



## WELCOME TO STM

### Weekend Mass Schedule

**Saturday** 8:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m.

**Sunday** 8:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.

### Daily Mass Schedule

**Rosary** 8:00 a.m.

**Daily** 8:30 a.m.

### Reconciliation

**Tuesday** 5:30 p.m.

**Thursday** 9:00 a.m.

**Saturday** 9:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.

### Online Giving

[stthomasmorechurch.org/donate-1](http://stthomasmorechurch.org/donate-1)

### Perpetual Adoration

**Sunday** 1:00 p.m. - **Saturday** 1:00 p.m.

[stthomasmorechurch.org/adoration](http://stthomasmorechurch.org/adoration)

### Parish Office Hours

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

847.888.1682

### Pastor

Reverend Ryan Browning

[rbrowning@stthomasmorechurch.org](mailto:rbrowning@stthomasmorechurch.org)

[www.fatherbrowning.com](http://www.fatherbrowning.com)

### Parochial Vicar

Father "Ejay" Edil Jarapa

[associate@stthomasmorechurch.org](mailto:associate@stthomasmorechurch.org)

### Deacons

Mr. Jack Roder & Mr. David Deitz

### Parish Staff

[stthomasmorechurch.org/staff](http://stthomasmorechurch.org/staff)

### School Office

[stmelgin.org](http://stmelgin.org), 847.742.3959

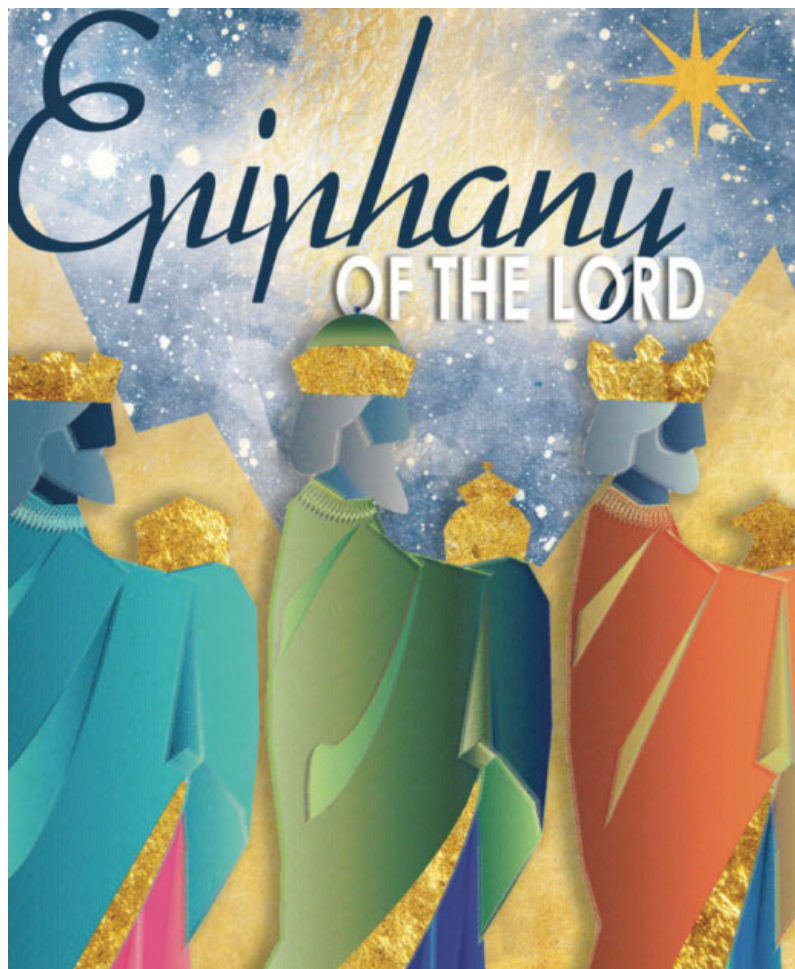
### Faith Formation Office

[stthomasmorechurch.org/religious-education](http://stthomasmorechurch.org/religious-education)

847.888.4887

### Sacraments

[stthomasmorechurch.org/liturgy-sacraments](http://stthomasmorechurch.org/liturgy-sacraments)



## Stay Connected



### Flocknote

Text "stmelgin" to 84576 or visit  
[flocknote.com/stthomasmore37](https://flocknote.com/stthomasmore37)



### YouTube

St Thomas More Church  
[youtube.com](https://youtube.com)



### Facebook

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Catholic Church](https://facebook.com/StThomasMoreCatholicChurch)



### Instagram

@stmcelgin #stmcelginthegram

## Bulletin Deadlines

### January 14th Bulletin

Materials Due: **January 02, 2024**

### January 21st Bulletin

Materials Due: **January 08, 2024**

## Get Involved 2024

It's a new year and a new opportunity to take a next step in being a part of the St. Thomas More community. Volunteering is the best way to meet more parishioners and help us to continue to provide the many services and events that we have at St. Thomas More. Here's a list of where we could use your help. Sign up at our website [stthomasmorechurch.org/get-involved-2024](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/get-involved-2024), scan the QR code or visit Raquel at the Welcome Center and she will happily help.

- Extraordinary Ministers of Communion
- Communion to the Homebound & Nursing Homes
- Altar Servers
- Bell Choir
- Ministers of Hope
- Cooks
- Adoration Adorers



## Q. & A. I was born Catholic but...

### Q: I didn't receive First Communion or Confirmation.

**A:** We have a group here for adults called "Becoming Catholic" that can help you to prepare for those sacraments. They meet following the 10:00 Mass on Sundays at 11:00am. Make a plan to stop in and check it out. You can send them a message on our website at [stthomasmorechurch.org/becoming-catholic](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/becoming-catholic)

### Q: I received First Communion and Confirmation when I was younger but I don't really remember much of what was taught and want to know more.

**A:** As adults we should always be seeking to learn more about our faith. We regularly have programs or events for adults at St. Thomas More. Our "Becoming Catholic" program is a perfect place to begin. These two links may be helpful to get you started. If you don't find what you're looking for please reach out to us.

[stthomasmorechurch.org/adult-programs](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/adult-programs)

[stthomasmorechurch.org/catholic-apps-and-podcasts](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/catholic-apps-and-podcasts)

### Q: We got married civilly but not in Church. Can we still do that?

**A:** If this is a first marriage for both of you then the answer is YES! No matter how long you have been married civilly. This is called marriage validation. It's a very simple process that starts with meeting with a priest. It does not require a large church marriage. This link will provide more details. If either of you have a previous marriage your process will require more details that the priest can help you navigate. [stthomasmorechurch.org/marriage](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/marriage) The benefit of having your marriage validated is that you will then be able to receive Eucharist.

### Q: I got divorced. Am I still able to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Confession?

**A:** If you were married in the Catholic Church and divorced and are currently not in a new marriage or new relationship then you are able to receive the sacraments. You should first make a good confession before receiving Eucharist. Remember Confession is a sacrament of healing and has powerful graces waiting for us.

**A:** If you were married civilly and divorced and are not in a new marriage or new relationship you are able to receive the sacraments. You should first make a good confession before receiving Eucharist. Remember Confession is a sacrament of healing and has powerful graces waiting for us.

### Q: I have children who are not babies who have not been Baptized. Is it too late?

**A:** It is NEVER too late to request Baptism and become a son or daughter of God. We have children of ALL ages seeking Baptism. We are happy to help your family. Contact Sharon Hall for more details. (847)888-1682x216. [evangelization@stthomasmorechurch.org](mailto:evangelization@stthomasmorechurch.org)

### Q: I have children who were Baptized but have not received First Communion or Confirmation. Is it too late?

**A:** It is NEVER too late to request these sacraments. Our Family Faith program is designed to meet families where they are and guide them in next steps. Contact Michelle Tack for more information. [stthomasmorechurch.org/religious-education](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/religious-education) (847)888-4887

## Everyday Stewardship

### Wise Men See God in the Simple Things

If you're on social media, you have probably seen a meme going around that features this quote: "God has a plan for your life. The enemy has a plan for your life. Be ready for both. Just be wise enough to know which one to battle and which one to embrace."

There were certainly two competing plans for the Magi: God's and Herod's. And, wise as they supposedly were, it wasn't entirely easy for the Magi to discern which was which.

After all, Herod posed as a friend. He offered the Magi hospitality and kindness. Though the Gospel doesn't say so, he probably flattered them and appealed to every moral weakness he could observe in them. In his palace, they must have felt great physical comfort — rest and tables of plenty on what was an otherwise long and treacherous journey.

But if the Magi were honest with themselves, I'll bet they would have admitted that, regardless of Herod's charm, they felt a gnawing sense of doubt while in his presence. When they looked upon the Christ Child, born in a stable without any of the comforts of the world or protections of wealth, they probably felt the opposite. They probably felt safe.

The Magi were lucky enough to have the right plan spelled out for them in a dream, but for the rest of us, it's enough to remember this: God's plan is often the one that leads us to places of great simplicity, great humility and great love. Let's have the wisdom to view power with suspicion, and innocence with admiration.

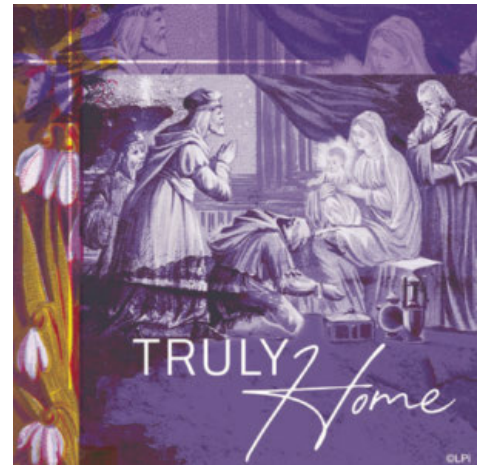
— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS ©LPi

## Worldwide Marriage Encounter

"They prostrated themselves and did him homage." As we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord, let us give homage to the presence of God in our marriages. Strengthen, renew, and rekindle your marriage sacrament by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience on

- Jan 26-28 in Brookfield, WI
- Feb. 9-11 in Geneva, IL
- March 9-10 in Wisconsin
- April 27-28 in Mundelein, IL

Visit our website at - [wwwme.org](http://wwwme.org) or call (888) 574-5653



### NEW YEAR'S



## A Letter from Fr. Ejay



### KONTI LANG: "The Star"

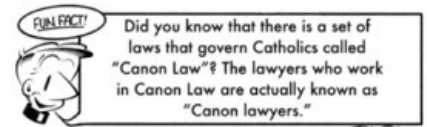
Fr. Edil Jarapa

The beautiful star of Bethlehem was uniquely designed, made by God to announce the birth of the Savior and to guide the three Magi in their search for the newborn king. The star represents Jesus as the light of the world, bringing hope to mankind. It represents the fulfillment of prophecy. But the star was more than simply a symbol; it illuminated the path that led to Jesus. As we start this new year, we really need this star that will give us hope and lead us to a meaningful and fruitful life, but this will only happen if we come to meet Jesus and keep Him in our hearts. While reaping the fruits of his presence, let us strive to be a "star" for others in order for them to find Jesus as well.

"What do you call a Catholic priest who became a lawyer?"



"A Father-in-law!"



### Prayer List

Join us in praying for members of our community who are sick or ailing. To add or remove a name on our prayer list, please call the parish office 847.888.1682. To keep our prayer list current, names will remain on the list for 3 months. After that time, please contact the parish office to renew names.

#### Lord Hear Our Prayer...

† All Souls in Purgatory  
† Debbie Abbs  
† Michael Abbs  
† Eunice Bai  
† Marjorie Brammer  
† AnnMarie LoPiccolo-  
Carlsen  
† Yolanda Castro  
† Mary Crawford  
† Dianna Giardino  
† Al Hansen  
† Jim Hansen  
† Lynn Harper  
† Richard Hart  
† Larry Kancler  
† Shirley Kinsella  
† Swan Lourits

† James Lublow  
† Joan Maryanski  
† Fran Meek  
† William Meek  
† Lila Moulton  
† Gloria Neitzel  
† Elizabeth North  
† Barbara Pruter  
† Lillian Rozanski  
† Patricia Tanner  
† Gabriele Tomlinson  
† Darren Watson  
† Chosen Whitehead  
† Joann Wille

### Sympathy List

Rest In Peace

† All Souls

### Giving at St. Thomas More

At St. Thomas More Church you are able to share your donations in a variety of ways.

- **AT MASS:** You can drop your weekly offering in one of the baskets at the back of church. We are currently not taking up a collection during the Mass.
- **ONLINE:** You can sign up to make your weekly offering online by visiting our website at Parish Giving; [stthomasmorechurch.org/donate-1](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/donate-1)

If you have questions about donations to St. Thomas More, contact Melissa Galla at 847.888.1682 x213 or [finance@stthomasmorechurch.org](mailto:finance@stthomasmorechurch.org).

### Readings of the Day

<https://bible.usccb.org/>

Podcast audio, videos and daily prayers.

### St. Vincent De Paul

[stthomasmorechurch.org/st-vincent-de-paul-society](https://stthomasmorechurch.org/st-vincent-de-paul-society)

We strive to comfort, feed, clothe, and assist those in need. We serve in person, keeping all things confidential and preserving dignity. Please call our answering machine at **847.628.5170**.

## STM Spotlight

### Meet Raquel Kemblowski

Hello, I'm thrilled to be the new receptionist at St. Thomas More. I'm Raquel Kemblowski originally from Carpentersville and a graduate of Jacob's High School in Algonquin. Family is central to me - I have 5 children, 2 grandkids and another on the way. My home in Huntley is shared with my husband, 3 kids, and 2 dogs. Beyond weekdays in the office, you'll find me at the Welcome center in gathering space every Sunday after all masses. I feel blessed to serve this wonderful parish and am touched by the warm welcome from the St. Thomas More community.



## Step Into The Light

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

How strange it is to think that if not for Herod's directions, the magi would not have known where to find Jesus. They were not Jews, they knew nothing of the old prophecies. It was Herod who convened the scholars. It was Herod who pointed the way — for ulterior motives, certainly, but nonetheless, this is the part he played. It was Herod who made the Epiphany possible.

"Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance," writes the prophet (Isaiah 60:3). A king may keep to the shadows, suspicious of the light — he may foolishly imagine he can snatch it from the sky to keep as his own possession, and, upon finding the light cannot be governed, grow to loathe it, and even seek to extinguish it once and for all.

But all his grand designs will come to nothing because there is no king so powerful that he can see in the dark. And even a man like Herod — a man so jealous that he sought to kill God — cannot prevent the breaking of day.

The Epiphany marks the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. It is a celebration of truth reaching places it was not expected to reach, of brightness illuminating corners of the world long ago consigned to shadow. It is a reminder that the battle has already been won, the night is over. All that remains is for us to decide: will we step into the light?

*"See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory." — Isaiah 60:2 ©LPi*

## Wedding Feast & Epiphany

### Question:

How are the feasts of the baptism of Jesus and the account of the wedding feast of Cana related to the Epiphany celebration?

### Answer:

The Epiphany season focuses on revealing Jesus to the world. Following the Christmas celebration, the liturgical year lays out a series of manifestation points in which Jesus is made publicly known. From its very beginning, the Christian community highlighted three events in the life of Jesus. These are the Epiphany, the Baptism of the Lord and the wedding feast at Cana.

The Epiphany discloses Jesus to the world of the Gentiles, represented by the magi from the East. The accounts of Jesus' baptism reveal his identity and mission, along with exposing him to those to whom he was sent to minister. The miracle of turning water to wine at the wedding feast of Cana, unique to John's Gospel, is the first public sign that Jesus performs, thus manifesting his public identity and his powers.

Today in the Roman Church, these are usually celebrated on three successive Sundays: Epiphany, the Baptism of the Lord which is usually the next Sunday, and the wedding feast of Cana, which is proclaimed on the 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time in lectionary year C.

These feasts connect around the concept of epiphany, public manifestation of Jesus to the world. They help us get to know more intimately who Jesus is and what he is about. Spend some time delving more deeply into your understanding of who Jesus is. Continue to cultivate these "epiphany" moments in your life. ©LPi

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**A HUGE Thank You to everyone who helped decorate and prepare our worship space for Advent and Christmas! Your amazing talent, hard work and support added so much to our celebrations!**

If you are interested in becoming part of the incredible Arts & Environment team, please call the parish office to leave your name and number or drop an email to [music@stthomasmorechurch.org](mailto:music@stthomasmorechurch.org) to be added to our notification list. There are no major commitments - come help when you can, share ideas and talents, or be a prayer warrior for the team!

# INTENTIONS & PRESIDERS

January 07, 2024 | The Epiphany of the Lord

## Mass Intentions for the Week

If you would like to have a Mass said for someone, call the parish office to schedule. The contribution for reserving the intention of a Mass is \$10.00.

### Monday, January 08

8:30 AM Mass

**Riccardo Avelar**

### Tuesday, January 09

8:30 AM Mass

**Bertha Rivera**

### Wednesday, January 10

8:30 AM Mass

**Adam Ariza**

9:30 AM Mass

**Barbara Weiss (Mrs. Hansen's Sister)**

### Thursday, January 11

8:30 AM Mass

**Jose Manuel Ariza**

### Friday, January 12

8:30 AM Mass

**Jesus Llagas (sp. Int.), Gilbert Llagas & Evelyn Aguzar**

### Saturday, January 13

8:30 AM Mass

**Henry Alonzo**

5:00 PM Mass

**Evans Family**

**Joseph Andrew Rienstra**

### Sunday, January 14

8:00 AM Mass

**Charlie Bushbaum**

10:00 AM Mass

**Rita Lutzow**

**Richard Sutton**

12:00 PM Mass

**People of STM**

## Presiders

### Saturday, January 13

8:30 AM Mass

**Fr. Ejay**

5:00 PM Mass

**Fr. Browning**

### Sunday, January 14

8:00 AM Mass

**Fr. Ejay**

10:00 AM Mass

**Fr. Browning**

12:00 PM Mass

**Fr. Linster**

## Adoration Candles Intentions

### January 07 – January 13

**Linda Lee McEwan**

### January 14 – January 20

**Linda Becci**



**January 13-14, 2024**

The National Appeal reflects the varied ways we seek to communicate Christ's message. You can help to promote the Gospel through your support of these worthy causes:

- Retirement Fund for Religious
- Catholic Campaign for Human Development
- Catholic Communication Campaign
- Catholic University of America
- Rockford Diocesan Priests' Pension
- Catholic School Financial Support for the Diocese of Rockford

Please bring the National Appeal envelope to Mass, or donate online at [rockforddiocese.org/donate](http://rockforddiocese.org/donate).

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