

St. 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, NJ 07003 . Website: www.stachurchbloomfield.com

Rev. Charles J. Miller, M. Div., Pastor

Parochial Vicars: Rev. Andrew N. Onyemaobi, M.Div., M.A. • Rev. Camilo E. Cruz, M. Div.
Rev. Thomas F. Blind, M. Div., In Residence

PERMANENT DEACONS:

Deacon Albert H. Tizzano • Deacon Dennis J. Besida • Deacon Thomas J. Coyle

EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY

Saturday Eve: 5:00pm

Sundays: 7:30, 9:00,
10:30am & 12:00 Noon

Weekdays: 7:30, & 11:30am

Saturday Mornings: 8:30am Only

Holy Days:
7:30, 11:30am & 7:30pm

Holidays: 8:30am Only

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE FOR
ELEMENTARY CATECHETICS:
Tracey Rennie

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE
FOR PARISH MINISTRY:
Sister Arleen Crimmins, O.P.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:
Ms. Joan Ferraer

DIRECTOR OF LITURGICAL
MUSIC MINISTRIES:
Nancy A. Cardone

ASSISTANT LITURGICAL
MUSIC MINISTERS:
Kimberley Mesiti

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE FOR FAMILY
& ADULT FORMATION MINISTRIES:
Robert P. Miller

COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY:
Mr. Timothy Dennin

PASTORAL COUNCIL:
Eileen Conte, Chairperson
Jean Barbetta, Vice Chairperson
Michael Pasquale, Secretary

FINANCE CHAIRMEN:
Peter Maulbeck, Finance Council
Patrick DeCotiis, Finance Committee

SACRAMENT OF
RECONCILIATION:
(Penance/Confessions)
Saturday: 11:00am

MARIAN
DEVOTIONS:
Mondays
Novena Prayer
11:30am Mass

LITURGY OF
THE WORD
WITH CHILDREN:
Sundays: 10:30am Mass
September - June

CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY
SERVICES
OFFERING SOCIAL
SERVICE ASSISTANCE
1(800) CCS-7413
Fax: 596-3735

December 19, 2010 . 4th Sunday of Advent

Masses for the Week

Sunday, December 19

Saturday, December 18

5:00 pm Michael & Fannie Bove – Family

Sunday, December 19

7:30 am Grace Monticello – Son

9:00 am Josepha Martinez – Family

10:30 am Thomas Bennett – Daughter & Family

12:00 pm Richard Adrian Sause – Wife

Monday, December 20

7:30 am Mary Ombalsky – Daughter

11:30 am Michael John Melograno – Wife

Tuesday, December 21

7:30 am Stella Giampapa – Friend

11:30 am Ciaran Keon – Friend

Wednesday, December 22

7:30 am Thomas P. Mahon, Jr. – Parents

11:30 am Michael Fitterer – Sister

Thursday, December 23

7:30 am Martha Oliveras – Daughter-in-law

11:30 am Frances Foley – Friend

Friday, December 24

8:30 am Stella Giampapa – Son

4:00 pm Ernest & Philomena Cordasco & Joseph Bianchi – Family

6:00 pm Jacqueline Sefjack – Husband

10:30 pm Josephine Ruffalo (6th Anniv.) – Son

Saturday, December 25

8:00 am Daniel & Marie Lovallo

10:00 am Jacob Szajkowski – Daughter

12:00 pm Veronica Kievit – Family

Sunday, December 26

Sunday, December 26

7:30 am For the People of the Parish

9:00 am Anna & Joseph Stevens – Daughter & Family

10:30 am Jacqueline Sefjack – Husband

12:00 pm Rocco Nardelli – Family

PRAY FOR OUR SICK:

Ryan Joseph, Robert Colucci, Barbara Savage, Alan White
Angela Ciccone, Virginia Fazzi, Anthony LoConte, Halle Barrett

CANDLE INTENTIONS: Week of December 19

Church: Rohan/Powers Families

Rectory: Paul Blackman

Convent: David Kochuk

Week of December 12

Church: Lataro Family

Rectory: Thomas, Lena, & Cathy Caputo

Convent: Constance Stabile

Fourth Sunday of Advent



Up to now, our Sunday readings have focused on the coming of Jesus at the end of time. Now, on the last Sunday before Christmas we begin to meditate on the first coming of Christ, his Incarnation in the womb of Mary

FIRST READING:

The First Reading comes from early in the book of Isaiah. God's first commission to the prophet after calling him to be a prophet is to send him to Ahaz, the king, who is filled with fear as war looms and attack on Jerusalem is imminent. Isaiah speaks words of comfort, and urges him to have faith. God tells Ahaz to ask for a sign so that the people will have no doubt that God is with them.

But the terrified Ahaz does not dare. And so the Lord chooses a simple, but powerful sign of hope: the birth of a new child. For Christians, the prophecy has always been read in light of the birth of Jesus, born of a virgin. Jesus is truly Emmanuel – God-with-us.

RESPONSORIAL:

Psalm 24 is the song of a just man, whose hands are clean, and whose heart is pure. The psalm anticipates the Gospel reading and the struggle of Joseph, the just man.

SECOND READING:

The Second Reading takes us to the very beginning of St. Paul's letter to the Romans. The reading is closely linked with the Gospel for today, for it is through Joseph that Jesus is "descended from David according to the flesh" (Romans 1:3). Joseph is the perfect model for what Paul calls "the obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5).

THE GOSPEL:

We move decisively toward Christmas. Matthew begins his Gospel with Joseph—first his genealogy, then, in this passage, his faith. Joseph is silent, but his silence comes from a compassionate heart. Mary is with child, but Joseph refuses to accuse her, but rather makes the merciful decision to "divorce her quietly" (Matthew 1:19). But an angel, coming to him in a dream, tells him not to be afraid. And Joseph—with the silence, now, of trust and faith—promptly obeys.

**Visit our website at
www.stachurchbloomfield.com**

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



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Friday, December 24, 2010 (Christmas Eve)

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)

Saturday, December 25, 2010 (Christmas Day)

8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 noon
(All Masses with traditional Christmas Carols)
(There will be no 5:00 p.m. Sunday Mass)

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Sunday, Dec. 26, 2010
7:30am, 9am, 10:30am, & 12noon
Blessing of Families at all Masses

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Friday, December 31, 2010 - 4:00pm (Vigil Mass)
Saturday, January 1, 2011 - 8:30am

SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY
(Annual "Bell Sunday")

Saturday, Jan 1, 5:00pm Vigil Mass
Sunday, January 2,
7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am, & 12noon
(Children's Epiphany Pageant following 12noon Mass)

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

The main source of operating funds for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is our weekly offertory contribution. To assist us in being good stewards of God's gift of treasure, our contribution from last weekend is compared below to the amount we need this week to meet our budget. You may have noticed this amount will vary. This is because our budget varies by season, just as yours does. The year to date (YTD) amount compared to the budget is also shown below. This line will be updated monthly.



Amount Budgeted: 20,500
December 12th collection: 15,795

SCHOOL, RELIGIOUS ED & SACRAMENTS

St. Thomas the Apostle School
MOMMY 'n ME PLAYGROUP
Tuesday Mornings
Join the fun! Free program!

11:00 a.m. till 11:45 in the school gym

- ☺ The playgroup will serve children from 2-4 years old
- ☺ The playgroup aims to promote new and lasting friendships for both children and their parents.
- ☺ Parents will be responsible for the supervision of their children at all times.
- ☺ If you, or a friend, have any questions, please call the school office at **973-338-8505**.

www.stthomastheapostlenj.com

Reminder: Please register or re-register your Stop & Shop Card for the A+ Bonus Bucks School Rewards Program. You must re-register every year. The program only runs through March 25, 2011. All you have to do is: Log on to www.stopandshop.com/aplus to register online OR Dial 1-877-275-2758 to register your card over the phone. The St. Thomas the Apostle School ID # is 08625.
Thank you for your support!

*We welcome into our Community of Faith
With our prayers and good wishes,
Our newly Baptized...*



Gavin Vincent Cerniglia-Rapavi
Parents: Kelli (Cerniglia) & Philip J. Rapavi

Aubrey Lynn Coffey
Parents: Lindsay (Rogers) & Walter Coffey

Casey Leigh Lardner
Parents: Kelly A. (Meehan) & Michael J. Lardner

Gabriella Ann Petagna
Parents: Larissa (DiGiovanni) & Ronnie A. Petagna

Emma Mary Rudolph
Parents: Deborah (Weinstein) & Brian Rudolph

Daniela Nicole Tortorello
Parents: Jennifer M. (Payerl) & Michael A. Tortorello

STA SOCIETIES, MINISTRIES & EVENTS

“THIS WEEK”

Monday – 12/20

September Club – 11:30am in St. Peter

Wednesday – 12/22

SCC Wednesday/Thursday – 7:00pm in St. Andrew

Friday – 12/24

Christmas Eve

Parish Center closed

Please see Christmas Schedule for schedule of Masses

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP NEWS

MEETINGS EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT IN THE PARISH CENTER FROM 7-9PM. ALL HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH ARE WELCOME

TONIGHT 6PM ADVENT MASS IN CHURCH FOLLOWED BY DINNER AND GIFT EXCHANGE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

JANUARY 9TH KICK-OFF MEETING FOR 2011

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT TIM DENNIN AT tdennin@att.net

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.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING THIS SUNDAY - December 19th

Blood pressure screenings will be held on Sunday, Dec. 19th, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

THIS SUNDAY

DEC. 19th at 1:00 p.m.

We need men to volunteer to help carry in Christmas trees into the Church for our Christmas decorations.

There's still time to participate! Children's Epiphany Pageant

OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN OF THE PARISH
Ages Pre-K4 – Grade 4

Sunday, January 2, 2011

Immediately following 12:00 Noon Mass

Angels, Shepherds and Kings are needed to join our Nativity and Epiphany scene. Many costumes will be provided.

Final rehearsal date: Thursday, Dec. 30th 1:00 p.m. (No rehearsal Sat., Jan 1st)

One parent or guardian must stay.

Mary has been assigned. We still need Joseph!

Please complete the form below and bring it with you to rehearsal.

Child's Name: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

_____ I would like to help with costumes.

_____ I would like to help with the Three Kings Reception.

Parent Name: _____

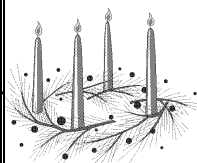
Phone: _____

St. Thomas the Apostle Mission Statement

The Roman Catholic faith community of St. Thomas the Apostle recognizes God's call to be a sign of His Kingdom in the communities we serve. We respond to this call by:

- † Leading people to a deeper relationship with Christ by providing opportunities for spiritual growth, renewal, education, the celebration of the Sacraments, and the worship of God in the sacred liturgy;
- † Encouraging a commitment to justice and to service of those in need;
- † Promoting good stewardship of our time, talent and treasure;
- † Building a community of hospitality and support in the daily living out of Christian ideals by nourishing mutual respect and understanding within our Church, our families, our community, and other faith traditions.

Women's Advent Reflection Group



On Tuesday afternoon, at 12:40 pm, there will be a Women's Reflection group in the St. James room. We'll pray, reflect, and share on the Sunday Readings for this Fourth Sunday of Advent. All women are invited. If you attend the 11:30 am Mass, you are most welcome to bring your lunch and eat here in the Parish Center before we gather.



The Saint Thomas the Apostle
Rosary Confraternity
Advent
Giving Tree

Thank You!

The Advent Giving Tree project was a huge success! Thanks to the kindness and generosity of our parish community, we fulfilled the wishes of over 1,000 people from 10 different organizations.

The Rosary Confraternity would like to thank Fr. Miller for his support of the Advent Giving Tree project, as well as the following organizations:

- 🔔 The Shawl Ministry for the donation of shawls, hats & scarves.
- 🔔 Joan Ferraer & the students of STA Parish School for gift donations.
- 🔔 Tim Dennin & the STA Youth Group for gift donations.
- 🔔 Glen Kyle & the Boy Scouts of Troop # 22 for their assistance with moving the gifts.

May God bless all of you during this Christmas season and bring you peace and good health in the New Year.



Moving?

Please let us know.

Within the parish – to update new address
Out of parish – to discontinue mailings

Call the Parish Center at (973) 338-9190



Right to Life

For school-age children:
That their parents will shield them from all that demeans human life and preserve the innocence of their childhood;

We pray to the Lord

For her part, the Church has always had great respect for the elderly. ... God wills a proper respect for the dignity and worth, the health and well-being of the elderly and, through her charitable institutions ... the Church seeks to fulfill the Lord's command to respect life, regardless of age or circumstances.

~Pope Benedict XVI, Address at St. Peter's Residence, London, September 18, 2010

Save the Date !!!

Don't Miss The 40th Reunion of the Class of 1971



St. Thomas the Apostle

Saturday March 12, 2011 7:00pm

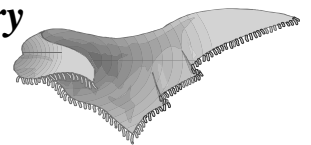
50 Burd Avenue Bloomfield NJ

\$50.00 per person

The Graduating Class of 1971 is having its 40th Reunion on March 12, 2011. It is scheduled to be held in Herron Hall. We are still in the process of locating some of our classmates. If you were a member of that class, or know someone who was, and have contact information, please call **Chris Helm** at **973-951-7669** or email him at **chrishelm@optonline.net**

Prayer Shawl Ministry

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



All are welcome to work and pray with us. If you have any questions or you wish to give someone a shawl or lap robe, please contact the Ministry Bernadette at 973-893-0114, Sister Arleen at 973-338-9190 or Alicia at 973-473-6633

JOB SEEKERS GROUP

Don't let your job search get you down. St. Thomas's Work Ministry offers a free, comfortable place to find support, ideas, and inspiration.

We meet on the first and third Thursdays of every month at 7:30 in the Parish Center. Keep checking the bulletin for our programs geared to help in your job search. All are welcome to join us if you are looking for a job or need a person to fill a position. For more info, send an e-mail to workministry@stachurchbloomfield.com

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.

ARE YOU GOING INTO THE HOSPITAL? DO YOU HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER IN THE HOSPITAL?



We would like to visit our parishioners who are homebound, in the hospital or other health care facility. Because of patient confidentiality laws, however, the only way we can know is if someone informs us. Call the Parish Center at (973) 338-9190, leaving your name and number so we may return your call, or you may leave the information at the Parish Desk on Sunday mornings.

Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America

Catholic Sisters in America, a traveling exhibit sponsored by the Leadership Council of Women Religious (LCWR) is at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Statue of Liberty National Monument through January 22, 2011. This creative and compelling exhibit illustrates the enormous impact the lives of these remarkable women have had and continue to have on both our church and our nation's history. Visit www.womenandspirit.org for more information.

HISTORY OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS



The roots of Advent go much deeper than Christianity. They reach deep into the thirsty soil of Israel, and into the dreams of God's chosen people. The word "Advent" itself means "Coming", but it has taken on the nuances of waiting and expectation. And in that sense, we can say that Advent began outside the gates of Eden.

During Advent, we join our voices in a special way with the people of Israel. The Old Testament readings on the Sundays of Advent recall our deepest roots, a people-in-waiting. A great majority of these readings come from one remarkable collection, the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah is the poet of the Promise, and his words provide us with a whole treasury of Advent-Christmas images. It was Isaiah who envisioned a "peaceable kingdom", where the lion and the lamb lie down together under a child's leadership. And it was Isaiah who first gave the Messiah the name by which He would be known through all the waiting years: Emmanuel, "God-with-us".

When we look at the roots of Advent in the early years of Christianity, we find a gap. The early Church did not celebrate Advent at all--which is really no surprise, because they didn't celebrate Christmas, either! In those first centuries, Jesus' death and Resurrection were the central experiences of Christianity --especially while Christians themselves were meeting persecutions and death for their beliefs.

In the third century, as Christians was finally allowed to flourish, the Church found room for more light-hearted feasts. No one knew, however, on what day Jesus had actually been born - and to make matters worse, there were many different ways of reckoning time, and no centralized calendar.

In the middle of the fourth century, Pope Julius settled on December 25th. It is possible that he chose this date because it fell so close to the Winter Solstice an ancient feast familiar to so many converts to Christianity. The Roman worshippers of Mithras, with whom Pope Julius was familiar, celebrated December 25th as "The Birthday of the Unconquered Sun" - a title that certainly suited itself to the Nativity.

Christmas itself didn't come to be called Christmas until much later. Some of the early names for this feast were Epiphany (manifestation), Natale (birth), and interestingly enough - Adventus (the coming).

During the fifth century, Christians in Ravenna, Italy, began experimenting with the liturgy of preparation for Christmas, which they called "Advent". The liturgies developed in Ravenna found their way to Rome in the sixth century, where they were printed in the Celesian Sacramentary, one of the earliest collections of prayers and readings chosen for liturgical use.

In about the ninth century, the first Sunday of Advent became the first Sunday of the Church's liturgical year. The tension between penitence and joy, promise, and waiting which marked the Advent liturgies gave rise to many rich customs and traditions.

The revised Roman Catholic Calendar of 1970 called the Church back to the original Roman understanding of Advent as a period of "joyful and spiritual expectation", not a penitential season