

St. Thomas Aquinas Church

5376 State Street • Saginaw, MI 48603
(989) 799-2460 • www.stasaginaw.org

Mission Statement

We, the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Community, united by our love for God and one another, are called to evangelize through worship, service, life-long learning, promoting God's truth, peace and justice, and respecting all creation.

Welcome Visitors & Friends

If you are worshipping with us for the first time or have visited before, We Welcome You! If you are looking for a church home in this community, we invite you to consider St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. Contact the Parish Office for more information on becoming a member.

Father Rick's Reflections . . .

This weekend, we take a break from the Bread of Life discourse and Ordinary Time to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of Mary. Not only is this a Holy Day of Obligation for us as Catholics, it is also the patronal feast of our diocese and the name of our Cathedral. The assumption of Mary into heaven is an event that is not described in the biblical tradition but has been a part of the Church's tradition since the early centuries. It emerged out of reflection among the faithful on the profound role Mary had in the salvation of all humanity, especially in her openness and faithfulness to God. Her openness and faithfulness to God were most profoundly witnessed in her bearing and giving birth to the Son of God, her son Jesus. It was understood that her role in the divine plan warranted her being taken bodily to heaven, to be in the home of God, the one to whom she gave a home in God's earthly sojourn.

Some have seen support for the church's teaching regarding Mary in the image of the "woman clothed with the sun" in Revelation. The woman certainly could stand for Mary, since the woman "gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod." But, like so many images in Revelation, the symbol has more than one meaning. Remember, the woman had "on her head a crown of twelve stars," which could signify the twelve tribes of Israel or the twelve apostles so referencing the Church. Later, the woman "fled into the desert where she had a place prepared by God." The Lectionary omits the conclusion of the verse: "that there she might be taken care of for twelve hundred and sixty days" – most certainly a reference to the church, as it refers to a symbolic number in Daniel regarding a period of 3½ years before the time of the end.

The point is that Mary is in heaven with her Lord, and she is not simply the stuff of legendary, mythic, or symbolic numbers. She was an actual flesh and blood woman, chosen above all people, male or female, to play the most significant human role in the divine salvific plan. We should never lose sight of her humanity. This is a temptation to "dehumanize" her, but this pays no justice to her faithfulness or to Mary as a model woman, someone women and men can follow as an example of faith and joy.

When Mary heard the word from the angel, she went to confide in another woman, not in the men of her family. She traveled "in haste" to the Judean hill country to see her relative Elizabeth. It was to Elizabeth that Mary entrusted her momentous news and Elizabeth was open to Mary and her greeting. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth cried out, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

Elizabeth was there for Mary, open to her joy and faithfulness, open to being with her and listening to her story. It was in response to Elizabeth's belief that Mary recited the *Magnificat*. In this song of praise, Mary speaks of her joy at being chosen, of being blessed in spite of being what she calls "lowly." Mary places her own role in the context of God's promise and faithfulness to the people of Israel and the lowly and forgotten of the world. (How often do we forget about the lowly and the forgotten – the denigrated and whose bodies bear the brunt of pain and abuse.)

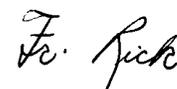
Mary did not just stop by to talk to Elizabeth; she needed to stay with Elizabeth. They were women together because though Mary had been called and chosen for a role unique among

women, had been set apart to return bodily to God's kingdom, she needed another woman, a friend and relative, to talk to, to be with, to share her story.

This weekend, we are welcoming Fr Thomas Helfrich, OSFS, as our annual Mission Appeal. The Oblates of St Francis de Sales are a religious community of men who were founded in France to live and spread the optimistic spirituality of St Francis de Sales. Last week, there was a brochure and an envelope for this mission. Since we are not "passing the basket" as of yet, if you use the envelope, you can place it in with your normal contribution envelope. We also plan on having extra baskets marked for the mission appeal as you come into the Church. I thank you for your generosity and welcome Fr Tom Helfrich to St Thomas Aquinas Parish.

Believe it or not, the teachers of NCCE/MS are returning to the classrooms on Monday as they prepare for a new school year. The students are scheduled to return on Monday, August 23 as they begin their new school year. As I write these few words, we are planning on returning to Thursday mornings as the time for the School Masses with parishioners and parents alike welcome to attend. The first school mass is scheduled for Thursday, September 2. We should have more information next weekend.

As you look at the bulletin this week, we are introducing a new layout, compliments of our bulletin publisher. We will be tweaking it over the next couple of weeks, but we hope you enjoy the new layout. A big thanks to Dawn, our parish secretary, who works to put the bulletin together each week. Enjoy the rest of the summer.



In Our Parish

Tuesday, August 17

8:30 AM Mass

Wednesday, August 18

8:30 AM Mass

10:00 AM Bible Sharing

Thursday, August 19

8:30 AM Mass

Saturday, August 21

4:00 PM Mass

Sunday, August 22

9:30 AM Mass

Lectors

August 21

4:00 PM **SUB NEEDED**

August 22

9:30 AM Dave Brasseur



Scripture Readings

For the Week of August 15, 2021

Sunday	Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Day: Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Ps 45:10, 11, 12, 16; 1 Cor 15:20-27; Lk 1:39-56
Monday	Saint Stephen of Hungary Jgs 2:11-19; Ps 106:34-35, 36-37, 39-40, 43ab & 44; Mt 19:16-22
Tuesday	Jgs 6:11-24a; Ps 85:9, 11-12, 13-14; Mt 19:23-30
Wednesday	Jgs 9:6-15; Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Mt 20:1-16
Thursday	Saint John Eudes, Priest Jgs 11:29-39a; Ps 40:5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10; Mt 22:1-14
Friday	Memorial of Saint Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church Ru 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22; Ps 146:5-6ab, 6c-7, 8-9a, 9bc-10; Mt 22:34-40
Saturday	Memorial of Saint Pius X, Pope Ru 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17; Ps 128:1b-2, 3, 4, 5; Mt 23:1-12
Sunday	Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Ps 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23; Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32; Jn 6:60-69



Sympathy

We ask for your prayers for Noelle Whitlock, daughter of **Evelyn Couillard** and **Kathleen 'Kathy' Gunther**, wife of Jim Gunther and mother of Pari & Mark Sitarski and James.

May their families and friends experience God's consoling presence during this time of loss.

Watch Mass

On-line

<https://stasaginaw.org/live-streamed-recorded-masses>

Recorded Mass for Sunday

SUNDAY MASS

Resumes September 11/12

Saturday	4:00 PM
Sunday	8:30 AM
Sunday	11:00 AM

Prayers

Please pray for all who have been commended to our prayer that they will respond to God's healing will, especially:

Aaron
Ruth Adams
Al V.
Anna
Jean B.
Dave Brzezinski
Cooper
Darlene
David B.
Dennis
Jim & Pat D.
Erin
Kathy Gunther
James
Todd J.
Sr. Mary Elizabeth
Troy Ostrowski
Deb K.
Bonnie L. & Family
Rod M.
Monica
D.N.
Patricia
Jean Q.
Cathy R.
Rosalind
Don S.
Larry S.
Nancy V. & Family
T.C.
M.H.
Fr. Charles D. -
Diocese of Gaylord

And those who are homebound and in assisted/nursing facilities.

We are happy to list names of those who request prayers for one month. The list will be purged again on August 30. Please remember to contact the office 799-2460 ext. 1 when a loved one's name no longer needs inclusion on the prayer list.

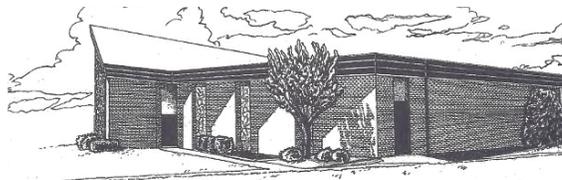
Special News

St. Dominic Parish Youth Program 5th through 12th Grade Students

You are invited to get involved. Below is information on how you can join. For more information on the Youth Program or the Youth Conference, contact Nikki (Youth Minister at St. Dominic Parish) at nikki@stdominicsaginaw.org or 799-2334.

Youth Ministry Registration – weekends of August 14-15 and August 21-22 with a quick on-line registration following all St. Dominic Parish masses for youth ministry program grades 5th – 12th. Youth ministry will take place on Sunday evenings beginning mid-September. You can also register on-line at the St. Dominic parish website under the Youth Ministry tab.

There is also an opportunity to attend the National Catholic Youth Conference being held in Indianapolis from November 18th -21st. An informational meeting at St. Dominic Parish will be on Sunday August 22nd following the 10:30 mass.



In and Around Our Parish

Anniversary Blessings

May God continue to bless **Jim Mike & Donna Wood** as they celebrate 50 years of faith filled marriage. Mike and Donna were married August 14, 1979 at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Saginaw.

RCIA Inquires

Inquiries for those wishing to learn more about the Catholic tradition will begin soon for adults and youth who are unbaptized or baptized in another Christian tradition and wish to prepare for the sacraments of First Eucharist and/or Confirmation. Please contact the Parish Office 799-2460 X1, starcia@stasaginaw.org.

Votive Candles

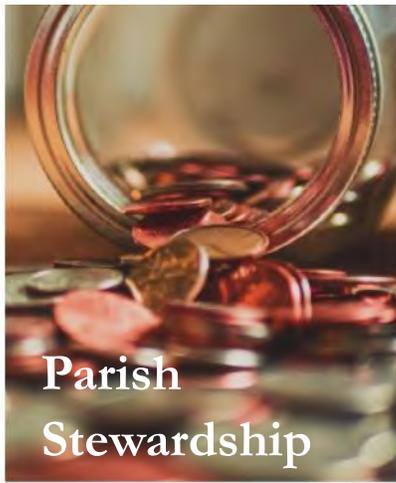
St. Thomas Aquinas is blessed to have votive candles available for your personal intentions. We have available to you lighting sticks to light your own candle with a donation to cover the cost of the candles. Lighting a votive candle is a sign of someone's "vow" to pray and a reminder that prayers continue to be offered even after leaving the church

Food Program Outreach • Old Town Christian Food Pantry • August 21/22

Suggested items: dry pasta and sauces (in plastic if possible), canned soups, crackers, package dinners, canned meats, canned vegetables/fruits, pancake mix/syrup, cereals and any household paper products or cleaning products ie: dish/laundry detergents, cleaners, paper towel/toilet paper. Monetary donations can be sent directly to 600 Gratiot Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602.

Brown Bag Bunch Cookie Challenge

We will be collecting cookies for the next three weeks along with the regular weekly collections. Thank you.



“Those who seek the Lord want for no good thing,” says today’s Psalm. But in the second reading St. Paul reminds us that, thus blessed by the Lord, the good steward should “give thanks to God the Father always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

August 7 & 8, 2021

Envelopes..... \$9,366.00
 Loose..... \$4,100.00
 Electronic (ACH)..... \$1,058.00
 Total..... \$14,524.00

Please remember St. Thomas Aquinas in your estate planning.

Sponsor of the Week
The Print Shop
 To view the full ad see the back of the bulletin. Be sure to patronize all of our businesses as their generosity allows us to provide the bulletin to you at no cost to the Parish.

St. Thomas Aquinas Church

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Welcome to Our Parish

If you are a visitor to St. Thomas Aquinas, we want you to know how welcome you are. If you wish to become a member of our parish, please call the parish office.
Parishioner Info: If you are moving, changing phone numbers or need to update family status, kindly notify the parish office.

Parish Staff

Pastor Fr. Richard Bokinskie
rickb@stasaginaw.org

Parochial Vicar Fr. Kevin Wojciechowski
kevinw@stasaginaw.org

Pastoral Associate Sr. Ann deGuise, OSF
annd@stasaginaw.org

Parish Secretary Dawn Drago
dawnd@stasaginaw.org

Bookkeeper Pat Messing
patm@stasaginaw.org

Director of Music Deborah Kraklow
debk@stasaginaw.org

Baptism & Funeral Coordinator & RCIA Director Karen Bartels
starcia@stasaginaw.org

Eucharistic Liturgies

Saturday..... 4:00 PM
 Sunday 9:30 AM
 (June • July • August)
 Tuesday - Thursday..... 8:30 AM
 First Friday 8:30 AM
 (In the event of a funeral on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or First Friday, morning Mass will be cancelled.)

Sacrament of Reconciliation

2nd & 4th Saturday 9:00-10:00 AM
 (Or by Appointment)

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)

Anyone seeking information about the Catholic Faith should contact the parish office for more information. Sessions meet from September through Spring.

Baptisms

Baptisms will be scheduled after the required Baptism Preparation Class. Parents are required to be practicing Catholics and attending Mass regularly. Call the parish office to register.

Marriage

Individuals must be registered in the parish at least six months before scheduling a wedding. A wedding date can only be set after meeting with the parish priest.

Care of the Sick • Pastoral Visits

Please notify the parish office when seriously ill at home, in the hospital or a nursing/assisted facility. Also, If you or a loved one has had a hospital stay and are recovering at a rehab facility or moving into an assisted living facility and wish a pastoral visit.

Lunches for the Needy

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 8:30 AM in the Church lower level.

AA & Al-Anon

Wednesday.....7:00 PM
 (In the Church Lower Level.)

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Readings for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First Reading: Revelation 11:19, 12:1-6, 10

The book of Revelation was written around 95 AD to encourage people suffering persecution. It is written in a symbolic language which used many images, such as a dragon to represent evil. In today's reading, the Church is imaged as a woman giving birth to the Messiah. Understandably, as the years went by, this imagery has also been extended to Mary.

Second Reading: Corinthians 15:20-26

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul addresses problems his converts in the community are experiencing. Some members of the community had questioned the bodily resurrection of Jesus and our own resurrection as well. This passage is Paul's response.

Gospel Reflection: Luke 1:39-56

Mary willingly said yes to the invitation to become the mother of Jesus. Without full knowledge and despite personal risk, Mary agreed, in faith, to become involved in God's plan. What she did not understand, she pondered, prayed and trusted. Throughout her life she taught that blessedness lies in hearing God's word and keeping it. In Mary's hymn, (Magnificat), she emphasizes God's favor for the lowly and challenge to the values the world idealizes in the mighty and powerful. (*Celebration, 361*)

Family Perspective-by Bud Ozar

In today's Gospel Jesus speaks of eating his flesh and blood. Parents can identify with this, for they often feel devoured by all the demands of family life. This is unavoidable for children grow in the soil of sacrificial love. Parenting is not part time work. It is a consuming lifetime commitment.

Stewardship Reflections

"And Mary said, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior." Luke 1: 46

After Jesus, we look to Mary as our model of stewardship. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God's will. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we too are called to reflect Christ to the world. We do this by living grateful and generous lives. We do this by putting other's needs before our wants.

Individual Rite of Penance

9:00 AM

Second and Fourth Saturdays
of the month

August 28

Following COVID-19 guidelines:
masks worn at all times and social
distancing.

A reconciliation room is setup in
the church narthex, with one priest
available to celebrate the
sacrament.

While waiting to celebrate the
sacrament, you may either wait in
your vehicles or stand outside
practicing social distancing.





August 15, 2021

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab | 1 Cor 15:20-27 | Lk 1:39-56

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

There are very few things in this world that are perfectly united, though many attempts have been made, think peanut butter and chocolate, Batman and Robin. But there is one example, and that is the Blessed Virgin Mary is perfectly united with Jesus' life and redemptive work. Though fully human, she is completely without sin – she is, as we pray in echoing God's angel, "full of grace." Thus she shares, as we do, in Christ's heavenly destiny but with an immediacy that we do not have. Upon her death she was instantly assumed into heavenly glory, body and soul, as the first of all the faithful who will eventually join with Christ in eternity upon death and purification. In celebrating this great Solemnity, the Church celebrates what lies ahead for those of us who imitate Mary's total trust in God. She had complete faith in God and his promises, and is a living example of the power and generosity of our God. We can follow her lead, engaging in a life of witness (proclaiming God's greatness) and gratitude (have a rejoicing spirit) for the sake of the world.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Sometimes, when hearing or talking about Mary's *fiat*, I first see it as a "yes" in modern, human terms. "Yes, I'll serve on that committee." "Yes, I'll organize that party." "Yes, I'll stay late to finish that project." It doesn't take long for our little "yesses" to turn into an adamant "Noooooooooooo," also known as burnout. Thankfully, Mary's yes was far more than just an acquiescence to a small request – it was the commitment of her entire self to the choice God had placed before her. And she was rewarded with a special seat in heaven near her Son. In today's Gospel, Elizabeth immediately recognizes the true meaning of Mary's *fiat*: "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." What can we learn from Mary's example? We can learn trust. We don't need to sign up for every volunteer opportunity (though volunteering is a great and worthwhile thing to do), but we can say "yes" to what God is asking of us according to the gifts and graces he has given us. Through daily prayer and seeking the intercession of Mary and Jesus, we can grow closer to the Lord and prepare ourselves for the day we meet Jesus and Mary face to face.

PRAY A lot of misunderstanding surrounds Catholic devotion to Mary.

We do not worship Mary – that is reserved for God alone. Yet we do revere her and honor her unique and important role in God's saving plan. Pray the Magnificat or the Rosary, paying close attention to their scriptural foundation and what was happening in the "stories" within those Scriptures.



*"How can I be useful,
of what service can I be?
There is something inside me,
what can it be?"*

BeFriender Ministry Information Night

August 26, 2021

7:00 PM

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish

At times, everyone experiences difficult and transitional situations. BeFriender Ministry offers a caring companion to listen, empathize, and be a reminder of a loving and supportive faith community. Befriender ministers are trained listeners who offer support to people through active listening, prayer and presence.

An informational evening is being offered to share the history of Befrienders in the Diocese of Saginaw, an overview of the program, what to expect in a training and stories from Befriender Ministers on how this has impacted their lives and ministry. Join us to prayerfully discover how God may be calling you to this amazing ministry.

No commitment is required. There is no cost to attend but registration is necessary. For more information or to register please contact Lori Becker, Respect Life Coordinator at 989.797.6652

"I have many friends who have been giving me support at this time, but you (the BeFriender) are the only one who really listens to me."

~ a person receiving BeFriender care



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