compassion in all of us. In the end, we should be spiritually renewed and prepared for the great events of the **Easter Triduum**. This is my sincere hope and prayer.

Unfortunately, there will be those who approach the ashes in a *superstitious* manner or with a misunderstanding that places more importance on this *sacramental* than it truly deserves. I used to tell my students in high school quite bluntly that *ashes (burnt palm) on the forehead, in and of themselves, will not get someone into heaven*. They are merely a symbol of **repentance** and **mortality**. Rather, **Jesus**, the *Bread of Life*, in the *Holy Eucharist* is much more than any such *symbol*. The *Holy Eucharist* is, in fact, the real, true presence of Jesus who was offered *for us* on the cross and who is now offered *to us* in Holy Communion.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. (John 6: 54-56)

Essentially, it is my duty as one who preaches and teaches to help people to understand and to prioritize what is *essential* for a Catholic (the **Holy Eucharist**) and what is merely helpful and a symbolic reminder for us (*blessed ashes*). All of the seven *sacraments* are *life-giving*—in essence, imparting to us *God's grace*—through various outward signs. They are opportunities to encounter **Christ**. We are *fed, nourished, healed, forgiven, strengthened, and sanctified* by our participation in these sacraments. Most notably, the **Holy Eucharist** and the **Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation** are the two sacraments that we are able to and should participate in *frequently*.

Please take *Lent* seriously. Heed the call to *conversion*. Put into practice acts of *prayer, fasting* (self-denial) and *almsgiving* (charity).

Over everything else, *fall in love with Jesus*. I say this not in some superficial, romantic way but as our essential, unconditional response to the *Son of God* who loved us unto death.

Fr. Ed Namiołka, Pastor

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 18, 2024

Ministry Schedule February 24/25, 2024

	Clergy	Music	Eucharistic Minister	Lector	Altar Server
4:30 PM	Fr. Namiotka	Florence	E. Beckman	C. Betson-Smith	T. Johnson
8:30 AM	Fr. Coronado	Becca Julie	Sr. Diana	S. Oatway	E. Bresani
11:00 AM	Fr. Namiotka	Becca/Choir Julie	D. Staton	C. Musso	S. Andino M. Marsden



The Lord Loves Who Gives With Joy

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops every year invites Catholics and faith communities in the United States to encounter God and

our global family throughout Lent by practicing the pillars *of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.*

Lenten alms donated through CRS Rice Bowl support the work of CRS in more than 120 different countries each year.

“God loves a cheerful giver.

Moreover, God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work” (2Cor.9,7-8).



For us Christians, this time of Lent is an important time of reflecting on the suffering and death of Jesus - who continues to suffer with those who are suffering for hunger or in other different ways - ... so that, we too, with Jesus, may enter into the joy of His Resurrection.

With new trust and hope, let us begin this Holy Season of Lent together with the Pope and the whole Church, looking at Jesus as He gives Himself totally, with all His love, to all and each one of us so that, with Him, we too, may share, with joy, His love to others. A blessed Journey to all of us!

REMINDERS:

February 18: First Sunday of Lent - NO SESSION –

February 24: (Saturday): Celebration of the First Penance for second graders, in the Chapel, at 10:00 am to 11:30 am.

March 9: at 9:00 am to 12:00 pm: Confirmation Preparation Classes taught by Father Ed, our Pastor (bring wit you the book “Decision Point”).

Parish Mission

A Parish Mission is a time of personal and communal renewal for all of us at St. Thomas More. We are pleased to have Fr.

Caparas as our Mission

Presenter for 3 evenings during the Lenten Season. Mission times and dates: 7:00 PM February 26th—28th, 2024 St. Thomas More Church. All are encouraged to attend.



Diocesan Synod Listening Sessions

The Holy Father wants to hear from everyone about how we are or are not continuing the ongoing work of the Christ’s mission.

What about the Church brings you joy?
What are some pathways to a shared responsibility for clergy and the laity?
How has the Church disappointed you?

Feb. 20: 7:00—8:30PM St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish, 200 Tuckahoe Rd., Marmora, NJ 08223

Feb. 27:7:00—8:30 St. Charles Borromeo Parish 176 Stagecoach Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081 PM

Your support of the **South Jersey Catholic Ministries Appeal** ensures the vitality of essential Diocesan ministries and programs that sustain the healing, teaching and redemptive Presence of Jesus Christ throughout Southern New Jersey.



Support the **South Jersey Catholic Ministries Appeal**
www.camdendiocese.org/sjcma

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 18, 2024

Weekly Intentions



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

4:30 PM Rev. Phillip Johnson
r/b Chris Betson Smith

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

8:30 AM Fr. Phillip Johnson
r/b Franciscan Sisters

11:00 AM Fr. Phillip Johnson
r/b Bill & Ann Vigrass

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

9:00 AM people of the parish
9:30—12noon Adoration in the Chapel

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

9:00 AM Rev. Phillip Johnson r/b Tobin family
9:30—12noon Adoration in the Chapel

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

9:00 AM Living and deceased members of Morgan family in Ireland
9:30—12noon Adoration in the Chapel

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

9:00 AM Rev. Phillip Johnson r/b Ibay family
9:30—12noon Adoration in the Chapel

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23

9:00 AM Souls in Purgatory
r/b Michael Calingasan
9:30—12noon Adoration in the Chapel
7:00 PM Stations of the Cross in the Chapel

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

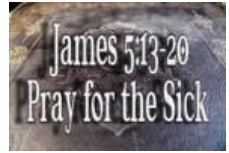
4:30 PM Hector Montes
r/b Pauline & family

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

8:30 AM Intentions of Fr. Ed Namiotka & Sr. Ann Byrnes
r/b Carlos & Daisy Santiago

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: THE SICK...

Kristina Acevedo, Caroline Bancheri, Jim Beaney, Jim Beaney, Jr., Pat Beaney, Joe Centonze, Ray Chuisano, Elva Clark, Grace Cobin, Alex Colon, Tammy Colon, Joseph Console, Marie Corcoran, Mary Cowan, Catherine Diana, Linda Di Giulio, Fr. George Donfurtang, Elizabeth Garber, Eileen Gerie, Eileen Goodwin, Marjorie Graham, Helen Kane, Marion Kapischke, Michael Kapischke, John B. Kennedy, John Lane, Bob Lento, Marie Manalo, Kelly Moore, Carter Oakley, Tina Petrone, Helen Protzman, Dom Sacca, Carlos Santiago, Teddy Shaffer, Grace Sklencar, Joe Sklencar, Claire Spence, Dick Spence, Dale Strack, Stacia Strack, Michael Suralik, Pat Suralik, Ed Targonski, Sr., Roy Targonski, Ann Vigrass, Joanne Wachman, Sarah Warner, *and Nicholas.*



PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE ARMED SERVICES... SPC Jordan Beckman, Captain Patrick J. Bones, USMC, Major Anthony R. Cosentino, USAF, TSgt. John P. DeYoung, Sam Houston, USN, Lt. Nicholas G. Iannuzzi, SSgt. Kris Knaup, Capt. Jennifer LaSalce, US Army, Capt. Christopher Mawn, Lt. Jacqueline A. McCabe, PFC Sonny Morrison, Lt. Col. Louis J. Papa, Sisi Tyrrell, USMC, SPC Nicole Williams, and *all those serving our country.*

Eucharistic Revival Quotes from Pope Francis

“We should not grow accustomed to the Eucharist and go to Communion as a habit: no! Each time we approach the altar to receive the Eucharist, we must truly renew our “amen” to the Body of Christ. When the priest says “the body of Christ” we say “amen”: but let it be an “amen” that comes from the heart.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of
Richard Spence
John “Jack” Smith

Pope Francis’ Prayer Intentions February 2024 For the terminally ill

We pray that those with a terminal illness, and their families, receive the necessary physical and spiritual care and accompaniment.

St. Thomas More Consolation Ministry meeting: 1:00 PM February 29, 2024 in the Hall. Join us or call for more information: Ann Marie Lento 856-344-7454; Jon Lisitski 856-210-6466; Marian Kapischke 856-424-2053



Are you able to help? Some parishioners from St. Mary’s Village, (right behind us) need rides to Mass. Please call the Parish Office (856-424-3212) if you can help fill this need.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 18, 2024

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 Second Sunday of Lent, February 25, 2024 - Mark 9:2-10

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them... Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus... Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, 'This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.' As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant."

Commentary:

Throughout Mark's Gospel, we hear the question "Who is Jesus?" In the Transfiguration, we hear the clearest answer. But this foreshadowing of the Resurrection comes between two predictions of suffering and rejection. Even Jesus' closest apostles fail to understand what Jesus means by "rising from the dead," and they do not want to hear his predictions of his Passion. But Mark makes it clear to his audience that resurrection can only be understood in the mystery of suffering and dying.

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: "Abortion is a profoundly immoral and unjust act: the taking of an innocent human life at its most defenseless. As Christians committed to justice and righteousness, we cannot stand by and just let that happen."— **Dr. James Anderson**, Author

2024 APPEAL: "THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM" CAMPAIGN PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
From the depth of your riches, you gave us your Son.
In the Eucharist, we have our spiritual sustenance and
our focus.
Sustain us, guide us, and bless us as we carry out our
work, always mindful of our purpose.
For from him, and through him and for him are all
things.
To him be glory forever.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Who with You and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns one God forever
and ever.
Amen.



****St. Thomas More's Goal is \$89,700. We will need the help of every parishioner to meet this goal. Thank you for prayerfully considering your donation. ****



Action needed to Prevent the Evil of Human Trafficking

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) and the Committee on Migration has supported calls for legislation and policies that enhance protections for victims and address the conditions that result in trafficking. Most recently, the committee has expressed its support for **the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2023 (H.R. 5856) and urges Congress to pass the bill without further delay. Call your representatives today and ask them to support this legislation. Senator Corey Booker---A(202) 224-3224|| Representative Donald Norcross 202-225-6501**

Step Up Dad Day for Men

Divine Mercy Parish
23 W. Chestnut Ave., Vineland, NJ
Saturday, March 16, 2024
8:30 AM—2:15 PM— Lunch Provided
For more information or to register: Ann Marie Ours:
annmarie.ours@camdendiocese.org or
call: 856-583-2904

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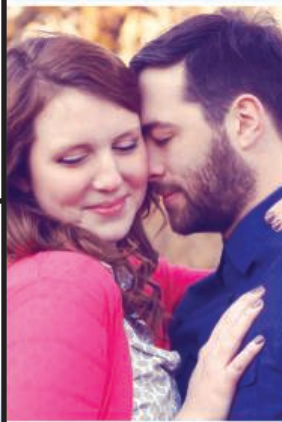
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