

Saint Thomas the Apostle

Roman Catholic Church

Rectory/Parish Center: (973) 338-9190 • Fax: (973) 338-4224 • Religious Education: (973) 338-7400

School: (973) 338-8505 • Convent: (973) 338-9118

Address: 60 Byrd Avenue, Bloomfield, New Jersey • Website: www.stthomas-bloomfieldnj.com



*The Child
to be born
will be holy
He will be
called
Son of God*

Christmas 2007

Masses for the Week

Sunday, December 23

Saturday, December 22

5:00 pm Charles Ofsak - Wife

Sunday, December 23

7:30 am For the People of the Parish

9:00 am Mary & Fred Roberts - Daughter

10:30 am Irmelinda Mazzullo - Friend

12:15 pm Altavilla Family - Family

Monday, December 24

8:30 am Jacqueline Sefjack - Family

4:00 pm (Church) Ernest & Philomena Cordasco and Joseph Bianchi – Wife & Daughter

4:00 pm (School) Anna Korec – Family

6:00 pm Samuel Gallucci – Wife & Family

10:30 pm For the People of the Parish

Joseph Besida – Family

Ann DiLaura & Joseph Marcheel - Family

Tuesday, December 25

8:00 am Daniel & Marie Lovallo - Family

10:00 am Jacob Szajkowski – Daughters

12:00 pm Josephine B. Ruffalo – Son (3rd Anniv.)

Wednesday, December 26

7:30 am Joseph Michalek - Wife

11:30 am Juan Sanchez - Husband

Thursday, December 27

7:30 am De Rogatis & Lepore Families - Family

11:30 am John Vojnik - Friend

Friday, December 28

7:30 am Joseph Pietrowski - Daughter

11:30 am Austin Patrizo - Wife

Saturday, December 29

8:30 am Mary Anntorelli - Friend

Sunday, December 30

Saturday, December 29

5:00 pm Salvatore Lo Cicero & Salvatore Cataliotti – Wife & Sister

Sunday, December 30

7:30 am Esterina & Silvester Fusco - Family

9:00 am Mary C. Healy - Family

10:30 am Frances Hughes - Friend

12:15 pm Francisco Rodriguez - Friend

Next Sunday's Readings:

Isaiah 7:10-14

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-24

Christmas Blessings

from your

St. Thomas family

to you!

PRAY
THE ROSARY
FOR PEACE



Right to Life

For every newborn child, and especially for those who are sick: that God might send an angel to be with them;

We pray to the Lord



When he discovered that Mary was with child, Joseph resolved to end their engagement with as little disgrace as possible. But obedient to the voice of God, he changed those plans and became instead the protector of the child Jesus and His mother Mary. God grant that I may be as open to the leading of the Holy Spirit!

Wellness Ministry Cares... Assistance Program

The Wellness Ministry phone line is available Mon-Fri, 9am to 8pm. Call the Parish Center 973-338-9190 ext. 20. A return call will be made within 24 hours. A Parish Nurse will provide limited confidential health counseling & referrals to Community health resources & services. Volunteers are available for errands, home visits and phone contacts.

PRAY FOR OUR SICK:

Paul Strickland, Susan Ferris, Eleanor & Peter Franco, Nina Vetere, Joanne Stile, Michele & Nicholas Fasone, Glenn Stickles, George Scott

REST IN PEACE:

Pauline A. Wassell, Sister Gertrude Doremus

CANDLE INTENTIONS:

Church:

Deceased Members of the Rohan & Powers Families

From the Pastor's Desk.....



Dear Parishioners,

All of our priests, deacons, sisters and staff of St. Thomas join me in wishing you and your loved ones a very happy and holy Christmas!

We welcome you all to our celebration of **Christmas 2007** here at Saint Thomas the Apostle Church. We especially welcome those who have been away from Saint Thomas due to school, illness or living elsewhere for whatever reason. It is good to have you home again. Welcome to all visitors. Thank you for choosing to celebrate your Christmas with us.

Christmas is a wonderful and holy time of year. It is when we become more aware of the many gifts God gives us at Christmas and all throughout the year – the gift of life, the gift of faith, and the gift of each other. On Christmas God showed us how deeply he loved us by taking on flesh and becoming one like us, so that we could become more like Him.

During this Christmas Season, which continues until the **Baptism of the Lord** on January 13th, we will also celebrate other important feast days in the life of the Church. We will observe the **Feast of the Holy Family** on December 30th with the *Blessing of Families* at all the masses that weekend. Then on January 1 we will celebrate the **Solemnity of Mary Mother of God** with one anticipated Mass at 4:00pm on December 31st, New Year's Eve, and masses at 7:30am; 11:30am and 7:00pm on January 1st during which we will have a special blessing for *expecting mothers*.

On January 6th we celebrate the **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord** with a special *Christmas Pageant* at 1:15pm after the final mass in the Church. I encourage you to immerse yourself in the spirit of the season by participating in the special celebrations.

My prayer is that Christ, whose birth we now celebrate, may dwell in your hearts and in your homes throughout this season of joy. Merry Christmas!

Love in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Fr. Charles J. Miller".

Rev. Charles J. Miller
Pastor

The Prayer Shawl Ministry



"And he was wrapped in swaddling..."

Let us continue to pray for those making shawls and those who receive them.

Our next meetings are Sundays Jan. 20th, Feb. 17th, and March 2nd at 1:30 p.m. Please check with the parish center as meetings may be cancelled due to bad weather. If you have any questions, call Eileen (973) 661-9699; Debbie (973) 771-1952 or Bernadette (973) 893-0114. If you need a shawl please call Sister Arleen (973) 338-9190 or Alicia (973) 473-6633.

Men's Cornerstone Retreat

(March 7th – March 8th)

All St. Thomas Men are Invited

What is Cornerstone?

Cornerstone is a **26-hour retreat** which provides you with the opportunity to reflect, renew and strengthen your faith while meeting other men in our Parish community. The retreat is hosted here at St. Thomas by a group of men from our parish who have experienced last year's Cornerstone.

This retreat is simply a gathering of **Ordinary Men** sharing stories and life's experiences. You may share in the discussion as much or as little as you choose. This is an outstanding opportunity to:

- examine your relationship with God, your family and others in your life
- think about those things that matter to you most in an atmosphere that lends itself to reflection and contemplation
- "jump-start" your sense of belonging or involvement in our parish, and enjoy the fellowship of other men who seek to build our Christian community

This is a great opportunity to step out of the hustle of daily life and meet and interact with other men of the parish, in a friendly, welcoming, non-judgmental environment.

Give yourself and our parish a gift by attending St. Thomas' 3rd "Men's Cornerstone" on March 7th to March 8th.

Contact us at:

- The Rectory:
 - Fr. Peter Funesti (973) 338-9190 x-14
- Cornerstone Welcoming Team Members:
 - Bob Garrabrant 973 338-6358 or bgarrab@neca.org
 - Bob Silvestri 973-773-6040 or silvestrima@optonline.net
 - Pat DeCotiis 973-896-5739 or pdecotiis@att.com

Religious Education News



Summer CCD Update: A quick reminder to all those hoping to attend summer CCD in 2008. Registration packages are NOT sent home, even if your child attended summer CCD last year. A notice will be placed in the bulletin around the middle of January announcing that the packages are ready.

Once the notice has appeared in the bulletin you may call the Religious Education Office and request that a registration package be mailed to you or you may download it from the STA website. Dates for summer CCD 2008 are July 7th through July 18th from 9:00 – 12:30 each day. Children in grades 3 through 8 only may attend summer CCD. Last year summer CCD closed out in two weeks and names were taken for a waiting list, so please note that this program is first come, first served. Please do NOT call the Religious Education Office until the announcement appears in the bulletin. Teachers and aides are needed for each grade. If you are interested please call Tracey Rennie at 973-338-7400.

Vacation Bible School 2008

Mark your calendar for an exciting faith adventure for children ages 4 through 12. Our annual Vacation Bible School program will be held June 23rd through June 27th. Each day will be packed with crafts, songs, activities, and games. Children do not need to be parishioners to attend. We will also need lots of volunteers, especially Confirmation Candidates. Watch the bulletin for further information.

ANNUAL SNOWBALL SHOWTIME SATURDAY JANUARY 26TH, 2008 HERRON HALL

It was previously announced that Bobby Byrne would be appearing. Unfortunately due to a mutual conflict, that is no longer the case.

So we will hold the event anyhow with local dance and comedy entertainment.

**It would be an old fashion night of fun.
Also Dance Contest with a special prize.**

SO WE NEED YOU TO COME.

**DINNER, BEER, WINE AND SODA AT
\$35 PER PERSON.**

Make your check to St. Thomas and mail it to Paul Alongi, 21 Leo Terrace, Bloomfield, 973-338-4665 or leave it at the Parish Center in my Social Box.

**THANK YOU
PAUL ALONGI, CHAIR**

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Presents

ST. THOMAS DANCE TIME

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26TH AT 7PM

**At
HERRON HALL**

MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR ALL AGES

**Also
DINNER, BEER, WINE AND SODA
BYOB FOR EVERYTHING REST**

DONATION-\$35 PER PERON

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO ST. THOMAS

NAME _____

TELEPHONE # _____

ADDRESS _____

HOW MANY COMING _____

AMOUNT OF CHECK _____

Make returns to Paul Alongi, 21 Leo Terrace,
Bloomfield, New Jersey, 07003, 973-338-4665
or Parish Center 973-338-9190

Ministry of Spiritual Direction **

**New Year – New Beginnings
One Day Guided Retreat**



**SATURDAY, JANUARY 12 from 9:00am – 3:30pm
(PARISH CENTER)**

**“There is an appointed time for everything...”
(Ecclesiastes 3)**

**After a busy season which holds much
excitement and possibly some
disappointments, it is good to take
some time to rest & reflect with God
on those things held in your heart.**

**Day includes presentations, prayer service,
quiet reflection time, gathering of the graces.**

**Anna Graziano, – (973) 338-9538
Registration Helpful / Offering \$25
Light Continental Breakfast**

**Individual Spiritual Direction Available by
Appointment

**LEARNING TO LIVE
WITH YOUR LOSS**

**Sunday, January 6th, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
in the Parish Center**

**Our theme will be:
We Are Precious Gifts**

**Mass Schedule
for the Christmas Season
at
St. Thomas the Apostle Church**



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Monday, December 24, 2007

- 4:00pm (Herron Hall – School)
Christmas Music Prelude and Mass
- 4:00pm (Church) Christmas Music Prelude and Mass
- 6:00pm (Church) Mass
- 10:30pm (Church) Concelebrated Mass with Music
Prelude at 9:45pm. (No Midnight Mass)

Tuesday, December 25, 2007 (Christmas Day)

8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
(All Masses with traditional Christmas Carols)

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

- Saturday, December 29th – 5:00pm
- Sunday, Dec. 30th, 7:30am - 9:00am - 10:30am - 12:15pm
Blessing of Families at Masses today

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Monday, December 31st, 2007
4:00pm Mass

Tuesday, January 1, 2008
Masses at 7:30am, 11:30am, 7:00pm

**SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY
(Annual “Bell Sunday”)**

- Saturday, January 5th 5:00pm Vigil Mass
- Sunday, January 6th -7:30am-9:00am-10:30am-12:15pm
(Children’s Epiphany Pageant following 12:15pm Mass)



SAINT ELIZABETH ANN SETON

**TO BE HONORED
IN CONVENT STATION**

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH AT A LITURGY TO HONOR THE FIRST NORTH-AMERICAN BORN SAINT, ELIZABETH ANN SETON. MOTHER SETON FOUNDED OUR COUNTRY'S FIRST RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY, THE SISTERS OF CHARITY, IN BALTIMORE IN 1809.

A WIDOWED SINGLE MOTHER WITH FINANCIAL AND PERSONAL CHALLENGES, THROUGH HER EXAMPLE SHE OFFERS INSPIRATION TO MANY OF US TODAY. THE MASS WILL BE CELEBRATED ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 2008, AT HOLY FAMILY CHAPEL, CONVENT STATION, NJ, AT 11:00 A.M. THE MASS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A LIGHT LUNCH IN THE STUDY HALL OF THE ACADEMY OF SAINT ELIZABETH. THE HERITAGE ROOM OF THE MOTHERHOUSE WILL BE OPENED FOR A DISPLAY OF MOTHER SETON MEMORABILIA. FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RESERVE A PLACE, CALL (973) 290-5412 OR (973) 290-5338.

IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER CALL (973) 290-5478. SNOW DATE IS JANUARY 12, 2008.

Rosary Confraternity

Note of thanks to all Rosarians for their support and generosity during this holiday season for parish families in need.

God's blessing to all who provided refreshments and services for setting up and cleaning up at our annual Christmas party.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

Memorial mass for deceased members is scheduled for February 4th, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the church followed by fellowship in the St. Peter room.



**Lil Bieksha
Rosary Confraternity
973-338-8188**

**CARMEL RETREAT_1070 RAMAPO VALLEY RD,
MAHWAH, NJ 07430**

Sabbath Morning for Women

Jan. 13th – EVE: Our First Mother

9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. \$25.00 per person includes lunch

Sunday Night at the Movies

Dinner, Movie and Discussion

Jan. 13th – Pride and Prejudice

5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. \$25.00 With Supper

Christ is the reason for the Season. Is Christ in your marriage? Worldwide Marriage Encounter can help you make your marriage Christ-centered. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is July 11-13, 2008

Please call 800-823-5683 or www.wwme.org

**Christian Marriage:
Helping meet the needs of the children:**

One of the great misconceptions about marriage is that children do not necessarily need a mother and father, or at least to know their mother and father. While all father-mother relationships and marriages are not perfect, they give the model of sexual complementarity to children from the earliest age. They learn how to behave with respect and integrity toward the opposite sex. And the benefits, both physical and psychological, are much greater for a child that grows in a mother-father, married family: these children are generally happier, depression manifests itself less, and suicide is less frequent, just to name a few. Two-parent married families are good for children! For more information, go to: www.foryourmarriage.org.

Archdiocese of Newark.....News

Where there is a will there is a way to be an angel for our parish. Please remember our parish endowment in your will. Your lawyer can add a simple inexpensive amendment (codicil) to your existing will. Learn more by contacting Anne DeMesa in the Archdiocese of Newark's Planned Giving Office at 973-497-4048.

*Thoughts and Prayers
As You Gather for Gift-Giving*

O Great Giver of all good gifts;

Make these beautiful packages and their contents more for us than simply objects and possessions.

Open our eyes;

That we may see in these gifts the love and care that you have given us to share with one another. Grant that the sentiments behind every gift may be appreciated, and that our "Thank you" may be genuine.

Open our eyes;

That these gifts may, in some small way, remind us of the gifts you offer us daily – food and family, clothes and shelter, employment and recreation, life and love.

Open our eyes;

That we may see in each of these gifts a tiny reflection of the greatest Christmas gift of all – the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.