Whatever your status in the Church, whatever your family/marital situation, whatever your religious affiliation, whatever your personal history, age, background, race or color, sexual orientation, you are invited, welcomed, accepted, loved and respected here in the Catholic Community of Saint Thomas the Apostle!
**Third Sunday of Advent**

*December 15, 2019*

**Mass Intentions**

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 15 - THIRD SUN OF ADVENT**
7:30am + Joan Donnelly r/o Shirley Regan
9:00am + Robert Sousa r/o Father and Mother
10:30am + Lynn Liberty r/o D’Mello Family
12:00pm + Travis Corraro r/o Grandma

**MONDAY DECEMBER 16**
8:15am + Andrew J. Cangelosi, Jr. r/o DeGuida Family
7:00pm* + Monthly Memorial Mass

**TUESDAY DECEMBER 17**
8:15am + Kathleen Driscoll r/o Wayne/Laurie Miller
7:00pm + Mary Connor r/o D’Mello Family

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 18**
8:15am + Angelina Iadevaia r/o Family
7:00pm* + Monthly Memorial Mass

**THURSDAY DECEMBER 19**
8:15am + Edward Lonegan r/o Betty
7:00pm + Michael Lynch r/o Ted & Eileen Hudock

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 20**
8:15am + Gary Hoos r/o Tosonotti Family
7:00pm + Donna Berger r/o Pat Higgins

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 – ST. PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST**
8:15am + Albertina Miranda Neves r/o Melanie A. Badillo-Iwaniszyn
4:00pm + Maria Marrero r/o Nellie/Marty Moran
5:30pm + Tara Wadiak r/o Mother-in-law Maria & Daughter Carly Weiss

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 22 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
7:30am + Parisioners Living and Deceased
9:00am + Michael Cavallo r/o Stella and Children
10:30am + Intentions of Hilary Cotter (60th Birthday) r/o wife, Miriam and children
12:00pm + Joseph Sansone r/o Sansone & Pasqua Families

*Mass in Church*

**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.saintthomastob.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 GODPARENTS, 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 Baptismal 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/Mary 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 . . .**
Luz E. Ortega r/o Williams family
Sanctuary Candle in Church
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 8: $10,993  ('18: $11,701)
Immaculate Conception: $2,144
Ret. Fund for Religious: $2,722  Poor: $720

Online Giving... Visit our website and get started: www.saintthomasob.com.

Parish Pipe Organ Fund

This 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

Deceased Loved Ones

Carmen Dias, John Felon, Emanuel Messina, John Francy, Kathleen Christian, Paula Colo

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!

Advent Prayer

Week Three

Dear Jesus,
Help us focus on you during this busy season. May we stay aware of the joy you bring into our lives. We want to find you in the everyday moments and come with hearts of gratitude to your manger on Christmas. Amen

Pope Francis: Apostolic exhortation, Admirabile Signum released Dec. 1, 2019 stresses the meaning and importance of the Christmas creche. The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture. “The enchanting image of the Christmas creche, so dear to the Christian people, never ceases to arouse amazement and wonder. The depiction of Jesus’ birth is itself a simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God…”Pope Francis encourages everyone to keep this beautiful family tradition, and said that one’s childhood memories of the joy and wonder of the nativity help one to recall the “precious gift” of faith passed down within families. To read the full exhortation go to http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20191201_admirabile-signum.html.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24
4:00pm - Church: Cantor/Auditorium: Cantor/Organ
7:00pm - Church: Children’s/Family Choirs
*11:00pm -Church: Parish Choir (10:20pm Pre-Mass Scripture/Music) * No Mass at 12:00am

Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25
9:00am - Church: Family Choir
10:30am - Church: Cantor/Organ
12:00pm - Church: Cantor/Organ

Sunday, December 29 - Regular Sunday schedule

New Year’s Eve - Tuesday, December 31
4:00pm Vigil Mass (No 5:30pm Mass)

New Year’s Day - January 1: Solemnity of Mary Mother of God
10:30am and 12:00pm

Epiphany of the Lord - Saturday/Sunday, January 4/5
4:00, 5:30pm/7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am and 12:00pm
(Baby’s First Christmas: 12:00pm) - followed by refreshments in the Pastoral Center.

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 the weekend of Jan. 5. Please submit your envelopes no later than Friday, December 20. Thank you!

POPE FRANCIS: Apostolic exhortation, Admirabile Signum released Dec. 1, 2019 stresses the meaning and importance of the Christmas creche. The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture. “The enchanting image of the Christmas creche, so dear to the Christian people, never ceases to arouse amazement and wonder. The depiction of Jesus’ birth is itself a simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God…”Pope Francis encourages everyone to keep this beautiful family tradition, and said that one’s childhood memories of the joy and wonder of the nativity help one to recall the “precious gift” of faith passed down within families. To read the full exhortation go to http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20191201_admirabile-signum.html.

Holy Name Society Presents:

“THE CHRISTMAS CAROL”
January 5, 2020
Featuring Riddlesbrood Touring Co.

Buffet Dinner and Photo booth
Knights of Columbus, Old Bridge
Doors open at 3:30pm - Show 4:00pm - 7:00pm
Cost: $40 per person or $70 per couple

Tickets available after all masses or call 732.763.3280.
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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.

♦ Christmas Eve Tableau - 7:00pm
Children Grades 3-8 are invited to participate in the Christmas Eve Tableau. Please call the PREP office to register 732.251.1660. Parent/child must attend a brief meeting, Saturday, December 14 - 12:00noon in St. Thomas School. Dress rehearsal next Saturday, December 21 in the church 10:00am.

♦ Sharing Tree Mass and Liturgy of the Word: 5:30pm –This Saturday, December 14. Celebrate Bambinelli Sunday with the children of our parish. Children are encouraged to bring the crèche from under their Christmas tree to be blessed by the Celebrant of the Mass after reading “Bambinelli Sunday”

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 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.

FLOCKNOTE.COM
..is a simple way for us to communicate with you via email or text! Simply register for Flocknote.com and follow the instructions ... it’s so easy!

St. Thomas would like to thank the following companies and groups that donated to the Msgr. Behl Memorial Thanksgiving dinner.

Aiello’s Market, Amboy National Bank, Brunswick Memorial Funeral Home, Costco, Knight of Columbus #4815, Old Bridge Funeral Home, Saint Vincent DePaul, ShopRite of Spotswood, Wegmans of Manalapan.

“TABLE AT STA”
“For I was hungry and you gave me food…” Matthew 25:35
Next meal is this 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 CASH CALENDAR
... the Gift that keeps on giving 366 days of the year with daily prizes ranging from $25.00 to $500.00! Reserve your $25 calendar at the “Welcome Table” and the Parish office today!

$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 $500.00 (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.

STAS - HSA hosted a Family Christmas Dance on Thursday, December 5th. The families enjoyed a nice dinner together, took pictures with Santa and danced to their favorite tunes.

Register for a Tour Today!
Contact: Admissions Office 732.251.4812 x8253
333 Highway 18, Old Bridge
Visit our website: www.sttaob.com

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH AND SCHOOL, OLD BRIDGE, NJ

Prayer for Vocations
Almighty and Eternal God,
In Your unfailing 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’re 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
The Young Adult Group is gathering this coming Sunday, December 15 to go to NYC to see the Christmas tree. There will be no meeting in the parish 6:30pm that evening. Please email jpheno81@gmail.com with any questions.

**SENIOR’S MEETING**

There will be NO meeting in December. **Blessed Christmas and happy, healthy 2020 to all!**

**BINGO**

( Including progressive) All proceeds support Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish School: Sundays - 5:00pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays - 11:00am; Friday—9:00pm and Midnight.

**OPLATKI AVAILABLE FOR SALE**

...at the Pastoral Center. Cost: $5. per package.

**HOLIDAY MOVIE NIGHT**

In celebration of the Christmas Season, the AOH Brian Boru Division 14 of Middlesex County invites everyone to a Holiday Movie Night this Sunday, December 15 at Corpus Christi Parish Hall, South River. The Bells of Saint Mary’s starring Bing Crosby and Ingrid Berman. Light refreshments available 6:00pm and movie start time 6:30pm. Suggested donation $5 per person. For more info: call 732.540-7823 or email njahd1v14@gmail.com.

**SIMBANG GABI**

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Old Bridge invites you to celebrate the 8th night of Simbang Gabi on Sunday, December 22, 7:30pm. See schedule below for complete schedule of parish dates.

**HOT LINE NUMBERS:**

- Al-Anon/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