

# THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF

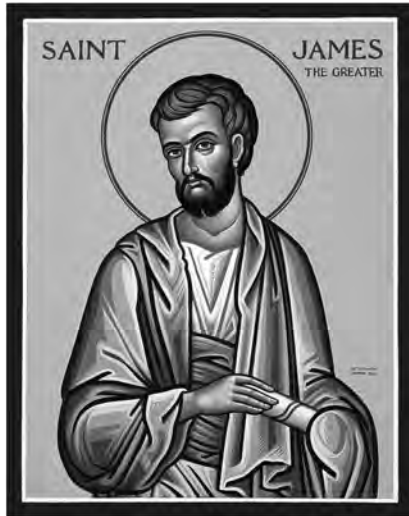
## *St. James the Greater*

75 River Road  
Montague, New Jersey



## *St. Thomas the Apostle*

210 Route 206 North  
Sandyston, New Jersey



Office for both parishes is located at  
210 Route 206 North, Sandyston, NJ 07826

*Parish Office* ----- 973-948-2296

*Fax* ----- 973-948-4634

*E-mail* ----- stjamesthomas@aol.com

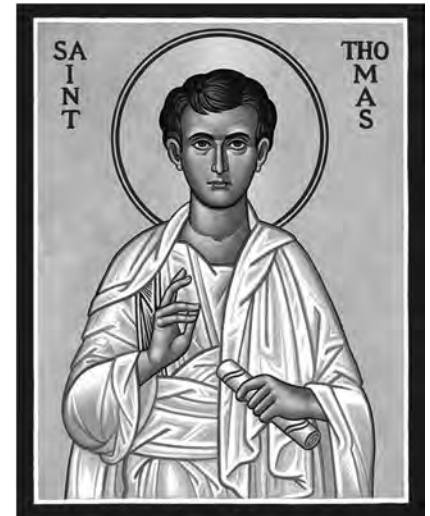
*Website* ----- saintjamesthomas.org

*Rectory* ----- 973-293-7582

### *Office Hours*

Monday - Friday ----- 8:30 am - 2:30 pm

## *Welcome*



Father Wayne Varga, *Pastor*

Mr. Wayne von Doehren, *Deacon*

Mrs. Mary Flexer, *CRE*

Mrs. Rosemarie Briegel, *Parish Secretary*

*The Sacrament of Baptism* is celebrated during Mass providing that liturgical norms do not dictate otherwise. Please contact the office to schedule a Baptism and to make arrangements for preparations especially for first time parents. Baptisms may be scheduled at other times if extenuating conditions apply. Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Part of our ministry is to *visit the sick* in hospital or at home. Privacy laws do not allow us to visit or pray publicly for the sick unless permission is given by the individual or their health care proxy. Please inform us of the needs of the sick, and we will be happy to respond as best we can.

*New parishioners* are invited to fill out a registration form which can be found in the vestibule of the Church. Often when a Catholic is asked to be a Godparent for baptism or sponsor for Confirmation a letter from the pastor of their parish is requested. This can only be given to registered and active members of the parish.

## MASS SCHEDULES

### *St. James*

Sunday: 8:00 am & 11:30 am

Saturday: 8:00 am

### *St. Thomas*

Saturday: 4:30 pm (*Vigil*)

Sunday: 9:30 am

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday &

Friday: 9:00 am

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

### *St. Thomas the Apostle*

Saturday: 4:00 - 4:20 pm or by appointment

## *Pregnancy Assistance*

Call 1-800-395-HELP or Tri-State

Pregnancy: 570-491-5151

Good Counsel: 1-800-723-8331

for pregnant mothers in need  
anytime, anyplace.

[www.goodcounselhomes.org](http://www.goodcounselhomes.org)

## *Post Abortion Healing*

Project Rachel:

973-777-8818 ext. 272

Lumina:

Hope and Healing After Abortion,  
1-877-LUMINA1 (877-586-4621)

[www.postabortionhelp.org](http://www.postabortionhelp.org)

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN (CCD)

Phone: 973-948-7004

Religious Education/Youth Office and classes are located at the Msgr. Gacquin Youth/Religious Education Center, 122 Layton-Hainesville Rd, Sandyston (*mail should be sent to parish office address listed above*)

## CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

(*September through April*)

At St. Thomas the Apostle Church as part of the 9:30 am Mass.

## *Adoption Services*

[Adoption@CatholicCharities](mailto:Adoption@CatholicCharities)

## *The Schools of The Catholic Academy of Sussex County*

973-729-6125 ext. 225

Rev. George A. Brown School  
(*Pre-K to Grade 4*)

Pope John XXIII Middle School  
(*Grade 5 to 7*)

Pope John XXIII High School  
(*Grade 8 to 12*)



[Facebook/StJamesThomas](https://www.facebook.com/StJamesThomas)

# The Three Stars of Advent



Can you name the three persons of the Bible who influence us the most during the Season of Advent ? They are three very different individuals, whom God had called to have important roles in the coming of His Son into the world. These days we celebrate the convergence of all three. They are: **Isaiah the Prophet, the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist.**

**Isaiah** lived more than 500 years before Jesus. He was called by God to rouse the Hebrew people back to faith and to the Covenant. In his own faith, and in his prophecies, Isaiah foresaw clearly the one whom God had promised to send to save Israel. Many of his prophecies were incorporated into Saint Matthew's Gospel—the Gospel which was written specifically for a Hebrew audience. Matthew's Gospel shows that the prophecies which Isaiah spoke centuries before, were all fulfilled in Jesus. We read many of Isaiah's prophecies during these weeks of Advent.

Last Friday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> we honored the **Blessed Virgin Mary** in the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. On this day, we celebrate that Mary was conceived—without the stain of Original Sin—in the womb of *her* mother, Saint Anne. God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that Mary, later on as a young girl, would freely and willingly consent to be the mother of His Son. And from the details we know of from the Gospels, Mary lovingly and tenderly raised the child that would, one day, save his people.

**John the Baptist** had the unique task of introducing Jesus to the world. He had no direct, concrete evidence that the Savior was on the way. But in listening closely to the Lord speaking to his heart, in the silence of the desert, John came to understand that the Savior was on the horizon. With the deepest faith, he prepared the people by urging them to repent. He convincingly proclaimed that the Savior was about to appear. And at the proper moment, as Jesus came up for his baptism in the Jordan River, the voice from heaven was heard: *"This is my beloved Son; listen to Him."*

Isaiah, Mary and John call out to us during these days of Advent. Their words are as current as the words you heard in your last cellphone call. And they give us the strong witness of their personal examples. As we see, their faithfulness to God's wishes enabled Jesus to come into the world. What can our faithfulness to the Lord accomplish today ?

God bless you,  
Father Wayne

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**December 10, 2023**

**St. James the Greater**

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in  
Memory of Steve & Eleanor Macko at the  
Request of their Family

**St. Thomas the Apostle**

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in  
Memory of Dale R. Briegel at the  
Request of his Wife & Son

**SATURDAY, December 16**

8:00AM – Brother Patrick King  
req. by Christian Brothers

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**December 17**

8:00AM – Ron Acker  
req. by Suzanne Laggy  
-John Klimkiewicz  
req. by Jane & Doug Sandberg

11:30AM – Fritz & Thelma May  
req. by their Family

**MONDAY, December 11**

9:00AM – Brother William Winter  
req. by Christian Brothers

**TUESDAY, December 12**

9:00AM – Timothy Egan  
req. by his Parents  
-Intentions of Mary Flexer  
req. by the Rimshnick Family

**WEDNESDAY, December 13**

9:00AM – Deceased Catechists and Students  
req. by Mary Flexer  
-Birthday Intentions of Grace Hagerman  
req. by Prayer Shawl Ministry

**THURSDAY, December 14**

No Mass

**FRIDAY, December 15**

9:00AM – Healing Intentions of Father Edward Rama  
req. by Margie Mullins

**SATURDAY, Vigil, December 16**

4:30PM – Mary Luteran  
req. by Prayer Shawl Ministry

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**December 17**

9:30AM – Clifford Jordan  
req. by Marie & Bruce Johnson  
-Mary Luteran  
req. by the Zidek Family

**ST. JAMES THE GREATER**

**\$1,270.00 – Regular Collection – December 3, 2023**

**\$1,066.00 – Online Giving**

**\$1,781.00 – Regular Collection – December 4, 2022**

**\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need**

***Consider a gift to St. James Parish in your will.***

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**For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:**

**[saintjamesthomas.org](http://saintjamesthomas.org) Then go to On-Line Giving Link.**

**St. James Altar & Floral Society** If any ladies in the parish are interested in joining, please call Joan Henn at 973-293-3690 or Linda Spinapolice at 973-293-7031.



**Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima Statue/Legion of Mary**

This beautifully adorned statue is a visible reminder of the love God has shown in the Blessed Mother. Placing such a beautiful image in your home turns hearts to prayer and brings grace to those who open their hearts to any image of God's love. If you would like to have the statue of Our Lady of Fatima in your home, or need any further information about the Legion of Mary in our parishes, please contact the parish office.  
*Pray the Family Rosary*

**TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:**

T.J. Albert, Phyllis Coneys, John Conrad, Sr., Melissa Cunningham, Geraldine Dayko, Audrey DeMarco, Terri Eaton, Marge Erickson, Peggy Gray, Patricia Harrington, Tracy Harriott, Patricia Hassan, Erin Hockenberry, Diane Hoos, T. J. Huffman, Charles Jensen, L. Lawson, Fred & Pat Leute, Nancy Lodema, Gerry Mahon, Sara Mahon, Teresa Mantani, Gen Miller, Richard Nowicki, Kim Osonitsch, Deacon Joe Roder, Ginny Sabia, Frances Sangiorgi, Joan Sangiorgi, Brian Scarpone, Kathleen Sibbio, Cecelia Smith, Yvonne Summers, Pastor Mike Sweeney, Richard Vergona, Walter Winkler, Ricky Wunder



We ask your continued prayers for the following men and women of our parish who are serving our country in the Armed Forces: George Abboud, Bryce Brigham, Saige Bruzard, Brandon Heimall, Mikey Heimall, Nicholas and Karissa Kealy, Ryan Kowal, Colton Lawrence, Joseph Mannion, Luke McDermott, Hunter Olenick, Christopher & Ana Sarao, Nicole Sarao, Marissa Snook, Peter Spinks and James Orr

**ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE**

**\$2,842.00 – Regular Collection – December 3, 2023**

**\$1,748.00 – Online Giving**

**\$3,200.00 – Regular Collection – December 4, 2022**

**\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need**

***Consider a gift to St. Thomas Parish in your will.***

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**For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:**

**[saintjamesthomas.org](http://saintjamesthomas.org) Then go to On-Line Giving link.**



### **Religious Education Classes for December**

Grades 1 – 4 – Tuesday, Dec. 12 & 19 – 4:00pm until 5:30pm at REC

Grades 5 & 6 and Conf. I & II – Sunday, Dec. 17 – 9:30am Mass at STC until 12:30pm at REC



**SAVE THE DATE...Children's Christmas Pageant** ~ will take place on **Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>** at **St. Thomas Church at 2:00PM**. All children in Grades 1 – 6 (actors) and 7 and 8 (readers, costume helpers, props – easy and fun way for Service Hours!!!) are encouraged to participate. **We are still in need of more kiddos! Please call Mary at 862-268-1876 if you still want to participate. Thanks!**



### **Listen Up – It's in the Bible**

**Dec. 10** – “Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare the way.” (MK. 1:2). *“What can we do to be messengers, like John, to prepare the way for Jesus?”*

### **Celebrate December**

This month we do a lot of waiting. Then, we do a lot of celebrating. For four weeks during the season of Advent we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus into the world. Then, on Christmas Day, we celebrate His birth!

**Dec. 10 ~ The Second Sunday of Advent** ~ Light two purple candles (Hope, Peace).

**Family Activity** ~ As a family, sing traditional carols that celebrate the birth of Jesus. **So, this makes it the perfect day to join in the Parish Christmas Carols!!!** The tractor and hay cart leaves the **REC at 2:00PM...jump on board!!!**

**Dec. 11 ~ St. Damasus I**

**Dec. 12 ~ Our Lady of Guadalupe**

**Dec. 13 ~ St. Lucy**

**Dec. 14 ~ St. John of the Cross**



### **Advent Traditions ~ The Jesse Tree**

The Jesse Tree is a way of preparing for the coming of Christ by reviewing His family tree. The name “Jesse tree” comes from Jesse, the father of King David, both of whom are named in the Jesse tree. For every day of December, a different member of Jesus’ own ancestry is represented by a unique ornament. As we look back at salvation history through the lens of Jesus’ family tree, we see how often God worked through ordinary and often unexpected men and women to bring us back to Him.



### **Children's Liturgy of the Word**

C.L.O.W. will take place again on **Sunday, December 10 and 17** at the 9:30am Mass.



### **Our Lady of Fatima Pilgrim Statue**

The beautiful statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the Sanctuary of St. Thomas is waiting to visit your home!

The purpose of the statue is a way the message of Fatima is spread throughout the world. It brings the graces of Fatima along with Our Lady's message of hope, peace and salvation. Each week, a family or a parishioner will receive this image at the end of Mass. You will be provided with a safe way for it to travel to and from your home. You may keep her in your home for the week and then return her back to church the following week before the start of Mass. Included in the box will be rosaries, prayer cards, books and holy water to help you in your prayer time. These things must be returned when you bring the statue back.

**We encourage all of our Religious Education families and all parishioners to take part in this beautiful and holy experience! There is a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Space at St. Thomas Church on the old altar near a picture of Our Lady of Fatima. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call Mary at 862-268-1876.**



Youth Group for 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders of Our Lady Queen of Peace, St. Thomas the Apostle and St. James the Greater parishes are waiting for YOU! Come and enjoy the companionship of new and old friends! Come for the food, fun and friendship! Come and find out about all the great activities and events they have planned for YOU!

**REMEMBER – we were given the option of an 8<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation because we have an active Youth Group for our teens!!!** For more information, please call Mary Flexer at 862-268-1876.

**Here is the December Schedule:**

**December 16 at 2:00PM – at Bentley Assisted Living as part of our Youth Ministry Outreach Program. We plan on hosting a Christmas party. Then back to OLQP for more festivities!!!**

**The Sacramental Sign-In Book** for our children and teens who are preparing for the Sacraments of First Eucharist (**grades 1 & 2**) and Confirmation (**grades 7 & 8**) These Binders (**Red – Conf. Class/White – FE Class**) will be kept in the back of BOTH churches and **must be signed each week**. Joyful participation in the weekly Celebration of the Eucharist as well as on Holydays of Obligation is a requirement for the reception of these sacraments. It is also expected of all faithful Catholics!!!

**Lottery Calendar** - St. James will again be selling the Lottery Calendars for 2024. The calendars are \$20 each and are eligible to win every day in 2024. Benefit of St. James and Knights of Columbus #13935 (Milford). Tickets will be available after Masses or contact Bill Ricciardi wjr218@optonline.net. They make great Christmas presents!!!

### **Yoga Classes at St. Thomas Church**

St. Thomas is offering a fitness class with a mix of Yoga moves (for flexibility and calm mind) and Pilates (for strength and tone especially in your core muscles). The class is on **Wednesday nights from 6:15 to 7:15pm**. Last class is on **December 27<sup>th</sup>**. **You may join us at any time**. The class is easy to follow but a full body workout. Any questions, please call instructor Chris Dube at 862-266-8418. Bring a mat, hand held weights (1-8lbs.), water and a friend. Join for \$6.00 per class. Twenty percent of the class money will be going to our St. Thomas Parish. So, please come and try it out!

# This Week in Our Parishes

STC – St. Thomas Church or Fr. Lewis Center  
SJC – St. James Church or Church Hall  
REC – Fr. Gacquin Religious Ed Center

**Sunday, December 10, 2023**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent*

9:30 a.m. STC Advent Pancake Breakfast  
--after Mass  
2:00 p.m. REC Christmas Caroling through town II

**Monday, Dec. 11**

**Tuesday, Dec. 12**

1:00 p.m. STC Bible Study  
4:00 p.m. REC Rel. Ed. Gr. 1 – 4

**Wednesday, Dec. 13**

6:15 p.m. STC Yoga exercises

**Thursday, Dec. 14**

**Friday, Dec. 15**

**Saturday, Dec. 16**

**Sunday, December 17, 2023**

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent*

2:00 p.m. STC --Children's Christmas Pageant  
--Lighting & Blessing of Christmas Tree  
--The Great Christmas Cookie Challenge

\* \* \* \* \*

**Next Sunday's Readings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent - B**

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: *Isaiah 61: 1—2a, 10--11*  
Resp. Psalm: *Luke 1: 46 -- 54*  
2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: *1 Thessalonians 5: 16--24*  
Gospel: *John 1: 6—8, 19--28*

\* \* \* \* \*

**The Delaware Valley Choral Society** in concert: "*Christmas in Germany*, at Milford United Methodist Church, 206 Ann St., Milford. **Sat. Dec. 16; 2:00 p.m.** Tickets: \$ 15 adults / \$ 10 students.

**Choose 'N Cut.** St. Paul's Abbey, outside Newton, has thousands of Christmas Trees ready to go. **Open 7 days a week 10 a.m. till 3:30 p.m., from now till Dec. 21.** (289 Rt. 206, Newton.)

**Christmas Caroling in Advent.** Warm up your vocal chords and join us **this afternoon: Sun. Dec. 10.** A tractor from Liberty Farms will pull us through the town and enable us to spread the cheer and joy of our Lord's birth. We meet at the Relig. Ed. Center at 2 p.m. We'll return at about 4 p.m and warm up with hot chocolate and snacks.

**Sunday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>:** Join us next Sunday for an afternoon filled with happy events. **1.** *Children's Christmas Pageant* at St. Thomas, at 2 p.m., presented by our religious ed. students. **2.** *Christmas Tree lighting and blessing.* **3.** *The Great Christmas Cookie Contest*, inviting you to submit your favorite Christmas cookie specialty. Plan now to be with us.

**2024 Lottery Calendars Available.** Lottery Calendars are \$ 20 each, A winner every day in 2024. They would make great Christmas gifts. Available after Masses or by reaching Bill Ricciardi at his e-mail site: [wjr218@optonline.net](mailto:wjr218@optonline.net)

**Soup on a Sat.** Nice, warm soup will be ready in time for the freezing weather in the dead of Winter. Place your order for these soups: **Italian Wedding Soup, Pasta & Fagioli, Manhattan Clam Chowder, Chili. \$ 9.00 per quart.** Place order & payment in Collection Basket or to Office. Proven home-made recipes only have been employed. **Order by Jan. 14. Pick-up at St. James, Sat. Jan. 20th, 12 Noon till 2 p.m.** Place your order on the order forms in Church, or call Bill Ricciardi at 845-341-3686 or at: [wir218@optonline.net](mailto:wjr218@optonline.net).

**Advent Wreath Blessing.** Just as in Church, it is an Advent custom to offer a blessing over your Advent Wreath at home. If you haven't done it yet, here is a **Prayer over Your Advent Wreath:**

*Lord our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ: He is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples; He is the wisdom that teaches and guides us; He is the Savior of every nation.*

*Lord God, let Your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May this wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

(Next week: a Christmas Tree Blessing.)



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