

# Baptism *of the Lord*

After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him.

Matthew 3:16

© Diocesan

## St. Thomas Aquinas Church

5376 State Street • Saginaw, MI 48603  
989-799-2460 • [www.stasaginaw.org](http://www.stasaginaw.org)

## 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



### Father Rick's Reflections . . .

Since we have been in the midst of the COVID pandemic, baptisms have "looked" a little different. Along with that, the Church instituted a new ritual for baptism of infants. Gone are the private, Sunday afternoon, celebrations of baptism with only a few people present. Baptism is a public celebration with the faith community gathered. In some of my past parish experiences, we had an upper pool in the font which was shallow enough for the babies to sit in the water. Some were naked and wiggly, some had "swimming" diapers on. I would invite the children present to come and gather around the font to watch. In this vulnerable scrap of humanity, I would baptize child with pouring water three times and then lifting the child out of the water to present them back to anxious and waiting parents. In fact, the new ritual calls for the child to be "immersed" in the water. I found out that the children didn't mind the water. Maybe it reminded them of the water of the womb or they just like baths. Even in our community, after the baptism and the child is presented to the community, they are greeted with applause and most people have to smile as well. This is a moment that is truly "sacramental," a sign of some greater and hidden mystery of God's extraordinary love; and it is a humbling realization. The child has done nothing to deserve this, except for the wonderful obedience of being born. One can almost hear the biblical question

echoing down the centuries, with all its hopes and fears: "What, then, will this child be?" This was the question asked at the circumcision of John the Baptist. Now, as an adult, we meet him in the context of water and baptism.

The solidarity of a parish baptism, the communal event that it is, reflects Luke's narrative today. Jesus is surrounded by people who had been baptized by John. John is humble and strong, for when the people express a wondering expectancy that he might be the promised Messiah, John resists the temptation and is quick to dispel any illusions about his status. He is only a servant, he says, who is not even worthy to perform the menial task of doing up the sandal straps on the coming One. He points out to the crowd the differences between himself and the One who is to come – his is a baptism of water and repentance; the Messiah's will be a baptism of transformation through fire and the Holy Spirit. John is probably referring to the end time, but Luke announces this with the insight of a post-Pentecost evangelist and the experience of the transformation of that fire and wind-struck day.

To the good news of solidarity and humility, Luke adds the significance of prayer. Several times in his gospel, Luke sets important events in Jesus' life and mission in the context of prayer. The baptism of the Lord could be called a prayer event, for Luke does not describe the moment of baptism but rather its aftermath. It is Jesus' prayer that tears open the heavens for the descent of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of his true identity by the Father's voice that acclaims him as the beloved Son on whom God's favor rests.

It is the same for us. Prayer is a necessary part of our identity as baptized

sons and daughters of God. It opens heaven to us and reveals who we are – and, in a very real sense, who we are when we pray. At prayer, we struggle to hear what God is calling us to be, to know who we are in our deepest truth, at the still point where the Spirit has descended into our depths and anointed us for mission.

Life is beginning to return to normal for the parish after the Christmas holidays. Also, we had Dawn out sick for some of the Christmas break, so the parish was struggling. Now, we are gearing back up. This Wednesday, we have Finance and Pastoral Councils meeting at the regular times.

Every so often, I get asked if we are still heading to the Holy Land in April after Easter. I emphatically say "YES." However, it all will depend upon the COVID virus and how it is spreading. But, for those who are interested in this trip or have already registered for it, we are having an informational meeting this coming Tuesday, January 11, 2022 @ 6 pm. We should know more about the trip at this time. Come by and find out more information. We are scheduled to be in the Holy Land a couple of weeks after Easter this year.

Today marks the end of the Advent-Christmas season. After this weekend, we will be "undecorating" the Church and putting away the decorations for another year. We enter Ordinary Time until Tuesday, March 1. Have a blessed week!

*F. Rick*

## In Our Parish

**Tuesday, January 11**

8:30 AM Mass

**Wednesday, January 12**

8:30 AM Mass

**Thursday, January 13**

8:30 AM Mass w/ NCCE

**Saturday, January 15**

4:00 PM Mass

**Sunday, January 16**

8:30 AM Mass

11:00 AM Mass

### **Private Prayer Time**

The church is opened Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM for private visits.



## Scripture Readings

### **Readings for the Week of January 9, 2022**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>The Baptism of the Lord</b> Is 40: 1-5, 9-11; Ps 104: 1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30 (1); Ti 2: 11-14; 3: 4-7; Lk 3: 15-16, 21-22
<b>Monday</b>	1 Sm 1: 1-8; Ps 116: 12-13, 14-17, 18-19; Mk 1: 14-20
<b>Tuesday</b>	1 Sm 1: 9-20; 1 Sm 2: 1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd; Mk 1: 21-28
<b>Wednesday</b>	1 Sm 3: 1-10, 19-20; Ps 40: 2 and 5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10; Mk 1: 29-39
<b>Thursday</b>	1 Sm 4: 1-11; Ps 44: 10-11, 14-15, 24-25; Mk 1: 40-45
<b>Friday</b>	1 Sm 8: 4-7, 10-22a; Ps 89: 16-17, 18-19; Mk 2: 1-12
<b>Saturday</b>	1 Sm 9: 1-4, 17-19; 10: 1; Ps 21: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Mk 2: 13-17
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Second Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> Is 62: 1-5; Ps 96: 1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10 (3); 1 Cor 12: 4-11; Jn 2: 1-11



**Ben C. Accardi**

Brother of Toni & Tom Cox & family

Family and Friends of  
**Frederick Kleinfeld**

**Edilberto Navarra**  
Husband of Remedios  
Dear friend of Vangie Isidro

Lord, we remember in our prayers those whom you have called to be with you. May the calming peace of your love be with their families. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may the perpetual light shine upon them. Amen.



### 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.

## Prayers

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

Harold G.  
Sylvia T.  
Larry S.  
Jim & Pat D.  
Stephanie  
Al V.  
Deb P.  
Monica  
Joanne  
Bill & Sally S.

*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 January 28. Please remember to contact the office 799-2460 ext. 1 when a loved one's name no longer needs inclusion on the prayer list.*



### **Seven Sisters Apostolate**

We are looking for women over 18 years of age, as we begin a Seven Sisters Apostolate here at St. Thomas Aquinas. Our pastors, Fr Richard Bokinskie and Fr. Kevin Wojciechowski do so much for our parish and people. It is our time to give back. What a better way to do this that through Seven Sisters Apostolate, to hold up, lift up and strengthen our priests by prayer. Members commit to praying one Holy Hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle or Eucharistic Adoration, (can be any Catholic Church in the world if traveling), on their chosen day of the week. Sisters pray for one specific pastor or assistant. Thus this covers a complete week of prayer. Sylvia Albulan 989-493-6941 is the "Anchoress" (leader) for our Seven Sisters Apostolate here at St. Thomas. You may also learn more about this apostolate at SevenSister.org. Also information can be found on YouTube or Facebook. Note that there are no meetings and no cost involved. Only one hour per week praying for Fr. Rick or Fr. Kevin.

## Special News



All students currently in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Choose from either: March 27-April 1 or April 18-April 23, 2022

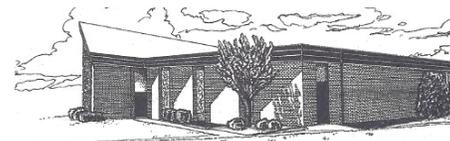
We will be traveling to southern Indiana and staying on the campus of Saint Meinrad Seminary. There will be many service opportunities within and the surrounding city of Saint Meinrad. We will be getting our hands dirty at a local camp, prayer and fellowship opportunities with the Monks of Saint Meinrad, food, fun, fellowship and more. This is a great way to be the hands and feet of Christ!



The cost for this rewarding experience is \$300: A \$100 commitment is due by January 15. Final payment due March 1. There will also be fundraising that takes place over the next few months to cover other expenses.

Questions: Nikki – [nikki@stdominicsaginaw.org](mailto:nikki@stdominicsaginaw.org) or call St. Dominic Parish at 989-799-2334.

## In and Around Our Parish



### **Bible Sharing • Resumes January 12**

There will be NO Bible Sharing on Wednesday, January 5, 2022. Please join us next Wednesday at 10:00 AM in the Parish Office Meeting Room.

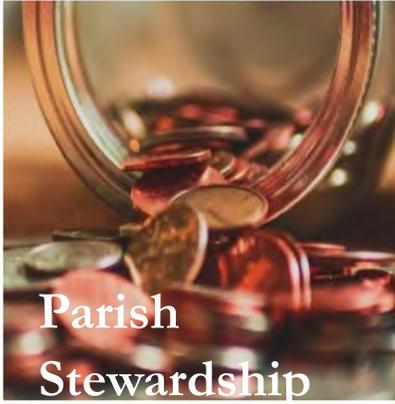
### **Thank you**

"The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love." Thank you for your prayers and notes of love while I was under the weather. They gave me strength and warmed my heart. I am truly grateful to have a wonderful church family. Dawn ♥

### **Food Program Outreach • Brown Bag Bunch • January 15 & 16**

Please take time to help the Brown Bag Bunch with any of the following needed items: juice drink boxes/bags, packaged cookies, peanut butter, sandwich and snack size zip-top bags, snacks, pretzels, individually wrapped snack cakes, **strawberry and grape jelly/jam; and mayonnaise.**

Monetary donations are gladly accepted. Please drop in the collection marked 'Brown Bag'.



Jesus, whom God called "my beloved Son," is also the "servant" of whom Isaiah speaks in the first reading. We who are baptized in Christ must follow His example and use our time and resources in the service of God and neighbor.

**January 1 & 2, 2022**

Envelopes.....	\$13,228.00
Loose.....	\$569.00
Electronic (ACH).....	\$3,519.00
Brown Bag.....	\$225.00
Total.....	\$17,541.00

*Please remember St. Thomas Aquinas in your estate planning.*

## Sponsor of the Week

**John Bartnik MD**

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

5376 State Street  
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[www.stasaginaw.org](http://www.stasaginaw.org)

### 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](mailto:rickb@stasaginaw.org)

**Parochial Vicar** ..... Fr. Kevin Wojciechowski  
[kevinw@stasaginaw.org](mailto:kevinw@stasaginaw.org)

**Pastoral Associate** .... Sr. Ann deGuise, OSF  
[annd@stasaginaw.org](mailto:annd@stasaginaw.org)

**Parish Secretary** ..... Dawn Drago  
[dawnd@stasaginaw.org](mailto:dawnd@stasaginaw.org)

**Bookkeeper**.....Pat Messing  
[patm@stasaginaw.org](mailto:patm@stasaginaw.org)

**Baptism & Funeral Coordinator & RCIA Director** .....Karen Bartels  
[starcia@stasaginaw.org](mailto:starcia@stasaginaw.org)

**Music Accompanist** ..... Deborah Kraklow  
[debk@stasaginaw.org](mailto:debk@stasaginaw.org)

### Eucharistic Liturgies

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

# Watch Mass On-line

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

## Recorded Mass for Sunday

### Nouvel Catholic Central Schools

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# FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



## Make us Holy

Loving Father,  
you sent the gift of the Spirit  
upon your beloved Son  
on the banks of the Jordan  
long ago.  
And upon each of us,  
the Spirit called upon the waters,  
making them holy.  
Strengthen us in that same Spirit,  
make us holy, set us apart,  
that we answer your call.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

January 9, 2022

In You I Am Well Pleased



*Today's readings: Isaiah 42, 1–4 or Isaiah 40:1–5, 9–11; Psalm 29:1–2, 3–4, 3, 9–10 or Psalm 104:1b–2, 3–4, 24–25, 27–28, 29–20; Acts 10:34–38 or Titus 2:11–14, 3:4–7; Luke 3:15–16, 21–22.* John the Baptist pointed away from himself and toward Jesus. He spoke God's Word to the people and baptized those who came to him, but he knew that he was not the messiah, the one who will baptize "with the holy Spirit and fire." And then one day, Jesus came to him to be baptized.

The heavens opened and the Spirit came down in the form of a dove. "You are my Beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." The Holy Spirit descended bodily, making

Jesus ready for his public ministry. What joy John must have felt to see the fulfillment of God's promises to him and to the people of Israel! It was the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, in which he preached the kingdom of God but also revealed it in everything that he did.

On the day of our baptism, we receive the same Holy Spirit that descended on Jesus two thousand years ago. It is the beginning of our own vocation to reveal the kingdom of God in our words and our actions: to be like Jesus. How is God calling you today? You are God's beloved child, in whom God is well pleased. How will you carry the joy of that revelation into your life beyond the Christmas season?



## THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

### January 10—March 1 Ordinary Time

The word *ordinary* can feel like a synonym for “boring,” but Ordinary Time is far from it. This season takes its name from the ordinal numbers (first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and so on) that are used to count the Sundays and the weeks that follow them. While the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter have a certain importance in the liturgical year, that does not diminish Ordinary Time. Consider that as the priest prepares the paschal candle at the Easter Vigil, he states, “All time belongs to him.” How might you use this season to grow closer to God?

### January 18–25 Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity spans an octave, or eight-day observance, a time frame that lends significance to the week. It is a great sorrow to be separated from our brothers and sisters in Christ, unable to join around the Eucharistic table together to “do this in memory of me.” We wait in hope in a special way during this week for the day when all divisions among Christians will cease.

### January 25 Conversion of St. Paul

This feast commemorates the day when Saul, an observant young Jewish man who opposed the early Christians and even participated in the stoning death of St. Stephen, had an encounter with the risen Jesus. Saul, also known as Paul, left behind his former life to become an apostle to the gentiles. To preach the Gospel, you might offer forgiveness and mercy to someone who is not sorry, serve a meal at a soup kitchen with a joyful heart, or drop off a box of diapers at a place that serves mothers and children. *Today’s readings:* Acts 22: 3–6 or Acts 9:1–22; Psalm 117:1bc, 2; Mark 16:15–18.

### January 28 St. Thomas Aquinas

Known as the angelic doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas was a Dominican priest whose writings are essential to the way we understand what we believe. He was a great theologian and philosopher, engaging with the intellectual currents of his day as well as those of ancient philosophy. St. Thomas described the beatific vision, unending happiness and union with God, as the goal of human life. *Today’s readings:* 2 Samuel 11:1–4a, 5–10a, 13–17; Psalm 51: 3–4, 5–6a, 6bcd–7, 10–11; Mark 4:26–34.

### January 31 St. John Bosco

St. John Bosco was an Italian priest who worked to improve the lives of young people who lived in poverty. He went into the world to encounter the young people who had traveled to the city to try to find a better life but were living in abject poverty and unsafe conditions. He began many initiatives and organizations to assist children and was the founder of a religious congregation. *Today’s readings:* 2 Samuel 15:13–14, 30, 16:5–13; Psalm 3:2–3, 4–5, 6–7; Mark 5:1–20.

### February 2 The Presentation of the Lord

This feast, forty days after Christmas, is traditionally a time to bring candles to church to be blessed. In Luke’s account of the Gospel, we hear Simeon proclaim Jesus “a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory for your people Israel.” The Gospel according to John is also a source of the imagery of light associated with Jesus. Anna and Simeon watched and waited for the light throughout their lives. At times, it can be difficult to wait for what we most hope for. Watching and waiting for the light, we can unite ourselves with the waiting of Anna and Simeon. What desires of your heart are you still waiting to have fulfilled? You might decorate a tealight holder and light the candle to remind you to wait in hope. *Today’s readings:* Malachi 3:1–4, Psalm 24:7, 8, 9, 10; Hebrews 2:14–18; Luke 2: 22–40.



# The Baptism of the Lord

## **First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11**

This passage from the book of Isaiah begins with God calling the prophet to encourage the Jewish people exiled in Babylon. He is to tell them that they will be returning home soon, and the road of the return will pass through the desert. We will also hear God call the people to proclaim from a mountaintop the goodness of God.

## **Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7**

The letter to Titus was written about 30 years after Paul's death, and was written in Paul's name, a practice common in the ancient world. Titus was a traveling companion of Paul, and later was in charge of a Christian community on the island of Crete. The verses we are about to hear are also read at Masses on Christmas.

## **Family Perspective-by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel Jesus was publicly AFFIRMED by his Father: "You are my beloved son, with you I am very pleased." As parents we can become so focused on misbehaviors we overlook the good behaviors. Jesus needed AFFIRMATION and so do our children.

## **Stewardship Reflections**

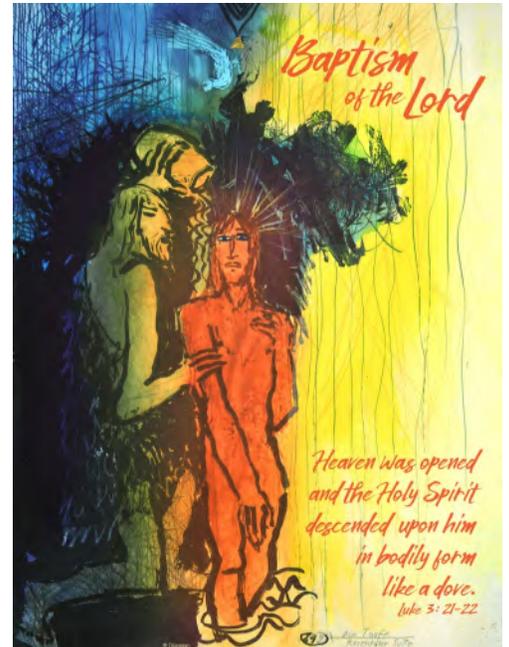
"John answered them all, 'I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming...he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit...' " Luke 3:16

The Catholic Catechism states that "Jesus' immersion in the water is a sign for all human beings of the need to die to themselves to do God's will." In other words, as baptized Catholics there is only one gift that we need to give to Jesus – the gift of ourselves. Surrender yourself to God, place your trust in Him and allow the Holy Spirit to work through you for the greater glory of God.

## **What I Love About Being Catholic...**

What I love about being Catholic is the community of believers that come together each week to support, pray and love each other. The Real Presence of Jesus in Holy Communion. The Communion of Saints that we can pray to and are praying for us. The Holy Scriptures inspired by the Holy Spirit to guide us. .

S.B.



## **Individual Rite of Reconciliation (aka "confessions")**

**9:00 – 10:00 AM**

**January 22**

## **Updated COVID-19 guidelines: \*NEW**

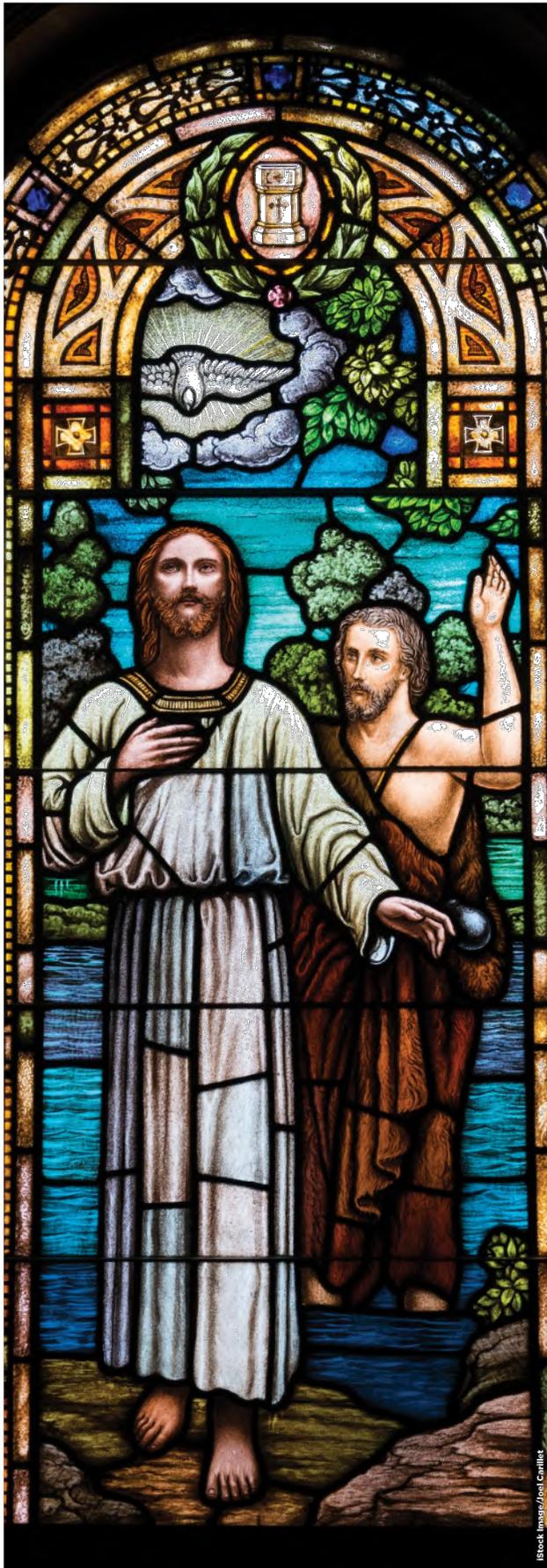
Only one Church door will be open to enter and exit the narthex.

\*While waiting to celebrate the sacrament, you may wait in the narthex practicing social distancing.

\*The reconciliation room setup is in the nave of the church, to the left and right of the confessional rooms. There will be two priests available to celebrate the sacrament.

Each penitent will have the option to celebrate the sacrament either behind a screen or face-to-face, keeping 6 feet social distancing.

Once you have finished celebrating the sacrament, you must leave the church nave and narthex.



January 9, 2022

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## The Baptism of the Lord

Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 40:1-5, 9-11 | Acts 10:34-38 or  
Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7 | Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

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

For cradle Catholics, baptism may be the most important step on the Christian journey that none of us actually remembers. Which is too bad! After all, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* instructs us that baptism is “the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit.” (#1213) Yes, baptism cleanses us of original sin, but it’s much more than that! We need only look to Jesus to see that. Though without sin, Jesus’ baptism is a turning point in his life all the same. The Holy Spirit descends upon him and a voice from heaven cries out, “You are my beloved Son.” So begins the public ministry, in which Jesus would carry out his Father’s saving mission. Through our baptism, at any age, we, too, become God’s beloved sons and daughters. Through word and sacrament, Jesus invites us to share in his mission by turning our lives over to our Father as we embrace our Christian journey.

### **GO** EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Baptism is often referred to as “the doorway to the Church” because through this sacrament, our sins are forgiven and we are united to Christ and his Church. It is the door which gives access to all the other sacraments. (cf., CCC 1213) At the conclusion, the celebrant asks God to continue to pour out his blessing upon those being baptized, and send his peace to all who are gathered. As baptized Christians, we are now adopted children of God; we are disciples who are empowered, through the wisdom and strength of the Holy Spirit, to share the Good News and help build the kingdom of God on earth. Sound intimidating? It shouldn’t. Each day that we “put on Christ” and do his work, God is re-creating us and making us into something far better than we could ever be on our own. Embrace this faith you have been given and go out and share your gifts and talents with others, confident in the Spirit that guides you.

**SERVE** Think of something you have been told you are very good at by friends or coworkers – something for which you have been “anointed,” in a sense. In what way can you do something specific to lead others with care in this area, or perhaps do a very particular good yourself?

## ST. THOMAS AQUINAS FIRST FRIDAY MEMORIAL

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Learman – Koratich Families  
In Loving Memory of Robert Chaklos  
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L&D Pesta & Bruzewski Families  
Chuck & Gerry Flattery & Family  
Rozek & Holihan Families  
Meyer & Streng Families

L&D Stan Dorywalski Family  
Raymond Klonowski  
M. James Robinson Family  
L&D Leo Eigner Family  
Bob & Vi Bloniarczyk  
Garske & Riha Families  
Finan-Lupcke Families  
Melvin VanOchten

The Webster Family  
Al Luplow Family  
Lois Zehnder  
LaVern Fox  
Blair R. Loessel  
Daniel P. Sauvie  
Mary A. Sauvie  
Basil N. Sauvie

Woodrow J.J. Sauvie  
Dale A. Krueger  
Rose Martino  
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Chris Gunther Family  
Doyle Family

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