



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH

HOMOSASSA, FLORIDA

7040 S Suncoast Blvd.
Phone: (352) 628-7000
E-mail: Info@MyStThomas.org

Homosassa, FL 34446
Fax: (352) 628-4723
www.MyStThomas.org

A warm welcome to everyone, parishioners and guests, whether coming from near or far. I am so happy you could join us today, as we reflect on the Word of God and partake of the Eucharist. My hope is that you feel at home at St. Thomas. ~ **Fr. Glenn**

MASS SCHEDULE

Daily: 8:00 am (Monday Friday);
Saturday 8:00 am: Communion
Service Only

First Saturday Mass: 8:00 am

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday: Vigil Mass: 4:30 pm
Sunday: 8:00 am & 10:30 am
(Parish Choir)

HOLY DAYS & HOLIDAYS

Consult our bulletin or parish website:
www.MyStThomas.org

First Friday Adoration: 8:30 am to Noon

Saturday: Reconciliation (Confession)
3:15 - 4:00 pm or by appt.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

It is our pleasure to serve you!

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Friday - Sunday: Closed

PASTORAL STAFF MEMBERS

Rev. J. Glenn Diaz, Pastor

Assisting Clergy:

Rev. Msgr. Joseph Sobiesiak

Deacon Mark Manko: Business Manager

Robert Adams: Maintenance

Steve Balcom: Maintenance

Karen Ballaban: Comms. Specialist

Robin Furciato: Coord. of Religious Ed.

David Martin: Custodian

Joseph McEvoy: Pastoral Assistant

Michelle Kim-Painter: Music Director

Alfred Papino: Bookkeeper; Cantor,
& Lead Accompanist

Pauline Papino: Sacristan

Karen Robben: Office and
Communications Manager

First Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023

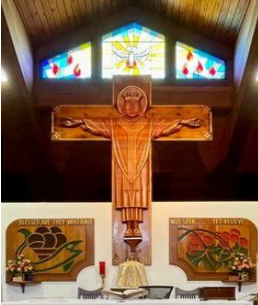


Advent is a time of
Hopeful longing, Joyful expectation,
Prayerful penance and Spiritual
Preparation.



TENDING GOD'S FLOCK

3 December 2023 | *First Sunday of Advent, Year B*



1. When we discussed parish priorities during the town hall meetings held in February of this year, the installation of **stained-glass windows** in our church was not exactly on top of that list. However, a few weeks ago, a generous parishioner, a snowbird who prefers to remain anonymous, informed me that she was willing to pay for one stained glass panel, the one on top of the sanctuary area. This panel will depict the Holy Spirit descending on the Church with his seven gifts inspiring worship, unity, and service. The provider assured me that it will be ready for installation before Christmas. Thank you, anonymous donor, for this beautiful Christmas gift for our parish. The other window is still waiting for another donor.

2. We celebrate today the **First Sunday of Advent**, which ushers in a new liturgical year. We begin our Advent celebration by lighting the first candle of our Advent wreath. This reminds us that Advent is a season of preparation for the threefold coming of Jesus into our lives, namely: his *historical coming* (his birth at Bethlehem), his *second coming* (when Jesus comes as judge at the end of time), and his *sacramental coming* (when Jesus comes to us in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist). As we begin Advent, reflect on what you would change about your life if you knew that Jesus was coming back soon. Since we don't know the day of his final coming, start living as if the day is today.

3. Whenever we enter a new stage, we usually have plans we'd like to implement before this time around next year. Many use the start of a new liturgical year to make plans: to read the bible more often, to go to church every Sunday, to volunteer more for a worthy cause. But today's readings offer us a different course—one which begins with our surrender to God's plan. As today's **First Reading** (Isaiah 63:16-19; 64:2-7) tells us, God is the potter and we are the clay, the work of his hands. Even if things have gone badly, and we are misshapen or broken by our sins, we surrender as clay to the Potter's hands, knowing that he can make us new and whole and holy. Do we dare to welcome those whom God will send our way this Advent? Will we allow them to have a hand in molding and refining who we are?

Fr Glenn | 21 October 2023

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the United States of America

Holy Day of Obligation

Mass: Friday, December 8: 9:00 am

Vigil Mass: Thursday, December 7: 4:30 pm

Read: "No sin would touch her, so that she would be a fitting and worthy vessel of the Son of God. The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the virginal conception and the birth of Christ, but rather to Mary's being conceived without inheriting Original Sin."

(United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 142-143)

Reflect: In today's Gospel, we hear and reflect on Mary's famous words to the angel Gabriel: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 2:38)

Pray: Pray with Pope Francis on this Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

Act: On this Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a holy day of obligation, attend Mass and pray the Hail Mary before meals.



"BEHOLD, I AM THE
HANDMAID OF THE
LORD. MAY IT BE
DONE TO ME
ACCORDING TO
YOUR WORD."

— LUKE 1:38

Fr. Glenn and the entire Pastoral Staff send our congratulations & best wishes to all those celebrating a December birthday, marriage anniversary, and/or birth of a baby. May God bless you with his infinite love, comforting peace, and heavenly joy throughout the coming year.



What is the New Testament evidence proving the doctrine of the Real Presence? (Part 2)

Continuing the New Testament proofs for the doctrine of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, Part 2 addresses the fulfillment of Jesus' promises of John Chapter 6 at the Last Supper.

The Gospels of Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24 and Luke 22:19-20 and Paul's first letter to the Corinthians 11:23-25. How were the promises of Jesus in John Chapter 6 fulfilled in these verses? In each Jesus took bread, broke it and gave it to his disciples saying "This IS my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."; and "This cup IS the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (citing St. Paul's letter)

The important word in these passages is "IS" referring to his body and blood. From the beginning, Catholic theologians have insisted that "IS" be taken in its natural and literal sense. It is one of the simplest words in the language and no explanation can make it plainer. Jesus says that what He holds in His hands is His body, and in the chalice is his blood. Jesus was clearly not speaking symbolically and we must humbly believe him. It truly is miraculous and we must not set limits to God's power by making it extend only as far as the human mind will allow.

1 Cor 10:16 and 11:27-29. St. Paul affirms that partaking the bread and wine is the communion of the body and blood of Jesus, and demands that we partake this communion in a worthy manner: "Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. A person should examine himself ... For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself." If taken as symbolic these verses have no meaning,

In remembrance of Jesus, the Church re-presents this memorial sacrifice at each Mass. Next month we'll examine the evidence from the early Fathers of the Church.

Note: In addition to the noted cites, see especially: Wilhelm, Joseph; Scannell, Thomas B.. A Manual Of Catholic Theology: Cross-linked to the Bible, , Patristic Publishing, 2019, Sect. 25

~ written by Greg Windmiller

Christmas Flower Offering

In Memory / Honor of...

(Please Print)

☐ In Memory of
☐ In Honor of

☐ In Memory of
☐ In Honor of

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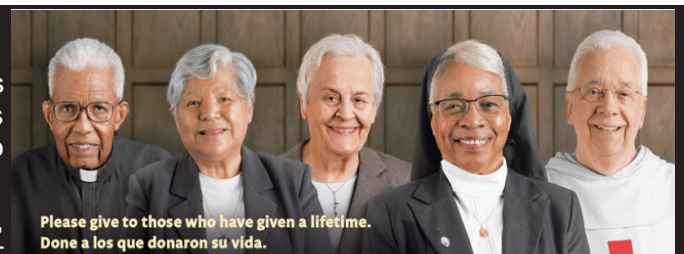
For those of you who do not receive church envelopes by mail, there are extra Christmas Flower Offering envelopes in the lobby (narthex) of the church.

Please include your desired donation for the mass intention 'In Memory of' or 'In Honor of' and place the envelope in the December 2/3 weekend collection basket or drop it off at the parish office. Your donations will be used for flowers to decorate the church at Christmas. Thank you!

Elderly Religious Need Your Help!

The Retirement Fund for Religious raises funds for the Catholic sisters, brothers, and priests in religious orders that for most of their lives worked for little or no pay and do not have 401 (k) or pension plan.

Like those pictured, nearly 25,000 senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have devoted their lives to prayer and ministry - educating the young, tending the sick, aiding the needy, and more. Yet years of serving for little or no pay have left a profound shortage in retirement savings. Your support of the Retirement Fund for Religious helps furnish care, medicines, and other necessities. ~ retiredreligious.org



Retirement Fund for Religious
Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos

retiredreligious.org

The Collection is next weekend (December 9 & 10). Please give generously.

MASS INTENTIONS // DAILY READINGS // ALTAR FLOWERS // PRAYER LIST

Sunday, December 3

8:00 am: Jason Shaw † (3rd. Anniversary)

Requested by: Mom & Dad

10:30 am: Parish Family

Monday, December 4

8:00 am Margaret Grenawalt †

Requested by: Roy Grenawalt

Tuesday, December 5

8:00 am: Lou Vanderham †

Requested by: Gene & Helen Koczur

Wednesday, December 6

8:00 am: Jamie Summerton †

Requested by: Lorraine Traylor and Rick White

Thursday, December 7

8:00 am: Peter & Susan Floreno †

Requested by: Joseph & Beverly McEvoy

4:30 pm: James & Marjorie Maffia †

Requested by: David & Tina Maffia

Friday, December 8

9:00 am: Bill Robben †

Requested by: Mary Lou Robben

Saturday, December 9

4:30 pm: John Schell †

Requested by: Ruthann Pullen

Sunday, December 10

8:00 am: Jeffrey Michael Sciscilo †

Requested by: The Morrow Family

10:30 am: Parish Family

Sunday

First Sunday of Advent

Is 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 12:33-37

Monday

Is 2: 1-5; Ps 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9; Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday

Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday

Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Mt 15:29-37

Thursday

Memorial of Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1 and 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1; 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

Saturday

Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mt 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

Sunday

Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

Saturday, December 2, through Friday, December 8



This week's Altar Flowers are
donated in loving memory
of Mark Male†

by Marcy & Wayne Male

LORD, GRACIOUSLY HEAR OUR PRAYERS

Please remember in your prayers all those in our parish family who are ill, especially:



Karl Wolf, Ethan Grayshan, Virginia Kanis, Scott Klaben, Kerrie Schmidt, Mike Jablonsky, Skip Guss, Stephanie St. Clair, Mary Ann DeSimone, Charles Terreault, Christine Gicola, Elizabeth Dostal, Anthony Cimorelli, Rita Frisbee, Marguerite Corrao, Norma Galvin, Wendell Miller, Joseph Hertrich, Michelle LaGreca, Sutton Hotard, Charles Harvey, Betty Parker, David Cheevers, Joseph & Gail Carey, Deacon Vince Small, Raymond Huffman, Wade Wolfe, Samantha Wasley, Don Harnett, Frank Watson, Peggy Lingrosso, Pat Cleary, Mary Ann Zack, Arria Wheeler, Andy Lunk, Sarah Phillips, Peggy Paul, Sheila Greifenkamp, Pat Allard, Philip Porter III, Phyllis Fylak, Richard & Lorraine Kwiecienski, Sandy Marecki, Linda DeWitt, Neill Aiken, Peg Laurie, Sheyna Clements, Sandra Boros, Edward & Rusty Ryal, Fred Di Battista, Tonya Leigh & Family, Evelyn Sweeny, Kevin Watson, Ron Zasada, Audrey Shetton, Fr. Robert Pesarchick, Mariann De Pue, John Chaplin, Maria Casey, Barnara Diaz, Glenn Hultgren, Carl Campise, Imre Beke Sr., Dayl Kohorst, Victor & Phyllis Closi, Terry Brausch, Robert Adams, Karen Ballaban, Robert Firminger, Brian Stanley.

To add or remove someone from our parish prayer list, please contact the parish office.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Occasion	Date	Mass Time	Special Activity
<u>Sundays of Advent:</u> First Sunday Second Sunday Third (Gaudete) Sunday Fourth Sunday	Sunday, December 3 Sunday, December 10 Sunday, December 17 Sunday, December 24	All Weekend Masses Saturday Vigil: 4:30 pm Sunday: 8:00 & 10:30 am	Advent Wreath Blessing Lighting Advent Candles You Pick the Prize Drawing: Dec. 17 at 10:30 am Mass
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Thursday, December 7 Friday, December 8	4:30 pm: Vigil Mass 9:00 am	Holy Day of Obligation
Hour of Mercy	Friday, December 15	3:00 pm	Reconciliation, Adoration, Divine Mercy Chaplet (See Pg. 6)
Christmas Concert: Festival of Lessons & Carols	Wednesday, December 20	3:00 pm	Music Ministry Concert followed by Women's Guild Cookies & Cocoa (See Pg. 6)
Simbang Gabi	Friday, December 22	6:00 pm	Night Mass (See Pg. 6)
Christmas Eve	Sunday, December 24	4:00 pm 4:30 pm	Children's Xmas Pageant Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
Christmas Day	Monday, December 25	8:00 am 10:30 am	Holy Day of Obligation Merry Christmas!
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God New Year's Holiday	Monday, January 1	9:00 am	Holy Day of Obligation Happy New Year!
Feast of the Epiphany	Sunday, January 7	All Weekend Masses Saturday Vigil: 4:30 pm Sunday: 8:00 & 10:30 am	

THANK YOU!

YOU PICK the PRIZE RAFFLE

This year's goal is \$9,000
for parking lot improvements.

★ \$10,111.00 ★ Entries 490

One lucky winner will be drawn
at random during the 10:30 AM
Mass on Sunday, December 17!

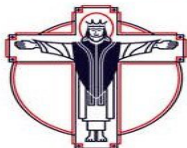


Join our fourth annual "You Pick the Prize Raffle"!

Here's how it works: Your donation amount directly correlates with your potential prize percentage – a \$30 donation gets you 30% of the total pot, \$25 gets you 25%, \$10 for 10%, and \$5 for 5%. Your family and friends are also welcome to participate. Participation is easy – complete the ticket & return it with your donation. You can pay by cash, check, or credit card.

Drop your entry in the collection basket at Mass, or mail it to the parish office. Obtain more tickets in our parish office or from our weekly bulletin. You can also participate online at give.mystthomas.org/give and select "You Pick the Prize Raffle" from the dropdown.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC CHURCH 2023 YOU PICK THE PRIZE RAFFLE



The winner will be drawn during the
10:30 a.m. Mass on
Sunday, December 17, 2023.

Need not be present to win.

YOU PICK THE PRIZE RAFFLE TICKET

Return this portion.

Donation Amount (circle): \$30 \$20 \$10 or \$_____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

(Maximum of \$30 per ticket)

ST. THOMAS MINISTRIES & UPCOMING EVENTS



Toys for Tots donation boxes are located in the narthex through Sunday, December 10.

Drop off unopened & unwrapped gifts for children up to the age of 16.

Toys for Tots prefers not to accept realistic-looking weapons and gifts with food. If donated, they will not distribute these items.

Please help if you are able.

2022 New Parishioner Welcome

Sunday, December 3

In St. Martin's Hall following the 10:30 a.m. Mass

Pastor, Rev. J. Glenn Diaz, our parish staff, and ministry leaders look forward to personally welcoming our new parishioners who joined St. Thomas the Apostle Church in the past year.

Come meet other new parishioners.

Learn more about our parish and ministries.

Enjoy food, refreshments, and fellowship!



We depend on our amazing volunteers to keep our church and ministries running smoothly. Fr. Glenn and the St. Thomas Pastoral Staff want to thank all volunteers. Join us at **Volunteer Appreciation Day** on Wednesday, December 13, at 11:00 a.m. in St. Martin's Hall.

Let's celebrate with food, fellowship, and raffles!
Your dedication means a lot to us.

All are invited to the St. Thomas Music Ministry's

Christmas Concert:

Festival of Lessons and

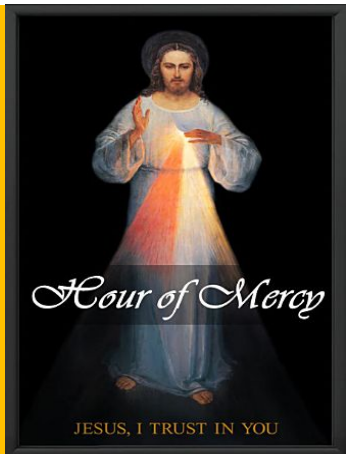
Carols on Wednesday, December 20, at 3:00 p.m. in the church. Following the concert, the Women's Guild will host **Cookies and Cocoa** in St. Martin's Hall.



Join us on Friday, December 15, at 3:00 p.m. for an **Hour of Mercy.**

Fr. Glenn extends a personal invitation to those who have been away from the **Sacrament of Reconciliation.** This time is devoted to you to meet with Fr. Glenn in the confessional and experience God's healing mercy and forgiveness.

All parishioners are invited for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, and Benediction.



The Citrus Community Concert Choir presents **"Celebrate with the Angels"** on Sunday, December 3, at 3:00 p.m. at Faith Presbyterian Church located at 206 Washington Avenue in Inverness. Admission at the door is \$10 for adults, students are free.

Join us for our first **Simbang Gabi!** Simbang Gabi, which means "Night Mass",

is a Filipino Advent tradition honoring the Blessed Mother. The Mass will be on Friday, December 22, at 6:00 p.m.

Simbang Gabi

At the Parish Dinner Dance on November 18, 2023,

Charlie Mattingly was

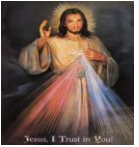
presented with a certificate of appreciation for 75 years of service to the Knights of Columbus.

Pictured is Grand Knight Joseph McEvoy presenting the award. Charlie is very active in the community and an attendee at daily mass. He is a founding member of St. Thomas and a charter member of Council 15154. He has been a member of the Knights since October 25, 1948, and recently celebrated his 94th Birthday.



EVENTS & COLLECTIONS // OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PRAYER CARD


The church is open Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for personal prayer time. Access to the church is available through the rear door, directly across from the entrance to the parish office.



THE DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

is prayed every weekday following the 8:00 am Mass.

Together We Pray!

Sunday, December 3: First Sunday of Advent & Name Tag Sunday Collections: Parish Building Fund, Christmas Flowers, Pregnancy & Family Life, and Toys for Tots	8:00 am 9:00 am - 10:15 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Mass YFF Class and Advent Reconciliation Mass New Parishioner Welcome
Monday, December 4:	8:00 am 6:00 pm	Mass RCIA Meeting
Tuesday, December 5:	8:00 am 8:45 am	Mass Holy Face Devotion
Wednesday, December 6:	8:00 am 4:30 pm	Mass SVdP Meeting
Thursday, December 7:  NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival	8:00 am 8:30 am—9:30 am 9:45 am 1:00 pm 4:30 pm	Mass Holy Hour Flame of Love Bereavement Group Vigil Mass: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Friday, December 8: Collection: Immaculate Conception	9:00 am	Mass: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Saturday, December 9:	8:00 am 3:15 - 4:00 pm 4:30 pm	Communion Only Service Reconciliation Vigil Mass
Sunday, December 10: Second Sunday of Advent Collections: Retired Religious Fund, SVdP Money Collection, and Toys for Tots (last day for collection)	8:00 am 9:00 am - 10:15 am 10:30 am 11:45 am—2:30 pm	Mass YFF Class (True Story of Christmas with Deacon Mark) Mass (Children's Mass) Love More Ministry, Team C

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

On December 12th of every year, the Catholic Church celebrates Our Lady of Guadalupe.

It is a Catholic title of the Blessed Virgin Mary associated with a series of five Marian apparitions in December 1531 and a venerated image on a cloak now enshrined within the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. Her appearances led to the conversion of millions of indigenous people. Today, Our Lady of Guadalupe is recognized as the Patron Saint of "The Americas."

Our Lady of Guadalupe represents hope, a renewal of faith, God's acceptance of all people, and His preferential option for the poor. She is also recognized as the Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of Unborn Children.

The *Respect Life Ministry* hopes the prayer card offered to you at the December 9th and 10th masses will remind you that she is always awaiting your prayers.





Diocesan is proud to be printing *St. Thomas the Apostle's Sunday Bulletin*



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George Kardashian, M.D. - Hand/Elbow
Juan Raposo, M.D. - Revisions/Total Joints
Kirill Ilalov, M.D. - Spine
Dragomir Mijic, D.O. - Shoulder
Dolfi Herscovici, D.O. - Foot/Ankle
Korey Yngstrom, D.O. - Hip/Trauma
Kenton Panas, M.D. - Sports Injuries Shoulder/Knee
Patrick Dermarkarian, M.D. - Spine
Christopher Reyher, M.D. - Psychiatry/General
Huy Nguyen, M.D. - Psychiatry/General
Alexander Pappas, D.P.M. - Podiatrist



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