Whatever your status in the Church, whatever your family/marital situation, whatever your religious affiliation, whatever your personal history,
Welcome to the Parish Family of St. Thomas!
If you are new to the community, Welcome! We are grateful to the Lord for your presence with us and look forward to including you in all areas of parish life. Please take a moment to stop by the Parish Office and register with us and after Mass please introduce yourself to Fr. Jay, Fr. Frank or Fr. Anthony. Registering and using your envelopes makes it easier for us to provide documentation, such as a certificate for sponsoring a child for Baptism or Confirmation or to arrange for a wedding. So please register... and Welcome!

Parish Office
One St. Thomas Plaza
Old Bridge, NJ 08857
Tel: 732.251.4000 Fax: 732.251.4946
School Tel: 732.251.4812
PREP Tel: 732.251.1660
Hours (Lunch 12:30pm-1:30pm approx.):
Monday and Friday: 9:00am—4:00pm
Tues./Wed./Thurs.: 9:00am-8:00pm
Saturday-Sunday: 11am—1:30pm

Contact Information:
Website: www.sainthomasob.com
www.facebook.com/pages/St-Thomas-the-Apostle-Church-Old-Bridge-NJ
Parish Office Staff
Business Administrator: Ms. Michelle Loney
Parish Secretary: Ms. Kristine Yuhas
Reception/Bingo Coordinator: Ms. Angelica Gangemi
Bulletin Editor: Ms. Nellie Moran

Sacramental Information
BAPTISMS: (1:30pm, most Sundays) The Church calls GOD-PARENTS, to be practicing Catholics, examples of Christ-centered living today. All Godparents should submit Sponsor letters from their Parish ASAP—but no later than three weeks before the scheduled Baptism. PARENTS must attend a Baptism Preparation Session. (Registration is required.)
MARRIAGES:
Arrangements must be made at least one year in advance—before any social plans. Either the bride or groom must be a registered member of our parish. Once a marriage questionnaire (available in Pastoral Center) is completed/returned, a Parish Priest or Deacon will then contact the couple.
ANOINTING OF THE SICK:
In case of dangerous illness or accident, phone the Pastoral Center. A communal celebration of the Sacrament is held each year in the Spring.
PENANCE: Individual Confessions most Saturdays, 12:30pm and immediately following 5:30pm Mass. Communal Penance during Lent/Advent with visiting clergy.
HOMEBOUND PARISHIONERS: Parishioners desiring the Sacraments, please contact Pastoral Center.

REMEmBERING LOVED ONES...
Sanctuary Candle/Street Candle, (lit for one week in church/chapel, available during daytime in Pastoral Center).
Wall of Remembrance: Honor your Loved One’s with a candle that burns for one year and has a plaque under the candle in the church.

This week in Loving Memory of...
Anthony Milea r/o Linda Picciomini
Sanctuary Candle in Church
Francis Fitzgerald r/o Friends of Ronnie
Mary Candle in Chapel
December 8, 2019

**Parish Support**
Here at STA we encourage you to be Christian Stewards, using everything God has given us—time, talent, treasure—to serve Him gratefully.

*Collection December 1: $12,797 (‘18: $15,095”)
Poor: $670*

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**DECEASED LOVED ONES**
John Francy and Kathleen Christian

**THIS WEEKEND: SECOND COLLECTION**
Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides vital support for our senior Catholic Sisters, Brothers and religious order Priests. Thank you for your generosity.

**PARISH PIPE ORGAN FUND**
*Next weekend: (Third Sunday of the month through December)* this special collection is for the refurbishing of our current pipe organ, so that we may achieve our goal of repairing it. Special envelopes will be available at the exits of the church, as well as a brochure for memorial opportunities. *November collection: $4,065.00*

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**“A Century of Faith...a Future of Hope”**
1921 • 2021

*In October of 2021, St Thomas the Apostle Parish will celebrate its 100th Anniversary!* We will begin our yearlong celebration in October of 2020. Parish Council members, as well as parishioners, will be part of planning our Celebration and asked to be members of the various committees that will be formed to make our Centennial Celebration a success. The Committees are: Publicity Committee, History Committee, Art and Historical Display Committee, Liturgy Committee, Dinner-Dance Committee, and the Event Committee Sign-ups for these Committees will be announced shortly and more information will follow in upcoming bulletins. May God continue to Bless our parish as we continue to strive to fulfill the Mission He has entrusted to us!

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**ALTAR FLOWERS**
Envelopes are available at church exits (Welcome desks) and in the Pastoral Center for those wishing to remember and honor Loved Ones by donating Christmas Flowers. A Triduum of Masses will be celebrated for them. (Names will appear in the bulletin.)

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**ADVENT PRAYER**
**Week Two**

*Dear Jesus,*
You entered our world on Christmas as the Prince of Peace. This Advent, as we strive to become the best version of ourselves, fill us with a deep and abiding peace. Help us share that peace with everyone we encounter, especially those who need it most.

*Amen.*

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**ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE**
*Tuesday, December 10, 7pm*
This service includes Scripture reading, a brief homily and a communal examination of conscience, followed by individual confessions (church). Visiting priests will be here. (No 7pm Mass.)

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**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**
...will be celebrated tomorrow, December 9, (and is not a Holy Day of Obligation) because December 8 falls on the Second Sunday of Advent. Masses: 8:15am & 7pm are in the church.

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**ADVENT SHARING TREE**
Each year we are amazed and grateful for the generosity of our parishioners who donate toys and gifts to our Sharing Tree. Families within our parish needing assistance, as well as other families that reach out to us for help will receive donated toys. The money received will go toward the purchase of gift cards to ShopRite and Target. The Yellow Tag Gifts received will be distributed to 120 residents of Summer Hill Nursing home, 110 residents of Preferred Care and 180 residents of Roosevelt Care Center. It is with your generosity that this year’s Sharing Tree will be a huge success, so that we can share the special warmth of the Christmas season with so many wonderful people.

*May the Peace of the season fill your heart.*
Please stop by the lobby and select your gift tag/envelope for the Advent Sharing Tree. Envelopes for monetary donations and for food (red stamp and clothing green stamp) will be available. Gifts for nursing homes are in great demand; at least 425 gifts are needed. Nursing home items will be on yellow tags and UNWRAPPED children’s toys red tags. Place any checks or monetary donations in the box. All Sharing Tree gifts/envelopes may be dropped off at the Pastoral Center or the Sharing Tree Mass on Saturday, December 14, 5:30pm. Please be sure to include the gift tag on each gift. Gifts accepted until December 14. Thank you!
PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

- All Confirmation Candidates: must sign the Mass attendance book (red binder) located on the front right side of the church. Arrive a few minutes early or stay after Mass to sign the book. Do not sign the book during Mass or after receiving Communion. If you attend Sunday Mass at another Parish, you must bring a bulletin signed by a local priest.

- PREP Confirmation Candidates Only: are required to attend a mandatory session on Monday, December 16, 6:45pm-8:30pm in St. Thomas School. Please arrive promptly. Parents must meet their child at the front doors of the school at dismissal.

- All Confirmation paperwork was due December 2. This includes your Confirmation Candidate Contract, Saint Report and Sponsor form. Please return to the PREP Office as soon as possible.

- Congratulations to the 100 children who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Please remember them in your prayers.

- Questions? Phone the PREP Office 732.251.1660.

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN
TODAY, 9:00am Mass. Children in Grades K-8 go to the Pastoral Center, listen to readings, reflection and Prayers of the Faithful on their own level. Children are well supervised and return to their parents during the Presentation Hymn for the Eucharist.

Bereavement Support Program
A parish bereavement support program will begin on Tuesday, January 14, 7:00pm—St. Thomas parish room of the Pastoral Center. The group will meet on Tuesdays - January 14, 21, February 11, February 25, and March 10. There will be five sessions, and is offered as a support for all persons who have recently lost a loved one struggling with the mourning process. Registration is required. No Walk-Ins. For more info... please call Deacon Pat 732-251-4000 ext. 8218. ext. 8218.

Holy Moments:
How are you spending your time?

Holy moments are actions you take to demonstrate Christ within you. It is being led by the Holy Spirit, doing God’s will. It can be as simple as smiling at someone who needs a smile, visiting a sick friend or signing up to be a teacher for PREP. Take time to read some of the Holy Moments shared by your fellow parishioners that are already posted on the wall in the lobby of the church and share your holy moments by filling out a label and dropping it into the box.

WITH GRATITUDE...
The Family Life Committee, wishes to express their gratitude to all those parishioners and PREP students who participated in our annual Christmas Card signing. We mailed over 400 cards to those serving in the military. In addition, your generous monetary donations exceeded the mailing cost, affording us the opportunity to send $100 to the Disabled Veterans. Thank you for your generosity! Thank you for your generous support!

“TABLE AT STA”
“For I was hungry and you gave me food…” Matthew 25:35

Next meal is Saturday, December 14, 12pm-2pm. Our thanks to parishioners for providing non-perishable food donations. Info: Chris Doyle cdoyle167@optimum.net or 732.257.0994.

PARISH BLOOD DRIVE
Many donors assume that they are not eligible to donate because they are taking medication. In fact most medications will NOT disqualify you from being an eligible donor. Examples of acceptable medications include most used to manage High Blood Pressure, High Cholesterol, Thyroid Conditions and Mental Health Conditions. Many blood thinners are also acceptable for blood donations (but not platelet donations). These include Aspirin, Plavix, Ticlid, Effient and Brilinta. For a complete list of medications and more information about eligibility requirements for blood donations call 1-800-688-0900.

St. Thomas the Apostle Church in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus Council 4815
Blood Drive
Donate blood... it’s the best gift you’ll give this holiday season!

Saturday, January 4th 2020
8:00am-2:00pm
333 Rte. 18

To donate blood you must be between 17 and 70 years old. 16 year olds can donate with parental consent form and those 76 and over can donate with a doctor's note.) You must weigh at least 110 lbs. and meet other requirements. Most medications will not keep you from donating. People with diabetes and blood pressure controlled by medication can donate. Please eat before you come and bring ID. Bring your donor card if you have one.

Appointments suggested. Appointments at http://tinyurl.com/GiveBloodNJBS sponsor code is 07755 end date 01/04/20 or call 1-800-933-BLOOD
Walk-ins welcome!!

Donors will be entered into a sweepstakes to win a trip for 2 to Cancun
New Jersey Blood Services
A Division of New York Blood Center
The Catechism teaches us that God created us to know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world and to be happy with Him forever in the next. This was God’s original intent. This is our purpose. Our restoration, worked through Jesus, and manifested in the Sacraments brings us back to this place of knowing, loving, and serving God here on earth.

(Excerpt from Restored discussion guide)

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY
Make the most of your Advent Season!
Join us for a Bible Study Monday, December 9, 12:00 Noon in chapel with Fr. Anthony and same date at 7:30pm (after Novena) in Parish Room with Fr. Jay. All are welcome!!

GOD, ARE YOU THERE? 24 HOUR PRAYER LINE
Our Diocesan Office for Persons with Disabilities has a 24 hour prayer line for those who desire prayers for any need. If you, a family member or friend would like to be remembered in prayer temporarily or permanently, please call us and leave a detailed message at 732.765.6431 or send an email to our office: catholicswithdisabilities@gmail.com.

$12,000.00 CASH CALENDAR
Searching for a unique Christmas gift for family and friends?
The 2020 St. Thomas Cash Calendar might be the answer.

Each month’s scene depicts one of our Church’s beautiful stained glass windows ~ and each of the 366 days of the 2020 leap-year offers a cash prize ranging from $25.00 (weekdays) to $50.00 (Sundays) to $100.00 (9 holidays) to $500.00 on both Easter and Christmas.

That’s a total of $12,000.00 in prize money!

Each $25.00 calendar is individually numbered with a tear-off section to fill in the recipient’s name and address. We keep the tear-off ~ you give the calendar as a gift. (Make sure to reserve one for yourself, too!)

Each daily winner will be sent a check for that day’s prize. You can win more than once as each winning number is returned to the pot for the next day’s drawing.

A total of 1,500 calendars will be sold ~ so please stop by the “Welcome Table” in the Church Lobby after weekend Masses to reserve your “gift” that keeps on giving throughout the year.

Prayer for Vocations
Almighty and Eternal God,
In Your unailing love You provide ministers for Your Church. We pray that more men may hear Your call to serve the Church of Metuchen as priests. Inspire in them a generous response. Grant them courage and vision to serve Your people. May their lives and service as Men of the Eucharist call Your people to respond to the presence of Your Spirit among us that, faithful to the Gospel and hope of Jesus Christ, we may all be reconciled to God, announce glad tidings to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, set prisoners free, and renew the face of the earth.

Amen

ONLINE GIVING
Now is a great time to start with our Online Giving Program. Even though you are away, your contribution will be sent without you having to worry about it! Also, you can give greener by using Online Giving. Simply go to our Parish website at www.saintthomasob.com. You can set
PRAY FOR THE SICK


Please pray for all the sick. (Names will remain on our sick list for one month, after which time they will be removed, unless we are notified to the contrary.)

The Clergy will be happy to visit parishioners confined to local hospitals. Phone the Pastoral Center: 732.251.4000

• Corpus Christi, Church Hall, off Kamm Ave, South River,
• St. Lawrence Tricky Tray, Parish Hall, Laurence Parkway, December 8. Doors will open 1pm. Tickets $10. Call 732.290.3002.
• St. Mary’s, S. Amboy, presents - Handel’s Messiah, Saturday Dec. 14, 7:30pm. $15 donation is suggested.
• Pilgrimage to Philadelphia Shrine of St. John Neumann, Saturday, December 14, 7am-5pm. Cost: $40. Mail to Church of the Immaculate Conception New Evangelization, 35 Mountain Ave. Somerville, NJ 08876.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

HOT LINE NUMBERS:

- Alanon/Alateen: 1-888-425-2666
- Narcotics Anonymous: 1-800-992-0401
- Nar-Anon of NJ 1-877-424-4491
- Alcoholics Anonymous: 1-888-245-1377 or 908.687.8566
- Domestic Violence: 1-800-572-7233
- NJ Gamblers Anonymous: 1-855-222-5542
- Suicide/Crisis: 1-800-999-9999

LIFE CHOICES RESOURCE CENTER

Clothing needed for children (up to size 7) Fall/Winter clothes. Also, toys/baby furniture (except cribs) needed. Contact: George Wiliszewski (732-679-4719)/Maureen Nigro (732-591-8914).

MILITARY MEMBERS DEPLOYED OVERSEAS

If you have a family member deployed overseas please stop at the “Welcome Desk” in the Main Lobby, so that the name(s) can be added to our Military Prayer List. May God bless all of our military service members and their families. Thank you for your service! 2nd Class Petty Officer Kyle Conlon - serving Japan Major Scott Daniels - serving in Japan SP4 Mark Gonzalez 82nd Airborne - serving in Iraq Sergeant Thomas Jobson - serving in India

Welcome Home Curtis Lynn and Douglas Titmas!