

St. Thomas More Church

1439 Springdale Road, Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08003

856-424-3212 • Fax: 856-424-2411

Web Site: <http://stthomasmorenj.org/> • E-mail: stthomasmore@comcast.net

Mass Schedule

Daily **Mass**: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 AM in
the Chapel

Sat. 4:30 PM

Sun. 8:30 and 11:00 AM

Eucharistic Adoration in the Chapel

Mon.—Fri. 9:30 AM—12 Noon



Rite of Reconciliation Saturday

3:00—4:00 PM

In the Chapel

First Fridays after the 9:00 AM Mass

Father Edward Namiotka, Pastor
Sister Ann Byrnes, RSM, Pastoral Associate for Life Long Faith Formation
Sister Clare Sabini, FMIJ, Director of Religious Education
Julie Linn, Music Ministry
Marylee Garber, Parish Secretary
Sheila Tartamosa, Pastoral Associate for Parish Administration



Find us on:
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Send all bulletin announcements to:
stmsecretary1439@gmail.com by 2:00pm Monday

DIRECTORY

Parish Trustees

Jeannine Mc Menamin
Henry Glover

Christian Life/Education

Bereavement

Consolation Ministry

Staff 856- 424-3212
Ann Marie Lento 856- 344-7454
Jon Lisitski jonl11@comcast.net

Faith & Justice Team

Hospital Visitors

Intercessory Prayer

Knights of Columbus

Marriage Formation

Parish Rel. Ed. Prog.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Respect Life

Rite of Ch. Init. Adults

Rosary Ministry

Small Christian Comm.

Spiritual Retreats

St. Vincent de Paul

Stewardship

Welcoming Team

Chris Baeckstrom 856-912-7078
Staff & Euch. Ministers 856-424-3212
Ann Vigrass 856-428-7217
Brian Haughwout 609-458-7851
Bob & Elizabeth Scarpa 856-795-1160
Sr. Clare Sabini 856-424-3212
Ann Vigrass 856- 428-7217
Staff
Sister Ann Byrnes 856-424-3212
Marian Kapischke 856-424-2053
Sr. Ann Byrnes
John Galati 856-428-7073
Chico Febus 856- 424-3212
Sheila Tartamosa 856-424-3212
Shirley Kane 856-424-8022

Worship

Altar Servers
Church Environment
Ch. Art Environment
Eucharistic Ministers
Lectors
Linen Committee
Sacristans

Ushers

Social Development
Bridge Groups

Funsters (over 50 club)
Parish Festival
Women's Club

Administration

House of Charity
Parish Finance Council
Parish Pastoral Council

Sister Ann Byrnes 856-424-3212
Committee
Committee
Sr. Ann Byrnes 856-424-3212
Dan Miller/ Sr. Ann Byrnes
Ann Vigrass 856-428-7217
Greta Tyrrell 856-428-2412
Dom Sacca
Dave Bongiovanni
Joe Centonze
Chico Febus
Joyce DeMichele 856-424-4008
Barbara Cerquitella 856-795-7323
Lin Lyon 856-795-4396
Committee 856-424-3212
Barbara Cerquitella 856-795-7323
Lorraine Kennedy 856-489-0031

Sheila Tartamosa 856-424-3212
Robert Crawford 856-424-3212
Marie Enny 856-751-8893

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 11, 2022

PARISH MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

Mission (Purpose)

Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we the Catholic Community of St. Thomas More respond to our call to holiness.

Vision (Goals)

Empowered by Baptism, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and formed by the Word of God and the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, we live out our Mission by working together:

- To structure prayerful, vibrant, participatory, Sunday worship experiences.
- To provide Life Long Faith formation for all age levels.
- To care for the young, the old, the sick, the hurting and the needy, both inside and outside our parish.
- To promote faith sharing, prayer, support, learning and listening to one another as a model for nourishing and sustaining our faith community.
- To welcome back, with hospitality, those who have left our faith community.

VISITATION AND ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the parish office, 424-3212, if a family member is seriously ill or facing/recovering from surgery and would like to see a priest or receive the Anointing of the Sick. Holy Communion is also available to those who are homebound on an ongoing basis.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please make arrangements for Baptism in advance through the parish office. Parents and godparents are required to attend a preparatory session.

MARRIAGE

Couples planning to marry will attend a marriage preparation program called Living in Love. Call office for appointment.

RCIA

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a process of formation for full initiation into the Catholic Church. It is open to those never Baptized; those baptized in another faith; and Catholics who have not received First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

For more information, please contact Sister Ann Byrnes, RSM, Pastoral Associate, 424-3212 ext. 104.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Grades One through Eight - Sunday 9:30 AM—10:45 AM

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

New members are welcome in our community of faith. Please call, 424-3212, or come to the parish

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Please submit hardcopy and/or e-mail by 2 p.m. Monday.

CATHOLIC GRADE SCHOOL

St. John Paul II Regional School - (856) 783-3088
Principal: Mrs. Helen Persing



The third Sunday of Advent we are invited to reflect on the **joy** we have access to because of our faith in Jesus. One of the defining characteristics of Christ-followers is their *joyful demeanor*. Let's not allow the struggles of this year steal from the **great joy** we have because of Jesus. [Philippians 4:4-5](#) says, "**Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.**"

Over this Advent, pray that the *joy of the Lord* would be evident in your heart and home. May God's spirit transform the days leading up to Christmas into a time of holy anticipation; preparing our hearts, as we joyfully await the chance to celebrate the arrival of our king.



Mitten and Sock Tree: Help us keep hands warm this winter by **donating mittens, gloves and socks of any size**. We appreciate any and all donations. **Please leave them in the parish office or in the box in the Gathering Space.**

"If my people, who are called by My Name, **shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My Face, and turn from their wicked ways; then** will I hear from heaven, and will **forgive** their sin, and I will **heal** their land." *2nd Chronicles 7:14*



The collection for the weekend of **December 3/4, 2022** was

\$4739.00 69 donations in church

1996.69 34 online donations

\$6735.69 103 total donations

\$8500 was the budgeted amount for this weekend.

Stewardship Corner: 3rd Sunday of Advent Stewardship Patience

"You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand." **JAMES 5:8**

Patience is another one of those things many of us struggle with. We want things to go according to our plan and our schedule; we like things to be convenient. Any change brings anxiety and fear. Through daily prayer God reveals to us what He wants us to do with the gifts He has given us. We are able to better align ourselves through Stewardship with God's will and His plan, which is far better than anything we can come up with on our own.



From the Pastor's Desk
“I Am the Immaculate Conception”

Dear Parishioners,

Among some Catholics, there is still a misunderstanding regarding what is meant by the term (or title) **Immaculate Conception**. Some people mistakenly think that this title refers to **Jesus** and His being conceived miraculously in the womb of His Mother Mary.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed the following in the Apostolic Constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*:

The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.

This proclamation was one of two notable times in the history of the Catholic Church when a pope declared an infallible dogma *ex cathedra* (that is, *from the chair* of St. Peter's teaching authority). The other occasion was the dogma of the *Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary* into Heaven.

Our catechism instructs us: “Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, “full of grace” through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the **Immaculate Conception** confesses” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #491. Mary was redeemed by Christ as all humanity is, but her redemption began at her very *conception* in the womb of her mother by a *singular grace*—hence, the term **Immaculate Conception**.

Around the same time as the pope, bishops and theologians were wrestling with this theological matter, **Bernadette Soubirous** was born in Lourdes, France in 1844. *Saint Bernadette*, as she is now known, is remembered for having received eighteen apparitions of the *Blessed Virgin Mary* between February 11 and July 16, 1858. Our Lady asked for a chapel to be built at a grotto in Massabielle where the apparitions occurred and a miraculous spring of water now flows. During these apparitions, Our Lady identified herself to St. Bernadette with the phrase “**I am the Immaculate Conception.**” St. Bernadette, an illiterate peasant girl with no formal training in theology, had no idea what the phrase *Immaculate Conception* meant. She was only *fourteen* at the time of the visions. It seems that in these apparitions Our Lady herself confirmed what the Church had formally declared just four years earlier. The church holds these apparitions as *worthy of belief*.

The Solemnity of the **Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary** is celebrated annually on December 8th and it is a Holy Day of Obligation. Too often various Holy Days are not observed by Catholics at all, regardless of whether there is an obligation to attend Mass. I must emphasize that just because we may or may not be obliged to attend a particular Holy Day Mass on various years, it doesn't mean the importance and significance of the occasion should be diminished nor should we get into the habit of doing only the least possible for God (minimum requirement) when it comes to our faith.

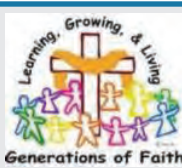
Our Lady, as the *Immaculate Conception*, is the patroness of our country and our diocese. She should certainly have a special place in our hearts.

Fr. Ed Namiotka
Pastor

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 11, 2022

Ministry Schedule for December 17/18

	Presider	Music	Extraordinary Minister	Lector	Altar Server
4:30 PM	Fr. Namiotka	Mena/Choir Julie	G. Tyrrell	C. Betson-Smith	E. & E. Shim
8:30 AM	Fr. Namiotka	Celine Julie	B. Massey	D. Miller	T. Kenny E. Bresani
11:00 AM	Fr. Namiotka	Celine Julie	J. De Michele	C. Musso	L. & G. Hutchinson



Traditionally, the Advent wreath is a circle of evergreen branches. It is often decorated with berries and pinecones. Both the evergreen branches and the circular shape symbolize the passing of time and eternal life.

The shape of the wreath, with no beginning or end, reflects the complete and endless love that Jesus has for us.

During the Advent season, we eagerly anticipate his coming and the promise of eternal life in heaven with him.

The Four Advent Candles. As a Christian tradition, the wreath holds the four Advent candles. The candles represent Jesus coming as the light in darkness. One candle is lit each Sunday until all four candles are lit. As Christmas draws nearer, each candle brings a little more light into the darkness. Sometimes a white candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to symbolize that Jesus is with us. This can be referred to as the 'Christ candle.' Each of the candles lit before Christmas represent an aspect of preparation during the season of Advent:

Week Three: [Pray the Advent wreath prayer for week three](#), **Candle Name:** the Shepherd's Candle

The Third Week of Advent Represents: Joy,
Candle Color: Pink

This third candle is pink and symbolizes rejoicing. During the third week of Advent we are filled with joy for the near arrival of Jesus on Christmas day. This Sunday is often called "Gaudete Sunday" as we reflect on the joy the shepherd's felt at the birth of Jesus.



Christmas Season Masses – Cemetery Visitation

To celebrate the birth of Christ Our Savior, we will be holding special masses at several of our cemeteries across South Jersey. Dates and locations for our Christmastide masses are listed on our website at SouthJerseyCatholicCemeteries.org. We encourage our families to visit all our Cemeteries and Mausoleums. We, the staff of South Jersey Catholic Cemeteries, wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Visit SouthJerseyCatholicCemeteries.org to learn more or call us at 855-MyPrePlan (855-697-7375) and a member of our staff will gladly assist you.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

Thank YOU, Eric Thompson

Many thanks to Eric Thompson for setting up the sound system for the Festival of Lessons and Carols. We are grateful to Eric for livestreaming our weekly Masses and helping with all the technical issues here at St. Thomas More.



Members of the St. Vincent DePaul Society will be at the doors of the church next weekend to accept your donations of non-perishable food or monies to buy same. Thank you in advance for your support of this ministry to feed the poor.

Advent Communal Penance Service
7:00 PM December 14, 2022
Christ Our Light Cherry Hill, NJ
All Parishioners are encouraged to attend.



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 11, 2022

Weekly Intentions

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10

4:30 PM May O'Brien

r/b Pat & Mike Hendricks family

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

8:30AM Sheila Mohan r/b Thompson family

11:00AM Gladys Barrientos r/b family

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12

9:00AM Michael Mahon r/b Sr. Ann Byrnes

9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13

9:00AM Mary Lou Thomas

r/b St. Thomas More Women's Club

9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14

9:00AM Sheila Mohan

r/b St. Thomas More Women's Club

9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15

9:00 AM Sheila Mohan r/b De Michele family

9:30AM—12 NOON Eucharistic Adoration-Chapel

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16

9:00 AM Yves Fils r/b Esther

9:30 AM—Eucharistic Adoration—Chapel

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

4:30 PM Jim Bones r/b Teri

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18

8:30 AM Sheila Mohan

r/b St. Vincent DePaul Society

Pope Francis' December Prayer Intentions: Volunteer Not-for-Profit Organizations

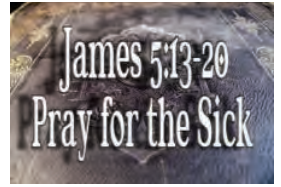
We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

Second Collection this Weekend Retirement Fund for Religious

Nearly 25,000 senior sisters and brothers, and religious order priests have devoted their lives to prayer and ministry—educating the young, tending the sick, aiding the needy, and more. **Your support of the Retirement fund for Religious helps furnish care and other necessities. Please give generously.**

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: THE

SICK... Kristina Acevedo, Caroline Bancheri, Jim Beaney, Jim Beaney, Jr., Pat Beaney, Ray Chuisano, Elva Clark, Grace Cobin, Joseph Console, Marie Corcoran, Mary Cowan, Catherine Diana, Elizabeth Garber, Eileen Goodwin, Marjorie Graham, Maureen Howe, Helen Kane, Michael Kapischke, John B. Kennedy, Bob Lento, Marie Manalo, Tina Petrone, Helen Protzman, John Ravena, Jacob Rivera, Jaxson Rivera, Carlos Santiago, , Teddy Shaffer, Claire Spence, Dick Spence, Dale Strack, Stacia Strack, Michael Suralik, Pat Suralik, Ann Vigrass, Sarah Warner.



PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE ARMED SERVICES...

SPC Jordan Beckman, Captain Patrick J. Bones, USMC, Major Anthony R. Cosentino, USAF, SSgt John P. DeYoung, Lt. Nicholas G. Iannuzzi, SSgt. Kris Knaup, Lt. Christopher Mawn, Lt. (j.g.) Jacqueline A. McCabe, SN Christian Mele, PFC Sonny Morrison, Lt. Col. Louis J. Papa, Sgt. 1st Class Mark Rimbaugh, Sisi Tyrrell, USMC, SPC Nicole Williams, and *all those serving our country in the armed forces.*

Advent Week Three Prayer

A Prayer for Joy

Heavenly Father, This third week of Advent, let us remember that the good news of Jesus' birth has the power to bring us great joy this Christmas season. Our joy isn't dependent on what is going on in our life, in our world, or the people that we are with. It doesn't depend on the gifts we give or the gifts we find under the tree. No earthly thing can ever give us complete joy. Our joy comes from you. That joy that flooded the hearts of the shepherds, the angels, the wise men, the hosts of heaven, and Mary and Joseph is the joy that still has the power to overwhelm our hearts with rejoicing.



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 11, 2022

Small Christian Community Faith Sharing

Please note that we put the following week's Gospel passage in this space so you can prepare all week for Proclamation of the Gospel the following Sunday. Faith Sharing helps ordinary people connect their faith with everyday life experiences

Excerpt from the Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 18, 2022 - Matthew 1:18-24

(Mary was found to be with child before she came to live with Joseph.) An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

Commentary:

Faith begins with predisposing ourselves to hear God's voice as it speaks into our lives. But faith has its end in active response to what we hear. This is where Joseph becomes the model for all who believe. When his engagement takes an unexpected and uncomfortable turn, he does what any of us might: he makes preparations for a discreet and direct exit. As a decent and upright man, he doesn't want to cause trouble or add to his fiancé's considerable burden. But God speaks through the voice of an angel and invites him to consider a new direction based on astounding information. Joseph immediately translates the dream into reality, taking Mary home as his wife. Only in faith can such a response be made. And for the person of faith, it is the only response.

Questions for Reflection and Sharing:

1. What is God saying to me in this Gospel passage?
2. What word or phrase in this Gospel speaks to me?
3. What word or phrase in the Reflection resonates with me?



Pro-Life Corner: Help for unplanned pregnancy:

Medicaid is a federal and state program that provides health coverage to low-income pregnant women during pregnancy and up to two months after the birth of the baby. Medicaid differs from state to state so be sure to apply in your state.



Antisemitism /Racism is an American crisis

"America was our promised land but we might not be safe here anymore," the artist Deborah Kass recently wrote, expressing a sentiment that is increasingly voiced at synagogues, where armed guards are now commonplace, and at Shabbat tables, where younger American Jews are suddenly facing anxieties that had supposedly been expunged several generations ago. In 2014 the ADL recorded 912 incidents targeting Jews across the United States; by 2021 the number had spiked to 2,717 a record.

"Racism still profoundly affects our culture, and it has no place in the Christian heart. This evil causes great harm to its victims, and it corrupts the souls of those who harbor racist or prejudicial thoughts." US Bishops

St. Thomas More Parish

stthomasmore@comcast.net

stthomasmorenj.org

A D V E N T 2022

Confessions throughout Advent

Saturdays 3:00-4:00 PM

Regional Penitential Service

Wednesday, December 14 7:00 PM

Christ Our Light Parish Cherry Hill

Large number of Confessors present

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve

4:00 PM and 6:00 PM

Christmas Day

8:30 AM and 11:00 AM

NEW YEAR'S MASSES

Mary Mother of God

December 31 4:30 PM

January 1 8:30 & 11:00 AM

Faith & Family Night with the 76ers

January 6, 2023



Flyers with ticket purchase information are at the doors of the church. Please scan the QR Code (and leave the flyer for the next person). Our promo code is: **SaintThomasMore**. Those who purchase tickers will have early access to the arena to watch warm-ups from 6:00 PM—6:30PM.

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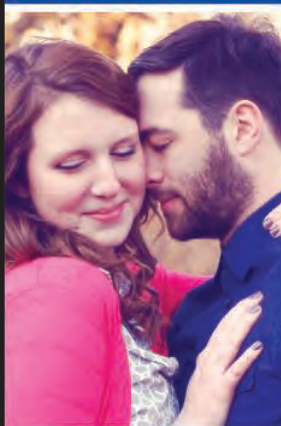
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