

Church of St. Theresa

A Caring Community Reaching Out To One Another in Christ

2855 St. Theresa Avenue, Bronx, New York 10461

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday at 5:00pm,
Sunday at 7:30am, 9:00am(Italian),
10:30am(Family Mass) 12:15pm ,
1:30PM(Spanish) & 5:00pm

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday thru Saturday 8:00am & 9:00am

DEVOTIONS

Miraculous Medal & St. Theresa
Novenas after Monday morning Masses
St. Anthony Novena after Tuesday
morning Masses.

Thursday 12 Noon Mass
& Eucharistic Adoration

Exposition & Benediction of the
Blessed Sacrament First Friday 6:00PM

CONFESSION

Saturdays from 4:00pm to 5:00pm
and by appointment

BAPTISMS

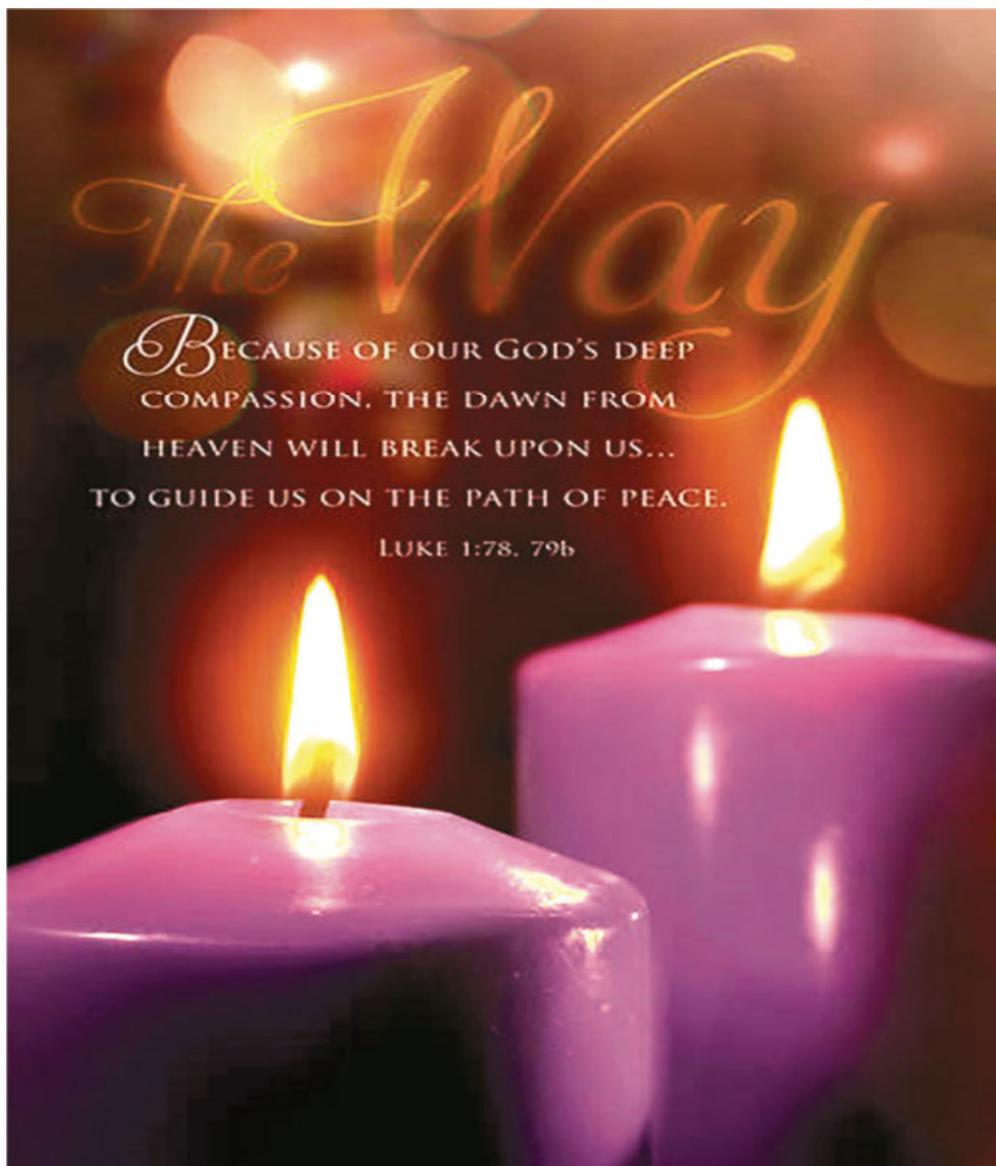
Baptisms take place most Sundays
after the 1:30pm Mass.

We ask parents to attend the Baptism
preparation meeting. Register at the
Rectory for the meeting.
The date of the Baptism will be discussed
at the Baptism meeting.

MARRIAGES

Call the Rectory at least six months in
advance of the wedding date to make an
appointment with parish clergy.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Rev. Msgr. Thomas Derivan, Pastor

Rev. Joseph Ligory, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Edmundo Gomez, Retired,
Rev. Robert Imbelli, Weekend Associate
Salesian Fathers, Weekend Associates

Mrs. Josephine Fanelli, Principal
Mrs. Marie McCarrick, Dir. of Religious Education
Nadia Papayani, Dir. of Music

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WEBSITE: www.sttheresachurchbronx.org
E-MAIL: rectorystc@aol.com

SCHOOL: 718-792-3688
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: 718-792-8434

CHURCH OF ST. THERESA, BRONX

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER DERIVAN:

Every year at the beginning of Advent, I remind the children of an old rhyme about Advent:

*First one, then two, then three, then four,
And then the Lord Jesus is at the door.*

That little rhyme reminds us of what Advent is all about: our four weeks of preparing for the coming of the Lord Jesus, our four weeks of preparing for Him to be “at the door.” And just as that little rhyme reminds us of what Advent is, so too does the Advent Wreath. It is an old custom, a German tradition which has spread throughout the world. The Advent Wreath has beautiful symbolism. The wreath is round, a circle with no beginning and no end, reminding us that God’s love goes round and round our lives, never ending. It is made of the evergreen branches which never change and neither does God’s love for us all.

And of course it features the four candles, the second of which we light today. They represent the four weeks of Advent, a visible reminder to us that we should not miss Advent. We should brighten up our lives with our Advent preparations of prayer, sacrifice and charity, just as we light these candles. Many people have found great symbolism in the candles of the wreath. One interpretation is this: the four candles represent each of the main themes of Advent.

- * The first candle, the candle of hope, sometimes called the “Prophecy Candle” in remembrance of the hope of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who awaited the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- * The second candle, the candle of faith, called the “Bethlehem Candle” as a reminder of the faith of Mary and St. Joseph as they journey to Bethlehem.
- * The third candle, the candle of joy called the “Shepherd’s Candle representing the joy of the shepherds in welcoming the Newborn King.
- * And the fourth candle, the candle of peace called the “Angel’s Candle,” recalling the angel’s message of peace on the first Christmas, peace to God’s people on earth.

Those are beautiful explanations of the candles of the Advent Wreath. But I have to admit that I favor a simpler explanation, that the four candles represent the four great people who were part of the first Advent: **First, Isaiah the Prophet** who foretold the coming of the One who would be Emmanuel, “God with us.” The third candle is the candle of **Our Blessed Mother Mary** who accepted the message of the Angel Gabriel, and gave birth to the Son of God. And the fourth candle, the candle of **St. Joseph**, the “just man” as the Gospel calls him, faithful Joseph who took his beloved wife Mary to Bethlehem and found the stable where the Son of God would be born.

But I have left out the second candle, the candle which we light today. It stands for the great prophet of Advent, **St. John the Baptist**, who called people to “prepare the way of the Lord and make Him a straight path.” John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus, John, the prophet who took no credit in himself, but who proclaimed, “One mightier than I is coming and I am not worthy to carry his sandals.” John who baptized people in the Jordan River calling them to repent for their sins.

What is the message of St. John the Baptist to us on this second Sunday of Advent? What is he telling us to do? He tells us to prepare, prepare the way of the Lord, prepare for Jesus to come. Is that not what Advent is all about—preparing for Jesus? But what do we have to prepare for Jesus? The prophet Isaiah gives us an answer—he says when Jesus would come, “every valley shall be filled, every mountain laid low.” How do we prepare during Advent? Pope Francis has a beautiful suggestion. He says we should fill up the valleys in our lives, those gaps when we are not opening our hearts and our lives to the Lord. Those gaps are not serious sins. They are times of neglect, when we could have done more for the Lord. Some gaps for adults may be those times we have not been concerned with others, people in our families whom we could have spent more time with or family members who might need our help or even our forgiveness. Some gaps for children may be those times when we just have not been kind and nice and friendly with brothers and sisters or some other child or some times when we could have done more to help out at home. We must fill up those gaps, those valleys during Advent. That is what St. John the Baptist asked people to do two thousand years ago. That is what he still asks of all of us today.

Let us make a decision as we light the second candle of the Wreath today. Let us make the decision that we will not miss Advent, that we will not waste Advent, that we will not let Advent go by without really preparing ourselves to let the Lord Jesus come more and more into our lives. Most importantly let us not keep Jesus waiting. And let us remember: “First one, then two, then three, then four/ And then the Lord Jesus is at the door.”

Father Thomas B. Derivan

Prayer to Saint Nicholas of Myra

O good St. Nicholas, you who are the joy of children, put into my heart a spirit of Christlike childhood,
which the Gospel exhorts us to have, and teach me to sow joy around me.

You, whose feast prepares us for Christmas, open my faith to the mystery of God made Man.

You, good Bishop and Shepherd, help me to unite my heart with the mission of Holy Mother Church,
and inspire her children to be faithful to the Gospel.

O good Saint Nicholas, patron of children, sailors and the helpless,
watch over those who follow Jesus, your Lord and theirs.

Bring us all in reverence to the Holy Child of Bethlehem,
where true joy and peace are found. Amen.

(Material from Good Catholic)

MESSAGE OF OUR HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS FOR THIS SUNDAY

In the Gospel given this second Sunday of Advent, John the Baptist's invitation resounds: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Mt 3:2). With these very words, Jesus begins his mission in Galilee; and such will also be the message that the disciples must bring on their first missionary experience. Matthew the evangelist would like to present John as the one who prepares the way of the coming Christ. It is a matter of the same joyful message: the kingdom of God is at hand! It is near, and it is in us! These words are very important: "The kingdom of God is in our midst!", Jesus says. And John announces what Jesus will say later: "The kingdom of God is at hand, it has arrived, and is in your midst". This is the central message of every Christian mission. When a missionary goes, a Christian goes to proclaim Jesus, not to proselytize, as if he were a fan trying to drum up new supporters for his team. No, he goes simply to proclaim: "The kingdom of God is in our midst!". And in this way, the missionaries prepare the path for Jesus to encounter the people.

But what is this kingdom of God, this kingdom of heaven? They are synonymous. We think immediately of the afterlife: eternal life. Of course this is true, the kingdom of God will extend without limit beyond earthly life, but the good news that Jesus brings us — and that John predicts — is that we do not need to wait for the kingdom of God in the future: it is at hand. In some way it is already present and we may experience spiritual power from now on. "The kingdom of God is in your midst!", Jesus will say. God comes to establish his lordship in our history, today, every day, in our life; and there — where it is welcomed with faith and humility — love, joy and peace blossom.

The condition for entering and being a part of this kingdom is to implement a change in our life, which is to convert, to convert every day, to take a step forward each day. It is a question of leaving behind the comfortable but misleading ways of this world and instead, preparing the way of the Lord. This does not take away our freedom, but gives us true happiness. With the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, it is God himself who abides among us to free us from self interest, sin and corruption, from these manners of the devil: seeking success at all costs; seeking power to the detriment of the weak; having the desire for wealth; seeking pleasure at any price.

Christmas is a day of great joy, even external, but above all, it is a religious event for which a spiritual preparation is necessary. In this season of Advent, let us be guided by the Baptist's exhortation: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight!", he tells us. We prepare the way of the Lord and make his paths straight when we examine our conscience, when we scrutinize our attitudes, in order to eliminate these sinful manners that I mentioned, which are not from God: success at all costs; power to the detriment of the weak; the desire for wealth; pleasure at any price.

May the Virgin Mary help us to prepare ourselves for the encounter with this ever greater Love, which is what Jesus brings and which, on Christmas night, becomes very, very small, like a seed fallen on the soil. And Jesus is this seed: the seed of the kingdom of God.

Angelus Message, December 4, 2016



DECEMBER 6
SAINT NICHOLAS OF MYRA
Bishop († c. 350)

Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, in the province of Lycia in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), has been widely venerated since ancient times. He is the patron of Greece and Russia, as well as of Sicily in Italy and Lorraine in France. It is said that Nicholas was born at Patara and, after becoming bishop at Myra, suffered imprisonment for the faith for a time under the emperor Diocletian.

A tireless defender of the poor, Nicholas is said to have once saved three daughters of an impoverished merchant who were on the verge of selling their bodies for money. The holy bishop tossed three bags of gold into their window—an act of generosity that stands behind the tradition of Santa Claus (from the Dutch "Sint Niklass") and his surreptitious middle-of-the-night gift-giving.

Nicholas is said to have died in Myra, where his tomb was the site of a multitude of miracles. "His favors," wrote a Greek in the 10th century, "are poured out over all the earth: the Scythians know them, as do the Indians and the barbarians, the Africans as well as the Italians." Indeed, Nicholas was so popular with Italians that in 1087 merchants from Italy schemed to have his relics removed from Myra, then under Muslim rule, to the city of Bari in Italy. His shrine there is still a popular site for pilgrims.

All-loving Father, through the intercession of Saint Nicholas of Myra, save me from selling myself for worldly wealth.



DECEMBER 7
SAINT AMBROSE
Bishop & Doctor († 397)

Ambrose was born of a family that boasted Roman statesmen and Christian martyrs. By his mid-thirties, he had achieved a high political rank as the prefect in Milan. When one day he was called to the cathedral to calm the belligerent crowd in the process of electing a new bishop, he suddenly became the crowd's unexpected choice. Still a catechumen at this time, Ambrose had to be hurriedly baptized and ordained before he could receive episcopal consecration.

He immediately gave away his wealth and commenced a study of the Fathers, learning as he preached. His homilies won many to the Faith, including the young Augustine. Augustine said that Ambrose "was one of those who speak the truth, and speak it well, judiciously, pointedly, and with beauty and power of expression."

Ambrose was known to keep his door open to any who sought his counsel. He vigilantly defended his flock against the political powers of his time. When he died, he had been leading them for twenty-three years.

Among Ambrose's writings are three treatises defending the divinity of the Holy Spirit. In his commentary on the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32), Ambrose exhorts us: "Rise, you who were lying fast asleep.... Rise and hurry to the Church: here is the Father, here is the Son, here is the Holy Spirit."

Father of mercies, through the intercession of Saint Ambrose, rouse me from my slumber. May I hurry on to you.

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION THIS THURSDAY

This Thursday is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Mother, when we celebrate our belief that Mary was conceived without original sin because of her future role as Mother of the Son of God. It is a holyday of obligation.

Our Masses on Thursday will be at 8AM, 9AM, 12PM, and 7:15PM.

There will also be a Vigil Mass for the holyday on Wednesday, December 7 at 7:15PM.

A REFLECTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

In front of our rectory, there is a beautiful statue of Our Blessed Mother Mary. The statue was given in memory of a beautiful little girl Maria Bruno who went home to God a few years ago. The statue shows Our Blessed Mother with her arms outstretched, embracing us all. She is standing on the globe of the world, because she is the Mother of all nations. And if you look closely you will see she is standing on a snake. In the Scripture, the snake, recalling the story of the sin of Adam and Eve, represents evil, the power of Satan. But God's power overcomes the power of Satan. Even when that original sin was committed by Adam and Eve, God promised them a Savior. And God says "He will strike at your head while you strike at his heel." The Savior, the Promised One, will strike the head of the serpent. He will conquer sin and evil. And the one to help Him conquer evil will be His Mother, Our Blessed Mother Mary. That is why she is depicted in that statue, with her heel on the serpent. Mary will join with Jesus her Son in conquering all evil and bringing us God's merciful love.

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, we celebrate our belief that Our Blessed Mother Mary was conceived in the womb of her holy mother St. Anne without original sin. This gift was given to her because she would become the Mother of Jesus who would conquer all sin. It was fitting that His Mother would have no sin from the very first moment of her conception. She is always the Immaculate Virgin Mary.

This feastday (which is especially important for us because our country is under the patronage of Mary the Immaculate Conception) is a message to us. Like Mary, we must conquer evil; like Mary we must battle sin. Remember that Mary's Immaculate Conception was only the first chapter of her battle with sin. She kept on battling sin. She joined her Son Jesus in saving the world from sin and death. And she calls us to do the same. That means that every day we should try to get rid from our lives things that should not be there—unkindness to one another; being disrespectful to parents and grandparents; finding excuses not to pray to God as we know we should. Like Our Blessed Mother Mary, we must battle sin and she will help us to do it. Remember, she is always our Mother. And like a good mother, she wants the best for us. She wants us to overcome sin. She wants us to do our best to make our lives more pleasing to Almighty God.

When we say the Hail Mary, we say that beautiful line at the end of the prayer. It reminds us that we are all sinners and it reminds us how much we need Mary's help. On this feastday, may we say: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

Father Thomas B. Derivan

PRAYER TO MARY THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, PATRONESS OF THE UNITED STATES

"Most Holy Trinity, Our Father in Heaven,
who chose Mary as the fairest of your daughters;
Holy Spirit, who chose Mary as your spouse;
God the Son, who chose Mary as your Mother;
in union with Mary, we adore your majesty and
acknowledge your supreme, eternal dominion and authority.

Most Holy Trinity, we put the United States of America
into the hands of Mary Immaculate
in order that she may present this country to you.
Through her we wish to thank you for the great resources of this land
and for the freedom which has been its heritage.
Through the intercession of Mary, have mercy on the Catholic Church in America.
Grant us peace.

Have mercy on our President and on all the officers of our government.
Grant us a fruitful economy born of justice and charity.
Protect the family life of the nation.
Guard the precious gift of many religious vocations.
Through the intercession of our Mother, have mercy on the sick, the poor, the tempted, sinners--on all who are in need.

Mary, Immaculate Virgin, our mother, patroness of our land,
we praise you and honor you and give our country and ourselves
to your immaculate heart.

O immaculate heart of Mary, pierced by the sword of sorrow prophesied by Simeon,
save us from degeneration, disaster and war.
Protect us from all harm. immaculate heart of Mary,
you who bore the sufferings of your Son in the depths of your heart, be our advocate.
Pray for us, that acting always according to your will and the will of your Divine Son,
we may live and die pleasing to God. Amen."



THE GIVING TREE



Our parish observes the beautiful custom of the Giving Tree. Throughout Advent the tree is placed near the statue of St. Joseph with tags on it. This year we are using Angel tags on the back of which there is a request for toys or other items. Gifts will be distributed in the name of St. Theresa Parish to the following charities:

- ***HOPE FOR US**-- a program started by Bronx college students to help children (particularly those affected by sickle cell anemia) who are in hospitals or other social service programs. (The tags for this are marked HU.)
- ***HOOR CHILDREN**-- a program to help children in needy families and neighborhoods to enjoy Christmas presents. (The tags for this are marked HC.)
- ***DOMINICAN SISTERS OF SPARKILL**-- to assist retired sisters in their infirmary. The Sparkill Sisters faithfully started our school and staffed it for many years. (The tags for this are marked S.)

Please take one of the Angel tags and then bring your gift next week to Mass or the rectory during the week. This can be a beautiful Advent project for the whole family. The deadline for bringing gifts is Sunday, December 18th

LOOKING AHEAD—OUR CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Even though the Feast of Christmas is several weeks away, we want to inform you about our Christmas Mass schedule.

- Our Masses on **Christmas Eve (Saturday, December 24)** will be at 4:00PM, 5:30PM and 7:00PM. At the 5:30PM Mass, the children will present their Nativity Pageant, which we are happy that we can resume this year.
- **There will be no Midnight Mass.**
- Our Masses on **Christmas Day (Sunday, December 25)** will follow our regular Sunday schedule with Masses at 7:30AM, 9:00AM (Italian), 10:30AM, 12:15PM, 1:30PM (Spanish) and 5:00PM.

Unlike in past years, tickets will not be required for any of our Christmas Masses

ADVENT: PREPARING FOR THREE COMINGS OF JESUS

Advent, a word meaning “arrival” or “coming,” was once a period of preparation for baptism which took place on the Feast of the Epiphany. Today Advent is a season of preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation (the Son of God becoming man) which begins on Christmas. The Mass readings that we hear from the prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah and the others remind us of the great yearning Israel had for the Messiah and enkindle in us a desire not only for the return of Jesus, but also for His coming to our hearts each day.

We can reflect on three “comings” of Jesus:

- **Jesus Comes in Human History.** Our celebration of Christmas focuses on the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. The Christmas manger scene at home or in the church, Christmas pageants and liturgies and other celebrations all help us to recall the moment Jesus was born as a human being, the Child born in the manger who was Savior of the world.
- **Jesus Comes to Our Hearts.** Alive and among us through the Holy Spirit, Jesus continually reaches out to us. Advent renews our desire for the daily coming of Jesus, as we recall the story of our salvation. We remember Jesus’ coming to our hearts every day, through prayer, through the Holy Eucharist, through His Holy Word in the Bible, and through the people whose lives we touch.
- **Jesus Comes in Glory.** The words of the Advent hymn, “O Come, O come Emmanuel” serve to remind us of our longing for Christ’s coming in glory at the end of time. The Advent season gives special meaning to the words we say in the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy Kingdom come.”

During this Advent may we celebrate all of Jesus’ comings. May we always be ready to welcome Him, not just as Christmas morning, but on every day of our lives.

(Material from Creative Communications for the Parish, Mark Neilsen)





PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED
MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH AND THEIR FAMILIES
ANNA MARANGIELLO & TOMAS SAN MIGUEL



THIS WEEK'S ALTAR BREAD IS IN LOVING MEMORY
OF
PATRICIA BOCKINO
FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS
MISS YOU SO MUCH
MOM & FAMILY



THE FLOWERS IN FRONT OF THE ALTAR THIS WEEK
ARE IN LOVING MEMORY OF
FRANK DIPOLO
LOVE, MARIE, DONNA, TONIANN
&
FAMILY

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All new or unregistered parishioners are asked to please register by phone or in person at the Rectory or fill out the information below. Many items of importance will be mailed home in the course of the year.

NAME _____

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E-MAIL _____

PLEASE RETURN TO THE RECTORY OFFICE.



SATURDAY DECEMBER 3, 2022

5:00PM Maria DiCristofaro

SUNDAY DECEMBER 4, 2022

7:30AM Parishioner of St. Theresa Parish

9:00AM Lucia Sementilli

10:30AM Angelo & Maria Pozzuto

12:15PM Frank DiPolo (40th Anniversary in Heaven)

1:30PM Bertha Chavez

5:00PM Vincenzo Mangelli

MONDAY DECEMBER 5, 2022

8:00AM Iris Delia Bdez

9:00AM Dielle Zefja

TUESDAY DECEMBER 6, 2022

8:00AM Paul Sivakumaran Thambaiyah
(1year Anniversary)

9:00AM Sergio Ocasio Roman

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 7, 2022

8:00AM Linda Solaro

9:00AM Brenda Tracey

7:15PM Parishioners of St. Theresa Church

THURSDAY DECEMBER 8, 2022

8:00AM Maria & Giuseppe Gatti

9:00AM John Patrick Parker

12NOON Victor Francis Pepe

7:15PM Tony Sementelli

FRIDAY DECEMBER 9, 2022

8:00AM Giuseppantonio Pozzuto

9:00AM Michael Rocco

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10, 2022

8:00AM Giuseppantonio Pozzuto

9:00PM Thomas McManus

5:00PM Felice & Rose Polito

SUNDAY DECEMBER 11, 2022

7:30AM Parishioners of St. Theresa Parish

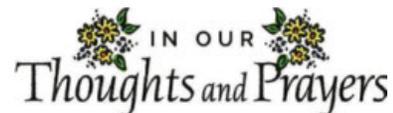
9:00AM Alberto LaPietra

10:30AM George Janvier

12:15PM Michael Rocco

1:30PM Armando Castro

5:00PM Victoria Morales & Jose Morales



Joseph B., Francesca Bastone, Nancy Cardone, Paul C., Marie DiPolo, Carmela Greco, Josephine Graziano, Maryann Maiorana, Msgr. John Meehan, Shara Olivera, Joan Orlando, Margie Primiani, Lisa Primiani, Elaine S., Denise Siracusa, Toni Spahr, Susan S., Theresa Ulrich

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