

St. Thomas More Catholic Church

December 10, 2023

The Bulletin

Second Sunday of Advent



*A Message from
Bishop Vásquez*

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from SVDP*

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Bulletin Deadlines

Submissions for the January 7th edition are due **by 11:59 p.m. on December 19th**. Submissions for the January 14th edition are due **by 11:59 p.m. on January 3rd**. Email asanchez@stmaustin.org for instructions on submitting content for *The Bulletin*.

To Reach a Priest in an Emergency

DURING OFFICE HOURS:

(512) 258-1161

AFTER HOURS:

(512) 258-1161, Opt. 1



Adoration Schedule

MONDAY-THURSDAY

9 a.m. - 10 p.m.

FRIDAY

3-10 p.m.

To sign up, please visit stm.weadorehim.com.

Parish Staff & Contact Information

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frkeith@stmaustin.org



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Website stmaustin.org

Parish Office Hours

MONDAY-FRIDAY

9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 5 p.m.

PARISH LIFE

This Week at a Glance

Sunday, December 10th

Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11 | Ps 85 | 2 Pt 3:8-14 | Mk 1:1-8

7:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: Pompili Family
8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Gift Shop Open
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Coffee & Donuts (Family Center)
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Library Open
9 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Sr. Carolyn Pelzel, CDP
10:15 a.m. - noon	Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) (Life House)
10:45 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: Gilbert & Beatriz Bosquez Liturgy of the Word for Children available
Noon - 1:15 p.m.	Elementary Faith Formation (Religious Education Building)
5 p.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: St. Thomas More Parishioners
6 - 6:30 p.m.	Gift Shop Open
6:30 - 8 p.m.	Life Teen (Parish Activity Center (PAC))
6:30 - 8 p.m.	Middle School Faith Formation (Religious Education Building: Brennan Auditorium)

Monday, December 11th

Is 35:1-10 | Ps 85 | Lk 5:17-26

8:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Maria Guadalupe Delgado
4 - 5:15 p.m.	Elementary Faith Formation (Religious Education Building)
6:30 - 7:45 p.m.	Elementary Faith Formation (Religious Education Building)
7 - 8:30 p.m.	Advent Lectio Divina (Life House: Back Room)

Tuesday, December 12th

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zec 2:14-17 | Judith 13:18bcde, 19 | Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

6:30 - 7:30 a.m.	Men's Scripture Share (Life House)
8:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Juliana Alviso & † Sucre Moreno
10:30 a.m. - noon	Cancer Support Group (Life House: Back Room)
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Young at Heart (Religious Education Building: Brennan Auditorium)
4 - 5:15 p.m.	Elementary Faith Formation (Religious Education Building)
7 - 8:30 p.m.	Rosary Prayer Group (Parish Activity Center (PAC): St. Thomas More Room)
7 - 9 p.m.	Life Teen Bible Study (Life House: Back Room)

Wednesday, December 13th

Memorial of St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

Is 40:25-31 | Ps 103 | Mt 11:28-30

8:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Rev. Mr. Tom Johnson & † Moises Robinson
9:30 a.m. - noon	Advent Penance Service (Church)
6:30 - 8 p.m.	Middle School Bible Study (Religious Education Building: Room 105)
7 p.m.	Advent Penance Service (Church)
7:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Alcoholics Anonymous (Parish Activity Center (PAC): St. Thomas More Room)

Thursday, December 14th

Memorial of St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church

Is 41:13-20 | Ps 145 | Mt 11:11-15

6 - 7:30 a.m.	Man Up (Parish Activity Center (PAC))
8:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Onesimo "Shorty" Salazar & † Rosemary Gard
9:30 - 11 a.m.	Adult Study: Catechism in a Year (Life House)
7 - 8:30 p.m.	Adult Study: Catechism in a Year (Life House)

Friday, December 15th

Is 48:17-19 | Ps 1 | Mt 11:16-19

8:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Howard Salge
9 - 10 a.m.	Library Open

Saturday, December 16th

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11 | Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 | 1 Thes 5:16-24 | Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

3:45 - 4:40 p.m.	Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation (Church: Confessional & Holy Family Room)
5 p.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: St. Thomas More Parishioners

Sunday, December 17th

Third Sunday of Advent

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11 | Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 | 1 Thes 5:16-24 | Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

7:30 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Walter Collins
8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Gift Shop Open
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Coffee & Donuts (Family Center)
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Library Open
9 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Robert Pond O'Beirne
10:15 a.m. - noon	Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) (Life House)
10:45 a.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Patrick Casey Liturgy of the Word for Children available
5 p.m.	Mass (Church) Intention: † Sr. Carolyn Pelzel, CDP

Due to the bulletin production schedule, *This Week at a Glance* does not reflect changes made to the church calendar within the last five days. Visit reservations.stmaustin.org to see the most up-to-date calendar.

If you would like a Mass said in memory of loved ones or for the intentions of an individual or family, please contact the Parish Office at (512) 258-1161. Each family can request up to four Masses per year.

Stewardship of Treasure Report

Weekly

November 27th - December 3rd
Collection:
\$52,962

Amount Needed Weekly:
\$50,000

ABOVE Weekly Budget:
\$2,962

Youth Stewardship:
\$122

Monthly Recap

Collected in November:
\$217,466

Amount Needed to Date:
\$200,000

ABOVE Monthly Budget:
\$17,466

Youth Stewardship in November:
\$421

Thank You!

We are done replacing the trees that were damaged in February's ice storm. The replacement was part of our almost \$300,000 property insurance claim. Only the deductible was funded from our operating budget. A hearty thanks to our facilities team and volunteers for their hard work in cleaning up the initial mess and replacing trees.

Thank you for faithfully using the gifts God has generously given you!

If you would like to help us share the Good News with our community, visit stmaustin.org/give to make a secure and convenient gift online.

THE Gift Shop

SUNDAYS
8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 9th
6 - 6:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 10th
8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. & 6 - 6:30 p.m.

The Gift Shop Advent/Christmas celebration continues this weekend with all Christmas ornaments 25% off!

For new items and Gift Shop hours, you can now follow us on Facebook and Instagram at stmaustin.org/gift-shop.

The Gift Shop is currently open every Sunday in December from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. It will also be open on December 9th and 10th from 6 to 6:30 p.m.

If you would like to join our ministry, please call or text Marlene Miller, Gift Shop manager, at (316) 304-5431 for more information.

A Message From Bishop Vásquez

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Advent is upon us — a time to prepare our hearts for the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and his return at the end of time. The penitential nature of the season of Advent allows us time to reflect on our personal weaknesses that prevent us from fully encountering Christ. During Advent, in listening to God's word, in the hymns we sing, and in the prayers we offer, we focus our attention upon the birth of the Savior who is coming. Let us embrace this sacred time so that God's graces penetrate our minds and hearts knowing that Christ is found in the Holy Eucharist and is always near.

- Most Rev. Joe S. Vásquez
Bishop of Austin

Knights of Columbus Nut Sales

The Knights of Columbus Holiday Nuts Sales will be available after Masses on December 9th and 10th. We accept cash, checks and credit cards. All proceeds from this sale benefit seminarians studying for the priesthood and other worthy charitable causes. The Knights will be selling pecans, almonds, walnuts, cashews, chocolate-covered nuts, candy-coated pretzels and other nut items. Plan now to buy for your needs for your holiday cooking, snacks and fun while supplies last! We are accepting online orders for nut sales products at stmknights.org/nuts. See the website for details on picking up your online order.

DEC
16

6:30 p.m.

Hallmark Movie
Mom's Night Out

Join Called to be Mom (CTBM)! Feel free to bring either an appetizer or dessert to share! There will also be a fun Christmas-inspired drink and bingo game, including prizes! Please RSVP at stmaustin.org/ctbm. Please email Kathryne at ctbm@stmaustin.org with any questions.

JAN
12

9:30 a.m. - noon

Friday Fellowship & Formation

Religious Education Building, Brennan Auditorium

Join Called To Be Mom on Friday (CTBM) for a discussion on children's adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. CTBM meets monthly and also offers monthly playdates and semi-monthly mother's nights out. Please RSVP online at stmaustin.org/ctbm. Childcare is available for children one year and older. Babies are welcome to join us in the auditorium. Please contact Kathryne at ctbm@stmaustin.org with any questions.

WORSHIP & PRAYER

Prayer Requests

Kellie Bergman

Barbara Boland

Ally Bengs

John Brun

Ed Burke

Graciela Diaz

Frank DiLorenzo

Katie DiLorenzo

Dodie Domanski

Al Esparza

Jo Falkenstein

Ray & Grace Fisher

Ame Frezza

Judi Gilliam

Trace Gilliam

Brendan Huey

Dylan Johnson

Beth Jones

Ramona Kaauamo

Frank Kelly

Jack Klaer

David Kresta

Mary Kubala

Linda Lange

Skye Lohraum

Charles McCourt

Luke Merchant

Jason Mikolajek

Fr. Michael O'Connor

Jim O'Donnell

Barbara Ohradzansky

Trent Overall

JJ Pacelli

Sylvie Pignot

Trent Rinehart

Dennis Robinson

Consuelo Rodriguez Brown

Dorothy Thompson

Andy Turner

Stan Urban

Barbara Wiegand

Jennifer Wiegand

Kerry Wolf

Christopher Younger

Luke Zouzalik

We also pray for the well-being of our fellow parishioners who are homebound or nursing home residents.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas

This year, Christmas is the day after the Fourth Sunday of Advent. When this occurs, it's confusing how we are called to meet our holy days of obligation.

One is expected to attend a Mass that fulfills the obligation for the Fourth Sunday of Advent and one that fulfills the obligation for Christmas. A Mass can only fulfill one obligation. Therefore, two Masses must be attended.

The good news is you have options:

- ⊕ **Option 1:** Attend the Vigil Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent at 5 p.m. on Saturday, December 23rd and either a Christmas Eve Vigil Mass (4 or 6:30 p.m.) on Sunday the 24th or Christmas Day Mass (midnight, 9 or 10:45 a.m.), on Monday the 25th.
- ⊕ **Option 2:** Attend the Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent on Sunday the 24th (7:30, 9 or 10:45 a.m.) and either a Christmas Eve Vigil Mass (4 or 6:30 p.m.) the 24th or Christmas Day Mass (midnight, 9 or 10:45 a.m.) on Monday the 25th.

Whichever option you choose, we look forward to celebrating the coming of Jesus with you and your loved ones!



Advent Prayer

This Advent, prepare your heart for the coming of Christ by praying Lectio Divina. Join us in the Life House back room, 7 to 8:30 p.m., on December 11th and 18th. If you prefer to attend via Zoom, please email Deacon Dan at deacondanlupo@yahoo.com with "Lectio Zoom" in the subject line. No prior experience with Lectio Divina is required. Just your desire to encounter Christ, the Word made Flesh, in prayer.

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP

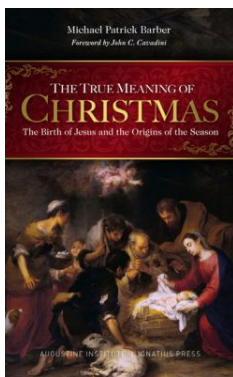
A Stewardship Moment

Today's second reading is about Christ's coming again, "The day of the Lord," Peter calls it, but that day isn't December 25th. It's that other day, that second-coming day about which Peter is concerned. He waits with great hope and anticipation for God to remake the earth into a place of perfect justice and peace. And he sets some demanding goals for the Christian community as it awaits that final day of accounting and reconciliation: strive to be

at peace, without spot or blemish. Christian stewards work for peace. **As you await the coming of Christmas, what can you do to promote peace in your home, workplace, community and world?**

This reflection is courtesy of the International Catholic Stewardship Council. Learn more about stewardship and the council at catholicstewardship.com.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION



The True Meaning of Christmas: The Birth of Jesus and the Origins of the Season

What does the Bible really say about the birth of Jesus? How did the celebration of Christmas become associated with things like Santa Claus and decorated trees? In *The True Meaning of Christmas: The Birth of Jesus and the Origins of the Season*, biblical scholar Michael Patrick Barber offers an inspiring look at the Bible's accounts of Jesus' birth and the development of the Christmas season. Look for this title and the many Advent and Christmas resources in the library!

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This Month on Formed

The Spirituality of Advent

Dr. Tim Gray discusses the spirituality of Advent and the joy of waiting for Christ. Watch it at stma.cc/F2312.



From the Catechism this Week

"Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer.

It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery."

-CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, 2724-

If you have ever wanted to understand what it means to be Catholic and allow those truths to shape your life, *The Catechism in a Year* podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz is for you! Start listening anytime and walk it with your parish community in monthly gatherings.

Next Gathering: December 14th
9:30-11 a.m. or 7-8:30 p.m.
Life House

We'll explore prayer and how Jesus taught us to pray in the Our Father.

▲ Learn more and sign up at stmaustin.org/ciy or contact Dawn at dawn@stmaustin.org or (512) 258-1944 x235.

YOUNG ADULTS

DEC
11through December 15th

Austin Caritas

Austin

Make a difference in Austin and join Austin Caritas Inner City Mission. No need to travel to make a difference to those in need. This five-day mission in Austin is organized by the Schoenstatt Movement of Austin and by UT students who collaborate with local charities in the city, serving the homeless, visiting the elderly and families in need, and hosting community events. The week

will include opportunities for small group community activities, Mass, adoration and spiritual formation. Anyone of college age (18-24) is welcome to join the mission. It's organized by Catholics, but all are welcome! To register, go to austincaritas.com. To support the mission with a financial donation go to schoenstatt-austin.us/donate. If you have any questions, please contact austincaritas@schoenstatt.us or message their Instagram @austin_caritas.

FAITH FORMATION

Will Your Children Be Disciples?

Parents, the #1 predictor of whether a child remains Catholic as a young adult is whether their parents are disciples of Jesus. This gives your child the best start. If your children are young, now's the time to build good habits. Elementary Faith Formation classes are open to all children in kindergarten through 5th grade. For more information, please contact Casey McMillan at cmcmillan@stmaustin.org or (512) 258-1944 x221.



Always Forward

The Life Teen Fall Retreat *Always Forward* was held November 10th - 12th at Camp of the Hills. We had an amazing time. Thank you to all who made this weekend possible!

SOCIAL OUTREACH & PASTORAL CARE

Stephen Ministry Blue Christmas

Are you or is someone you know having a blue Christmas? The holiday season can be a difficult time for some who are dealing with a crisis, depression over the loss of a job, grief at the death of a loved one, the necessity of hospitalization, the birth of a child. At times like these, it is very important to have someone who cares. Our parish has trained lay people, Stephen Ministers, who offer the ministry of Christian caring right here in our community. Make use of their ministry by calling Eileen at (512) 507-9563. All phone calls are confidential.

Catholic Social Teaching

In today's Gospel, we hear the message of John the Baptist calling us to a change of heart and reminding us that the true light and glory of the earth is Jesus the Christ. **While we are busy with trees and gifts and decorations, we might be especially mindful and attentive to Christ who is present to us in the one with no home to decorate, no place for a tree, no hope of gifts. Can we give them the gift of eye contact, or asking their name or of a few moments of conversation?** This might be the most important gift we can give this year for we never know the distressing disguise Jesus might use to come to us!

This reflection is courtesy of the Diocese of Austin. You can find more inspiring content and learn about the work of the diocese at austindiocese.org.

Thank You from SVDP

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) is very thankful to everyone who participated in the Thanksgiving Food Drive. We donated over 7,000 lbs of food to the Vincentian Family Center which currently serves over 800 families every Saturday. We also were able to donate 2,200 lbs of food to our Mobile Loaves and Fishes pantry here at STM. A special thank you to our Social Justice ministry who helped us sort and transfer the donations. You all are a blessing to SVDP and to this community.



Thank You from the Advent Giving Tree Ministry!

The Advent Giving Tree Ministry would like to thank you, our parishioners, for your generosity! Your donation of gifts and gift cards will help to make the Christmas season meaningful to hundreds of individuals and families. A very special thank you also to the volunteers who helped make the ministry a success again this year, especially Shirley Brinkman, Jennifer Pett Marsteller, Beth Moreno, Joanne Saathoff and David Reed. Through your generosity we are supporting the following organizations this year: Annunciation Maternity Home (Georgetown), Sacred Heart Catholic Church (Elgin), St. Louise House, STM Mobile Loaves & Fishes, STM Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Settlement Home for Children, SAFE Alliance, Sacred Heart Catholic Church (Austin), St. Thomas More families, Trotter House and Sarah's House Maternity Home. Have a blessed Christmas!

“God has become man via the Incarnation so that the gift of grace available through the celebration of the liturgy can transform the worshiper into another Christ.”

- DR. ROLAND MILLARE -

In need of healing prayer?

Mercy of God Prayer Center
Deacon Rob Reyna
(512) 814-6470

Struggling with bills?

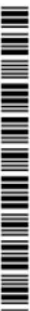
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
STM Offices
(512) 258-1161

Want to talk about a difficult time?

Stephen Ministry
Eileen (512) 507-9563

Need help with meals?

Good Samaritan
Meal Ministry
(480) 788-6325



AROUND THE DIOCESE



Did you know Catholic Charities of Central Texas (CCCTX) serves people of all ages, faiths, ethnic backgrounds and economic circumstances? CCCTX is dedicated to eliminating poverty in the community so all Central Texans may thrive in their God-given gifts and dignity. To learn more about the services available through Catholic Charities of Central Texas and how you can get involved, visit ccctx.org.

Livestreamed Daily Mass

Daily Mass is livestreamed from the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception (the chapel at the Diocese of Austin's Pastoral Center) at noon on weekdays. Join the livestream at austindiocese.org/watch.

Yard Nativity Scenes

The St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church Knights of Columbus are creating Advent and Christmas yard decorations. Made from durable white PVC sheets, the following items are offered:



- ⊕ Nativity Scene: \$200
- ⊕ Trumpeting Angel: \$95
- ⊕ Three Wise Men: \$180
- ⊕ Shepherd & Sheep: \$80

Visit stma.cc/Ssvdpkoc or scan this QR code with your phone's camera to see pictures and place an order before these items sell out. Orders will be ready for pickup at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church on December 16th and 17th.



DEC
13

through December 15th

Heart of Jesus Discernment Retreat

Cedarbrake Catholic Retreat Center, Temple

Attention men: How is Jesus calling you to follow Him? Join Fr. Greg Gerhart, the vocation director of the diocese, for a retreat that will include time for prayer, spiritual conferences on discernment and vocations, and opportunities to speak with priests, seminarians and other men discerning their vocation. The retreat is open to single men who are 18 to 49 years old. Seniors in high school are also invited. The cost of the retreat is \$35. Details are available at stma.cc/AVhj23 or by calling (512) 949-2430.

JAN
19

through January 21st

Rest in Me

Cedarbrake Catholic Retreat Center, Temple

This retreat is a weekend of rest for moms/female caregivers of children with physical, mental or intellectual disabilities and/or chronic medical issues. This weekend is a time for each caregiver to share and find strength in each other and God. Mass, adoration plus praise and worship will be part of the retreat. Cost: \$225 for a private room; \$200 for a shared room; \$100 for commuters. For more information, visit cedarbrake.org or call (254) 780-2436.

*“A child will change more than just the heart of a parent,
and more than just an ideal of what children are.
He can change an entire family, a village, a city, a country,
the entire world, and even the course of humanity.
Just read history. Jesus came to us through the womb
of his mother for a reason.”*

-CAROLYN SVELLINGER-

Ethics & Integrity in Ministry (EIM)

United with the bishop of Austin, St. Thomas More Parish is committed to preventing harm to any of God's people and supporting those who have experienced abuse.

What is EIM? It is the diocesan policy, training and screening process that empowers our community to prevent and respond to abuse. Compliance with EIM policies is required of all clergy, consecrated sisters and brothers, seminarians, employees and adult lay volunteers serving in ministry.

Why is EIM required for all who serve in ministry? We have a shared commitment to ensuring our parish is a safe place for everyone, especially children and vulnerable adults. The more people who are aware of abuse warning signs, the more effective we can be in keeping our parish, neighborhood, families and schools safe.

What is required to be compliant with EIM? To be compliant, one starts by creating an account with virtus.org and attending an initial live training. Then, one

completes the online refresher training and consents to a background check every three years. If you are a victim of sexual abuse and have concerns regarding your attendance at a workshop, please contact the EIM director at (512) 949-2447 to discuss alternative workshop arrangements.

How do I report a concern? If you have information that a person in ministry in this diocese abused a minor, elderly adult or adult with a disability, report the information to your local law enforcement or the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) online at txabusehotline.org or by calling (800) 252-5400.

After reporting to local law enforcement or DFPS, submit the form found at bit.ly/DOAerfB using the instructions at the top of the form. If you prefer to make your report to the diocese by telephone, call (512) 949-2447.

What resources are available for victims of abuse? You can find a list of available care resources at austindiocese.org/healing-abuse-prevention.

Learn more about Ethics and Integrity in Ministry at stmaustin.org/eim.

*Thank you to our
generous sponsors!*

Through the generous support of these sponsors, *The Bulletin* can be printed at no cost to our parish. When you need services, please consider using these sponsors and let them know you found them through our bulletin.



Linda Baddour
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Parishioner

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E: linda@bramlettresidential.com



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Barry Warmerdam
Parishioner

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& NW Austin



Annunciation Austin

- K-12 Catholic education at St. Thomas More with classes held Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Faith and family centered education model with school masses and spiritual formation
- An apostolate of Schoenstatt Movement of Austin

www.annunciationaustin.org



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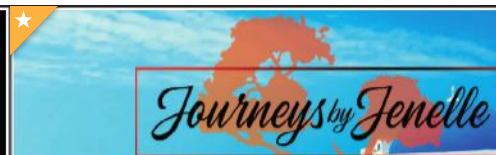
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