

Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish and School

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023



MASS INTENTIONS



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 24, 2023

SATURDAY	DECEMBER 23
4:00pm	Michael Cavallo r/o Stella & Children
SUNDAY	DECEMBER 24 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:00am	Thomas M. Doyle r/o Lucille & Ed Suffel
10:00am	Howard & Theresa McCauley r/o Colleen & Rhyanna McCauley
12:00pm	NO MASS WILL BE CELEBRATED
SUNDAY	DECEMBER 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE
4:00pm	Danny Treacy r/o Loney Family
7:00pm	Margaret McDade r/o Mike & Barbara Clements
11:00pm	Vladimir B. Santos r/o Paul & Vivian Montalban & Family
MONDAY	DECEMBER 25 - THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
8:00am	Christmas Flower Triduum
10:00am	Christmas Flower Triduum
12:15pm	Christmas Flower Triduum
TUESDAY	DECEMBER 26 - ST. STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR
9:00am	For Our Parishioners
WEDNESDAY	DECEMBER 27 - ST. JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST
8:00am	Dan Dildine r/o Susan Blum
12:15pm	Elena & William McCarron r/o Fillimon Family
THURSDAY	DECEMBER 28 - THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS
8:00am	Patricia Barabas/o Berman Family
12:15pm	Barbara D'Amato r/o Joe D'Amato
FRIDAY	DECEMBER 29 - FIFTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
8:00am	Joseph Meyer r/o Kathy Salmon
12:15pm	Christopher Heppel r/o Heppel Family
SATURDAY	DECEMBER 30
4:00pm	Phil Migliore r/o Children
SUNDAY	DECEMBER 31 - THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH
8:00am	John Wyatt r/o Joan Hampton
10:00am	Stan D'Mello r/o Alice & Percy Brown
12:00pm	NO MASS WILL BE CELEBRATED
4:00pm	Daniel McNerney r/o Donna Weber

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. After Mass, please introduce yourself to Father Jay, Father John or Father Joseph. 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

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am-4:00pm

Saturday-Sunday 10:30am-1:30pm

Tuesday and Thursday 9:00am - 7:00pm
(Lunch 12:30pm-1:30pm)

School Tel: 732.251.4812

PREP Tel: 732.251.1660

Contact Information:

Website: www.saintthomasob.com

www.facebook.com/pages/St-Thomas-the-Apostle-Church-Old-Bridge-NJ

Parish Office Staff

Business Administrator: Ms. Michelle Loney

Parish Secretary: Ms. Lisa Sorrentino

Reception/Bingo Coordinator: Ms. Jennifer Bachonski

Bulletin Editor: Ms. Lisa Sorrentino

Sacramental Information

BAPTISMS:

Sundays: 1:30pm, twice a month. 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 the marriage questionnaire is completed and 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.

RECONCILIATION:

Individual Confessions Saturdays, 12:30pm in the Church.

HOMEBOUND PARISHIONERS: Parishioners desiring the Sacraments, please contact Pastoral Center.

REMEMBERING LOVED ONES . . .

Sanctuary Candle/Mary Candle, lit for one week in Church, available during daytime in Pastoral Center.

Wall of Remembrance: Honor your Loved ones with a candle that burns for one year and has a plaque under the candle in the Church.

DECEASED + LOVED ONES

Gail Motta, Silvio Adami, John Agugliaro,
Irene Goldstein & Patricia Crescenzo



"Our sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ has no other purpose than to transform us into that which we receive."

- Pope St. Leo the Great

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.

You may mail in your weekly donation to:

St. Thomas Church, One St. Thomas Plaza
Old Bridge, NJ 08857

Online Giving... Visit our website to get started:

www.saintthomasob.com or other ways to give:

- visit <https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Giving/PS-1381>
- Scan the QR code below
- Use your envelopes



The collection for December 9th/10th....\$15,258
The collection for Immaculate Conception...\$3,360
The collection for Retired Religious...\$3,242

THANK YOU!

The **Mary Candle** in the Church for this week burns in memory of: Arpad Csizmadia Jr.

r/o Loving mother, Susan



The **Sanctuary Candle** in the Church for this week burns in memory of: Rosetta & Frank Pasqua and Gloria & Joseph Sansone
r/o The Pasqua Family



The **Altar Bread and Wine** this week is offered in loving memory of: Chris & Jerry Brown
r/o Pat & Bill McCormick



My Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Hebrews 1:1-2

"In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways.. In these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son."

With deep joy and gratitude, I extend to you all ...both parishioners and visitors alike, my prayerful best wishes for a holy and blessed Christmas! During this Advent Season, it was my prayer that each of us would find opportunities to reflect on our own faith and relationship with the Lord and His Church. Whatever it is that our hearts and souls, desire, *whether we realize it or not*, our ultimate desire is Jesus Himself. For this reason, we are filled with joy and consolation at Christmas to know that all that we hoped for has been fulfilled in the person of the Christ Child.

In the midst of all our current challenges and concerns, the love of God the Father is made manifest to us in the wonderful gift of His Son. With angels in Bethlehem, our faith moves us to sing. *"Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on earth!"* We recognize that true peace on earth flows from our recognition and praise of God in our lives.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your commitment to our parish. The giving of your time, talent and treasure to the Lord continues to reflect God's presence in our community. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all those who have worked so hard to make our Christmas celebrations truly wonderful, prayerful moments. Additionally, a special thank you to our staff and the devoted members of the various ministries in our parish and especially to those few who work quietly, behind the scenes all the time to make our parish vibrant.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, bless you, your families and loved ones in this grace filled Season of hope and grace. May Mary, the Mother of the Child Jesus and our Mother, watch over you and our Parish of Saint Thomas the Apostle now and always!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Fr. Jay

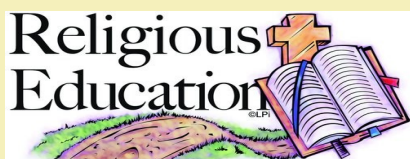
Advent Prayer

Lord God, may we, your people who look forward to the birthday of Christ experience the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen



Parents who are having their first child baptized are required to attend a Baptism Preparation session in advance.

Next class: this **Tuesday, January 23, 2024 - 7:30pm**
Parish Room of the Pastoral Center. **Registration required.**
The Sacrament of Baptism is a sacred event regulated by Church (Canon) Law. Any questions - call 732.251.4000.



PREP classes will resume Thursday, January 4th, 2024 and Special Needs classes will resume on Monday, January 8th, 2024 and Tuesday January 9th, 2024.

PREP Confirmation Candidates only:

Our next mandatory session is **Monday, January 8th from 6:45 - 8:30pm in St. Thomas School.** Please arrive promptly!

Parents must meet their child at the front doors of the school at dismissal.

Liturgy of the Word with Children at the 10:00am Mass:

Children in Grades K-8 are invited to go to the Pastoral Center, listen to the readings, share a reflection and Prayers of the Faithful on their level. Children are well supervised and returned to their parents during the Presentation Hymn for the Eucharist. We will meet every Sunday during Advent.

Rosary for Life—January 19, 2024

Come Pray a Rosary for Life (in solidarity with those at the March for Life in Washington DC and across the country). Bishop Checchio is scheduled to attend! Friday, January 19, 2024, at 1:00 pm, on Main Street in Woodbridge. Park and meet in the St. James Parish parking lot at 12:45 pm (369 Amboy Ave, Woodbridge, NJ) There is a 12:10 pm daily Mass at St. James, for those who wish to attend. For more information, contact amarshall @ di-ometcuhen.org or call 732-562-1543.



Stress in Your Marriage?

- Do you feel lost, alone or bored in your marriage?
- Are you frustrated, hurt or angry with your spouse?
- Have you thought about separation or divorce?
- Does talking about it only make it worse?

Retrouvaille is a Lifeline to Help Couples Heal and Renew their Marriages sponsored by the Office of Family Life, Diocese of Metuchen, NJ.

Retrouvaille consists of a weekend experience for married couples (no group discussions) with four follow-up sessions. The upcoming weekend is **February 2-4, 2024.** All inquiries are confidential. Please contact Rich Colasuonno 732.236.0671 or Annette Colasuonno 732.672.0748 or email 3024@helpourmarriage.org.



\$12,000.00 CASH CALENDAR

Searching for a unique Christmas gift?

The 2024 St. Thomas Cash Calendar is the perfect Christmas gift for family & friends!

All 366 days of 2024 offer a cash prize:

- + \$25.00 each weekday
- + \$50.00 each Sunday
- + \$100.00 each of 10 holidays: New Year's Day - Valentine's Day - St. Patrick's Day - Mother's Day - Father's Day - Memorial Day - 4th of July - Labor Day - Grandparents Day - Thanksgiving
- + \$500.00 on both Easter and Christmas.

That's a total of **\$12,000.00** in prize money!

Purchase a 2024 Cash Calendar for \$25.00. each. The calendar is individually numbered with a tear-off section to fill in the recipient's name and address. We keep the tear-off section for the daily drawing and you give the Cash Calendar as a gift. (Be sure to purchase a calendar for your stocking, so you can win too!)



Throughout 2024, each daily winner will be sent a check for that day's prize, and the best part is you can WIN MORE THAN ONCE as each winning number is returned to the pot for the next day's drawing. Your "Christmas gift" will keep on giving all year!



Dear Saint Thomas the Apostle Church,

Thank you so much for your generosity and support of our Baby Bottle Blessings Fundraiser!

Christ is alive and present here!

Your beautiful hearts raised an amazing
\$5,677.03!

Words cannot express our gratitude to you!

Your gifts enable us to continue serving mothers and families by providing the practical, emotional, and spiritual support they need when faced with a difficult or unplanned pregnancy or just need a hand to help right now. Your **LIFE** affirming support gives families hope! **YOU** celebrate **LIFE** right alongside us!

GOD loves you!

You are making a difference in the lives of many of God's people – born and unborn. You are helping to save lives and transform hearts right here in our own community. God Bless You!

Please know that you are in our daily prayers of Thanksgiving.

Your friends at
Life Choices

CLOSED FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

The **Parish Office** will be **closed** on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after Christmas.

We will **re-open** Wednesday December 27th at 9:00am



December 2023

Dear Parent(s),

An invitation to
"Baby's First Christmas."

On the Feast of the Epiphany, Sunday, January 7th, 2024 at 12:00 noon, our parish will celebrate a special Mass to mark your Baby's First Christmas. At this time, your child will receive a special blessing. Following the Mass, we will gather for a reception in the Pastoral Center to which you and your family members are cordially invited.

I hope you will be able to join us on January 7th. Please phone the Pastoral Center 732.251.4000 no later than Wednesday, January 3rd, to let us know how many family members will join us so appropriate arrangements can be made.

We here at Saint Thomas wish you and your family a blessed and healthy Christmas and New Year.

In Christ Jesus,
Rev. Jerome Johnson
Pastor

ST. MICHAEL the ARCHANGEL PRAYER

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our safeguard against the wiles and wickedness of the devil. Restrain him O God, we humbly pray, and do thou O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin and destruction of souls. Amen

ADVERTISING IN OUR BULLETIN!

Do you know we have 3000+ families registered here at St. Thomas the Apostle. What better way to advertise your business?

We need and appreciate your help!

Thanks to all our current advertisers!



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

Anonymously Recommended: Bob Andrews, Anthony Androvich, Ronald Atlak, Sr, Chet Dudek, Anthony D., Joseph Fricano, Cathy Hillman, Patricia Howley, Pat & Rudy Maurer, Barbara McMillian, Daniel Mechkowski, Rita Murray, Ernie Nocera, Frank Ranelli, Lucia Rella, Salvatore Sodano, Joseph Vasham, Isilio Villa, Nell White.

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 their home or local hospital.

Contact the Parish Office at 732.251.4000. If a name no longer needs to be on our list.

Christmas Schedule 2023

Fourth Saturday/Sunday of Advent

December 24th

Saturday 4:00 pm

Sunday 8:00am, 10:00am, NO 12:00 NOON

Christmas Eve Masses - Sunday

December 24th

4:00pm, 7:00pm, & 11:00pm, NO 12:00am

Christmas Day Masses – Monday

December 25th

8:00am, 10:00am, & 12:00pm

Solemnity of the Holy Family Masses

Sunday, December 31st

8:00am, 10:00am, NO 12:00 NOON

4:00pm Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of Mary,
Mother of God

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Masses

January 1st

10:00am & 12:00 NOON

Epiphany of the Lord Masses

Saturday/Sunday

January 7th/8th

Saturday – 4:00pm

Sunday - 8:00am, 10:00am

Sunday – 12:00 Noon – Baby's
First Christmas

PLEASE CHECK IF YOU HAVE

ENVELOPE NUMBER 1944 OR 1952

Please call Lisa in the Parish Office: 732.251.4000 ext.8211 and let her know so you may receive proper credit for your contribution.

Dear Family and Friends of Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish,

Help us kick off our 2023 Annual Fund with a BANG!



Your support is a vital part of our mission at Saint Thomas the Apostle School, and we cannot thank you enough for that. As we embark on another year of hard work and big goals, we want you to know that your generosity this year is as important as ever. Donations can be made by filling out the remittance envelope found at the rear of the church or online via our website www.sttaob.com. Once on our site, scroll across the home page banner to the Giving tab and click on 2023-2024 Annual Fund on the drop down menu and scroll down to the gold donate button. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Theology of the Eucharist

The Office of Ongoing Faith Formation will be offering a 12-week Adult Enrichment Course entitled "Theology of the Eucharist" on twelve consecutive Thursdays, starting January 4 through March 21, 2024 from 10am-11:30am. The course will be offered at the St. John Neuman Pastoral Center located at 146 Metlars Lane, Piscataway, NJ. Admission is \$15 for all twelve classes. Please register at www.diometuchen.org/faith-formation. For more information, please email amarshall@diometuchen.org or call 732.562.1543.

VOTIVE AND WALL OF REMEMBRANCE CANDLES ...

Are available near the Mary and St. Joseph statues. The votive candles in front of the statues are \$2, and the candles will burn for 2 hours at a time. The Wall of Remembrance will burn for one year, and the cost is \$250 per year, and will be marked with a plaque with your loved one's name. Please visit the Parish Office.

Monthly MEMORIAL Mass

*Is offered for specifically-recommended deceased loved ones. The names are inscribed in a **Memorial Register** located at the rear of the Church under a lighted candle. For more information, call the Pastoral Center: 732.251.4000.*



Thanksgiving

In this season of Thanksgiving, why not celebrate your marriage and its many blessings by attending a Marriage Encounter Weekend?

A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend gives you the time and tools to revitalize romance, deepen communication, and nourish the spirituality in your marriage.

The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held February 16 - 18.

Please apply ASAP as space is limited. Phone 1-732-904-9636 for application and information (Tom & Ruth DeFalco).

Visit us at: www.wwme.org for more information.



BLOOD DRIVE **St. Thomas RC Church**

Saturday, January 13th

8:00am-2:00pm
333 Route 18, Old Bridge



**Appointments preferred: Scan the QR code above or
call 1-800-933-2566, or visit www.nybc.org**

https://donate.nybc.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/311022

Please remember to eat, drink, and bring your ID with your name and photo. Appointments are preferred however walk-ins will be welcomed if space permits.
Visit nybc.org/coronavirus for COVID-19 safety protocols.



800.933.BLOOD • nybc.org [#nybloodcenter](https://twitter.com/nybloodcenter)