# 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: sthomasmore@comcast.net

## Mass Schedule

Daily Mass: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 AM in the Chapel
First Saturdays: 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
Father Victorino Coronado, In Residence
Sister Ann Byrnes, RSM, Pastoral Associate for Life Long Faith Formation
$\longleftarrow$ Find us on: Sister Rosangela Ganau, FMIJ, Catechetical Leader Julie Linn, Music Ministry Marylee Garber, Parish Secretary Sheila Tartamosa, Business Manager

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

## DIRECTORY

| Parish Trustees | Jeannine Mc Menamin <br> Henry Glover |  |
| :--- | :--- | ---: |
| Christian Life/Education |  |  |
| Bereavement | Staff | $856-424-3212$ |
| Consolation Ministry | Ann Marie Lento <br> Jon Lisitski (onll1@comcast.net |  |
| Faith \& Justice Team | Chris Baeckstrom | $856-912-7078$ |
| Hospital Visitors | Staff \& Euch. Ministers | $856-424-3212$ |
| Intercessory Prayer | Ann Vigrass | $856-428-7217$ |
| Knights of Columbus | John Galati | $856-424-3212$ |
| Marriage Formation | Bob \& Elizabeth Scarpa | $856-795-1160$ |
| Parish Rel. Ed. Prog. | Sr. Rosangela Ganau, | $856-424-3212$ |
| Respect Life | Staff |  |
| Rite of Ch. Init. Adults | Sister Ann Byrnes | $856-424-3212$ |
| Rosary Ministry | Marian Kapischke | $856-424-2053$ |
| Small Christian Comm. | Sr. Ann Byrnes |  |
| Spiritual Retreats | John Galati | $856-428-7073$ |
| St. Vincent de Paul | Chico Febus | $856-424-3212$ |
| Stewardship | Sheila Tartamosa | $856-424-3212$ |
| Welcoming Team | Shirley Kane | $856-424-8022$ |

Worship
Altar Servers
Church Environment Ch. Art Environment Eucharistic Ministers

## Lectors

Linen Committee
Sacristans

Ushers
Social Development Bridge Groups
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 $\quad 856-428-7217$
Greta Tyrrell 856-428-2412
Dom Sacca
Dave Bongiovanni
Joe Centonze
Chico Febus
Joyce DeMichele 856-424-4008
Barbara Cerquitella 856-795-7323
Committee
Barbara Cerquitella $\begin{aligned} & 856-424-3212 \\ & 856-795-7323\end{aligned}$
Lorraine Kennedy 856-489-0031

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

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 24, 2023

## PARISH MISSION \& VISION STATEMENTS <br> Mission (Purpose) <br> Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we the Catholic Community of St. Thomas More respond to our call to holiness. <br> Vision (Goals) <br> 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: <br> - To structure prayerful, vibrant, participatory, Sunday worship experiences. <br> - To provide Life Long Faith formation for all age levels. <br> - To care for the young, the old, the sick, the hurting and the needy, both inside and outside our parish. <br> - To promote faith sharing, prayer, support, learning and listening to one another as a model for nourishing and sustaining our faith community. <br> - 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

Come and dwell among us, O Lord, as we wait to celebrate the moment when your Word became flesh.
Mary our Mother, pray for us and help us to follow your example by saying 'yes' to what God asks of us.

Mary, your 'yes' to the Angel makes you a model disciple for us.

Help us to say 'yes' to God even when we are tempted not to.
SCC Thank YOU
"A small Christian community is a face-to-
face gathering of six to twelve people who
invest time with one another for the
common purpose of applying Gospel
values to every aspect of their lives."

To everyone who participated in our Advent Small Christian Communities, a big Thank YOU!
"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

## St. Thomas More Parish <br> ADVENT and CHRISTMAS 2023 <br> SUNDAY MASSES*

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 PM
Sunday: 8:30 AM and 11 AM
*In an attempt to lessen confusion for Christmas which falls on a Monday (and is a Holy Day of Obligation), Catholics should attend both a regular Saturday Vigil or Sunday Mass as well as an additional Mass for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS MASSES*
Masses for Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 24:
4:00 PM and 6:00 PM
Masses for Christmas Day
Monday, December 25:
8:30 AM and 11:00 AM
SUNDAY MASSES- DECEMBER 30th \& 31st
Saturday Vigil 4:30 PM
Sunday: 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM
NEW YEAR'S MASSES
(Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God)
Sunday, December 31: 4:30 PM
Monday, January 1st: 8:30 AM \& 11:00 AM

## From the Pastor's Desk What Does Christmas Truly Mean?

Dear Parishioners,

## Merry Christmas to all!

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." (Lk. 2:10-12)
The mystery of the Incarnation is foremost what Christmas is all about. God became a man for us. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. (Jn. 1:14) Timelessness entered into time. The almighty and all-powerful God became a helpless, vulnerable infant formed in the womb of a virgin. The creator of all life became subject to suffering and death. The infinite majesty of God became finite. God walked this very earth. He could be seen, felt and touched. He is the face of God for us to see.

Christ's humility should certainly be pondered as part of this mystery. Christ emptied himself (Phil. 11:5) and begins a hidden life in the womb of Mary. He has no royal palace and servants awaiting his birth but rather a stable. He was obedient to His parents and trusted in their care and protection as His life is threatened by Herod. He was forced to flee to a foreign land-Egypt. His life of sacrifice and humility will culminate in His suffering and death on a cross, like a common criminal.
Secularists, atheists, agnostics, pseudo-intellectuals and various irreverent comedians may deny, doubt or make fun of that which Christians believe as a central mystery of our faith: God became a man. Yet, this is truly what Christmas signifies.
Unfortunately, Christmas is all too frequently experienced as a once-a-year, get-nicelydressed, go-to-church experience. It becomes a time for the family to join together and share an extravagant meal. It is anticipated as a nostalgic, sentimental, feel-good holiday in which multiple gifts are exchanged. While these limited perceptions are not necessarily bad, let's not miss one of the greatest acts of love ever given to humanity: For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son . . . (Jn. 3:16)
Christmas celebrates when Heaven touched Earth and the Love of God took human form. Christmas is when a baby-the Son of God and Son of Mary-is born for us in Bethlehem. Christmas is unmistakably and definitively about Christ-Jesus, the Christ, the anointed one, the messiah.

Christmas is a mystery that needs to be pondered regularly so that we can begin to examine all of its beauty-like a most magnificent gem. When you peer into the manger this Christmas, realize that before you is a glimpse of the love that God has for you by giving us His only-begotten Son.

On behalf of all of the priests that serve our parish, our sisters and staff, we wish you and your families a happy, holy Christmas and a blessed New Year! May the love of God which took human form in the person of Jesus be honored and revered in every human person that we meet.
After all, God became one of $\boldsymbol{u s}$.

## Fr. EdNamiotka, Pastor

December 25/30/31/Jan. 1

|  | Presider | Music | Extraordinary Minister | Lector | Altar Server |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\frac{\text { Christmas }}{\text { 8:30 AM }}$ | Fr. Coronado | Celine Julie | B. Massey | S. Oatway |  |
| 11:00 AM | Fr. Namiotka | Celine Julie | T. Librojo D. Staton | C. Musso | T. Johnson <br> M. Marsdan |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Dec. } 30 \\ & \text { 4:30 PM } \end{aligned}$ | Fr. Coronado | Len | E. Beckman | J. Bland Campbell |  |
| $\begin{array}{\|l\|} \hline \text { Dec. } 31 \\ \text { 8:30 AM } \end{array}$ | Fr. Coronado | Julie | B. Massey | S. Oatway | E. Bresani |
| 11:00 AM | Fr. Namiotka | $\underset{\text { Julie }}{\text { Erin/Choir }}$ | D. Staton | J. Johnson | S. Andino |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Dec. } 31 \\ & \text { 4:30 PM } \end{aligned}$ | Fr. Namiotka | Len | L. DiGiullo | J. Cepeda |  |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Jan. } 1 \\ & \text { 8:30 AM } \end{aligned}$ | Fr. Namiotka | Becca Julie | B. Massey | T. Smith | T. Johnson |
| 11:00 AM | Fr. Coronado | Becca Julie | T. Librojo | B. Haughwout | M. Marsden <br> L. Vascisin |

## A Christmas with Jesus and with Pope Francis

On Christmas night, the angels lead the shepherds to a Baby born in a manger; they announced to them:
"I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Savior, yes, the Messiah the Lord, has been born tonight in Bethlehem," Luke 2:10"
"Littleness is the way to encounter God..." The shepherds in the manger are those who welcome God's surprise and live in wonder at their encounter with him, adoring him: in littleness they recognize the face of God," the Pope said.
"Awe and wonder are the two feelings that
 move everyone, young and old, before the Nativity scene, which is like a living Gospel overflowing from the pages of Holy Scripture," he wrote.
"Safeguarding the spirit of the Nativity scene becomes a healthy immersion in the presence of God manifested in the small, sometimes trivial and repetitive, everyday things," (From the book of Pope Francis: ‘Christmas at the Nativity" - Nov.21, 2023)

## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND..., A HAPPY

 ENCOUNTER WITH OUR LORD AND GOD JESUS, TO ALL OF US!Sr. Rosangela and the Religious Education Department


Pope Francis' Prayer Intentions for December: For persons with disabilities
We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.


## PLEASE REMEMBER IN

 YOUR PRAYERS: $T H E$SICK... Kristina Acevedo, Caroline Bancheri, Jim Beaney,
 Centonze, Ray Chuisano, Elva Clark, Grace Cobin, Tammy Colon, Joseph Console, Marie Corcoran, Mary Cowan, Catherine Diana, Fr. George Donfurtang, Elizabeth Garber, Eileen Gerie, Eileen Goodwin, Marjorie Graham, Helen Kane, Marion Kapischke, Michael Kapischke, John B. Kennedy, John Lane, Bob Lento, Marie Manalo, Felix Mele, Carter Oakley, Tina Petrone, Helen Protzman, Dom Sacca, Carlos Santiago, Teddy Shaffer, Grace Sklencar, Joe Sklencar, Claire Spence, Dick Spence, Dale Strack, Stacia Strack, Michael Suralik, Pat Suralik, Ed Targonski, Sr., Roy Targonski, Ann Vigrass, Joanne Wachman, Sarah Warner, and Nicholas.


## PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE

ARMED SERVICES... SPC Jordan
Beckman, Captain Patrick J. Bones, USMC, Major Anthony R. Cosentino, USAF, TSgt.John P. DeYoung, Sam Houston, USN, Lt. Nicholas G. Iannuzzi, SSgt. Kris Knaup, Capt. Jennifer LaSalce, US Army, Capt. Christopher Mawn, Lt. Jacqueline A. McCabe, PFC Sonny Morrison, Lt. Col. Louis J. Papa, Sisi Tyrrell, USMC, SPC Nicole Williams, and all those serving our country.

Eucharistic Revival Quotes from Pope Francis
" God knows how difficult it is, he knows how weak our memory is, and he has done something remarkable, he left us a
 memorial. He did not just leave us words, for it is easy to forget what we hear. He did not just leave us the Scriptures, for it is easy to forget what we read, He did not just leave us signs, for we can forget even what we see. He gave us Food, for it is not easy to forget something we have actually tasted. He left us Bread in which he is truly present, alive and true, with all the flavor of his love.. Receiving him we can say: 'He is the Lord: he remembers me!' That is why Jesus told us: "Do this in remembrance of me." (1st Cor. 11:24)

## The St. Thomas More Consolation Ministry

 Holiday luncheon Thursday, December 28, 1 pm, at Siena's Italian Creative Cuisine located at 300 White Horse Rd, Voorhees, NJ 08043-2500. Please contact one of the ministry members mentioned below if you wish to attend. Join us or call for more information. Ann Marie Lento 856-344-7454, Jon Lisitski 856-210-6466, Marian Kapischke 856-424-2053.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

## Small Christian Community Faith Sharing

Excerpt from the Gospel for the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Dec. 31, 2023 - Lk:2-22-
40 "When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord: "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord, and to offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took Him into his arms and blessed God, saying: 'Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."
Commentary:
The Gospel reading begins with the simple scene of a devout Jewish family obeying the Law. The holy man Simeon then meets them and says that this child will fulfill the hopes of Israel. Not only that, he will be a "revealing light to the Gentiles." One of Luke's dominant themes is salvation for everyone, Gentiles as well as Jews. This simple and strong description of the Holy Family concludes with their return to ordinary life in a small village.

## 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 Commentary resonates with me?

## Pro-Life Corner:



Merry Christmas from all of us to all of you!


Thank you for the gift of life!

## A prayer for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

"Pour forth, we beseech You, O, Lord, Your grace into our hearts that we, to whom the Incarnation of Your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever."



Thank You for participating in Angel Tree One and one-half million children under the age of 18 have a parent in the state or federal prison.
What becomes of these children whose parents are not available. Often, they are left to emotionally fend for themselves as they are placed in protective services or in the care of a grandparent. The children go through a grieving process. They have difficulty in school and feelings of abandonment, guilt, shame, etc. They feel very much alone. Your donation to Angel Tree helps in many ways. The holidays are very difficult times for them, and your gift brings joy and a connection with their parent who is incarcerated.

Thank you to all who gave so generously of their time and talents to make our Christmas celebrations so joyous and memorable. To those who
 provided flowers, cleaned, decorated, prepared the altar, made the music so special at all the Masses, served at the altar: Altar Servers, Cantors, Choir, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Greeters, Lectors, Musicians, Point Persons, Ushers we say: THANK YOU!
May the Peace of the Christmas Season be yours always.


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