

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

**“You shall love the Lord, your God, with
all your heart, with all your being, with
all your strength, and with all your
mind, and your neighbor as yourself.**

Luke 10:27

St. Thomas Aquinas Church

5376 State Street
Saginaw, MI 48603
989-799-2460

www.stasaginaw.org

Father Rick's Reflections . . .



Have you ever thought about the “*Good Samaritan*” story? It truly is a story intended to make us think about alternatives in our relationships with God and one another. It is introduced with the lawyer’s determine effort to justify himself with regard to the two great commandments – love of God and love of neighbor. The lawyer is focused on “*I*” or “*my*” when he asks the question – “*What must I do to inherit eternal life?*” Jesus simply responds with two questions – what is written in the law and how do you read it? The lawyer is quick to answer – he has done all the right and holy words, can quote his source documents perfectly, and adopts the faultless stance of Deuteronomy Leviticus. Jesus then urges him from “*right answering*” to “*right living:*” “*do this, and you will live.*”

The lawyer continues to seek self-justification rather than truth, responding – “*And who is my neighbor?*” Everything is in reference to himself. Discipleship does not start with myself, with asking whom I shall or shall not love or what are the boundaries of my responsibility. At the end of the parable, Jesus will ask the

lawyer another question that banishes self from center stage – “*Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?*” This is how our commitment to Jesus is to be defined – from the perspective of the half-dead, the fallen, the wounded, the abandoned ones, the person with whom every other character in the parable comes into either negative or positive contact.

After being ignored and avoided by the priest and the Levite, the abandoned man is approached, shockingly, by a Samaritan, a “*corrupted*” and despised Jew. The Samaritan is the one who *did* mercy. In the New Testament, “*mercy*” is a remarkable verb – one *does* mercy. In Luke’s gospel, it is used only in reference to Jesus in this parable and that of the Prodigal Son. In Hebrew, “*mercy*” derives from the word for “*womb,*” and in Greek, it has the sense of the gut feeling that embraces the situation of another. the implication of these gospel references is that we can be compassionate only in Jesus, who makes flesh the creating, sustaining, and birthing love of God. This is what the Samaritan does.

To go on to Jericho or back to Jerusalem to find lodging for himself and the half-dead traveler was a further act of the Samaritan’s brave compassion. Palestinian inns hardly offered five-star accommodation, especially if you arrived with a battered body slung over your donkey’s back.

Jesus’ listeners might well imagine that the morning after the Samaritan’s vigil with the patient there could be a thankless awakening when the traveler found himself ministered to by a Samaritan. How would we feel about being helped by someone whose sexual, racial, political, or social status we find extremely distasteful? Are we, ourselves, ready for the sometime thankless responses after long nights or our ministries?

The innkeeper is told to take care of the man and given the resources to do so until the Samaritan returns, when the innkeeper will be repaid for anything he has spent on the care of the wounded one. In this sense, Jesus is telling us, as well as the lawyer, that we are all innkeepers, entrusted by Jesus with the care of the wounded, asked to respond to the prophetic call that sounds through the centuries. Jesus shouts most loudly at us – “*I desire mercy, not sacrifice*” – until his return at the end of human history when we will be repaid for our compassion, or lack of it.

Now that the Supreme Court has overturned *Roe v. Wade*, it seems that all groups of people are scrambling to understand the repercussions of this decision. As Catholics, we have spent millions of dollars and hours of work to overturn the original decision. However, have we invested the same energy, physical and financial, into helping people understand the sanctity of all life?
(continued on page 6)

Mission Statement of St. Thomas Aquinas

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.

In Our Parish

**NO MASS
TUESDAY, July 12**

Wednesday, July 13

8:30 AM Mass

Thursday, July 14

8:30 AM Mass

Saturday, July 16

4:00 PM Mass

Sunday, July 17

9:30 AM Mass

Summer Schedule

Private Prayer Time

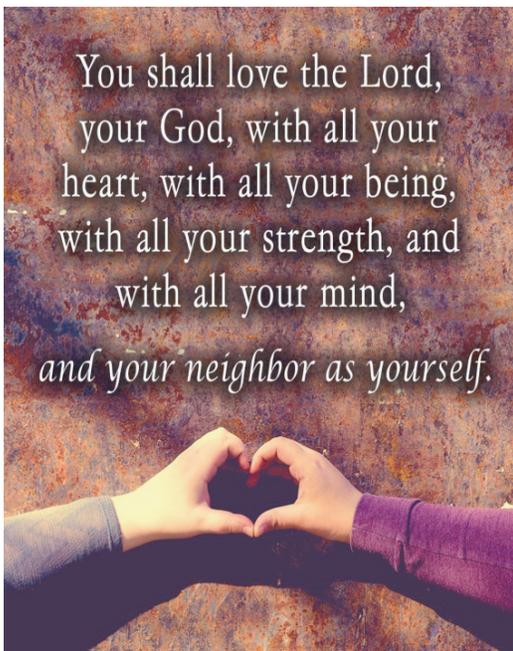
****Summer Hours****

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



Readings for the Week of July 10, 2022

- Sunday** **Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Dt 30:10-14; Ps 69:14,17,30-31,33-34,36,37 or
Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Col 1:15-20; Lk10:25-37
- Monday** **Memorial of Saint Benedict, Abbot**
Is 1:10-17; Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 & 23;
Mt 10:34-11:1
- Tuesday** Is 7:1-9; Ps 48:2-3a, 3b-4, 5-6, 7-8; Mt 11:20-24
- Wednesday** **Memorial of Saint Henry**
Is 10:5-7, 13b-16; Ps 94:5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 14-15;
Mt 11:25-27
- Thursday** **Memorial of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, Virgin**
Is 26:7-9, 12, 16-19;
Ps 102:13-14ab & 15, 16-18, 19-21; Mt 11:28-30
- Friday** **Memorial of Saint Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**
Is 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8; Is 38:10, 11, 12abcd, 16;
Mt 12:1-8
- Saturday** **Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel**
Mi 2:1-5; Ps 10:1-2, 3-4, 7-8, 14; Mt 12:14-21
- Sunday** **Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Gn 18:1-10a; Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 5; Col 1:24-28;
Lk 10:38-42



Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:10-14

The events in this reading take place as the Israelites are camped on the shore of the Jordan River, ready to enter the Promised Land. Moses makes it clear to the people that they are expected to remain faithful to the Lord after they have settled in their new land.

Second Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Today and for three more Sundays, the second reading will be from the letter to the Colossians. This letter responds to a widespread belief that God ruled the world through the mediation of angels who were given their own powers. The author quotes an early Christian hymn that emphasizes that Jesus is the one and only mediator.

Gospel Reflection: Luke 10:25-37

“And who is my neighbor?” For those who would be Jesus’ disciples, “neighbor” could no longer be limited by territorial nearness, or ethnic similarities, or those who share the same faith heritage or culture. Rather, Jesus reminds us all that a neighbor is one who treats another with compassion, that is, a person who suffers with another and acts to alleviate their suffering.

For your reflection: Who are the “Good Samaritans” you have met in your life who have modeled generosity and compassion of this Gospel?

Stewardship Reflections

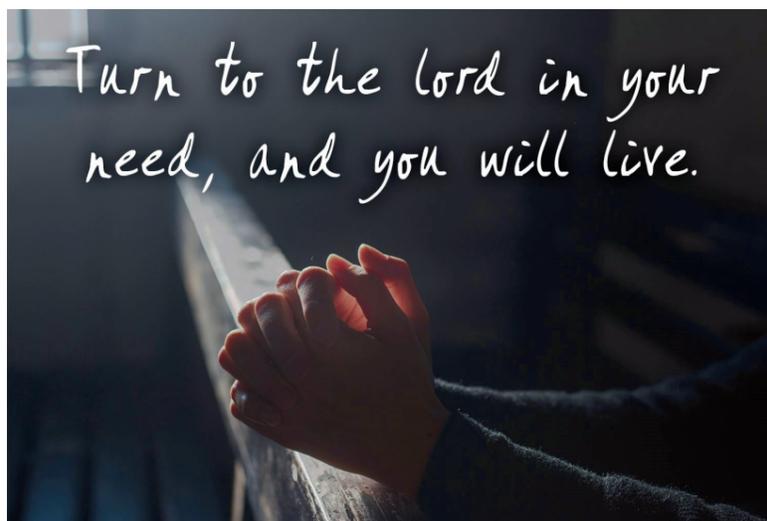
“Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’”

Luke 10:37

This was Jesus’ command at the end of the Good Samaritan story. Did you know that the Samaritans and Jews despised each other? The moral of the story is to love our neighbor. That means loving someone you may not know, or someone that looks different than you, or someone that has different beliefs than you, or someone that you don’t like. All without expecting anything in return.

Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Children learn by watching us. Do they see you helping others like the Good Samaritan, or do they see you avoiding others like the Levite in today’s gospel. Worry more about what your children see in YOUR LIFE than what they see on TV.



Prayers



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

Lisa A.
Tom K.
Tim R.
Brian
Lisa
Jo Vitu
Laurie Posekany
Al V.
Betty
Dennis B.
Lois B.
Karen V.

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 July 29. Please remember to contact the office 799-2460 ext. 1 when a loved one's name no longer needs inclusion on the prayer list.

In Our Parish



Brown Bag Challenge



Weekends of **July 16/17, July 23/24 and July 30/31.**

We will collect **JUICE DRINK BOXES/BAGS** along with the regular list of items needed. You have done a wonderful job in the past challenges and know that you will continue to help us serve those in need. Remember that we pack 40 sack lunches three times a week, for a total of 120 lunches.

Food Program Outreach • Brown Bag Bunch • July 16 & 17

Along with the Challenge, please take time to help the Brown Bag Bunch with any of the following needed items: 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'.

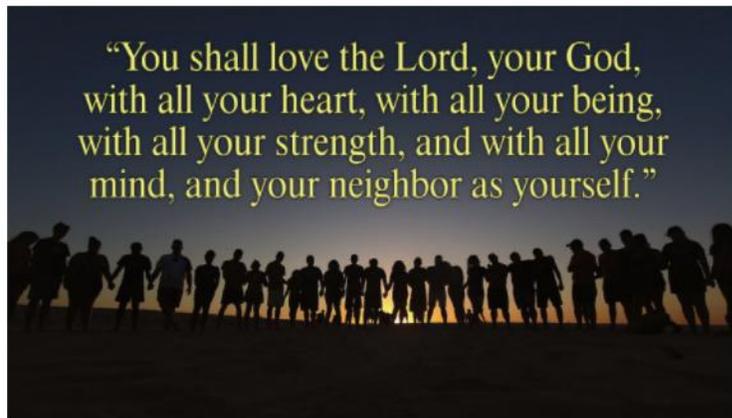
Parent Baptism Preparation Class • Inquire/Register

You must contact the Parish Office 989-799-2460 ext. 3 to inquire or register for a class. Parents are required to attend the preparation session and should be registered St. Thomas Aquinas parishioners attending Mass regularly. Baptisms are held on the first weekend of the month.

Low Gluten Altar Breads Available for Communion

STA has communion hosts with less than 0.01% gluten content available for parish members whose health needs require low gluten altar breads. Please see Father Rick or Father Kevin with instructions as how to receive at Mass.

**“You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart, with all your being,
with all your strength, and with all your
mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”**



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.

(counted from page 2)

Our state was one of the first to abolish it in our country but there are those who want to restore it. What about euthanasia? There are those who believe that a person has the right to assist another person to commit suicide. What about fair and equal treatment of all workers? Our social teachings demand this from employers. Like our gospel today, do we pick and choose who are the people we care for? Remember, we all belong to one human family and are our sisters' and brothers' keepers wherever they live. Do we believe that

everyone has the right to life which includes food, shelter, health care, education, and employment and every person has a responsibility to support these rights for others? How well do we care for creation? God created everything and, when he looked at it, he saw that it was good. We are simply the stewards of what God has made. Maybe this is a good time to look at how we treat all life – from the poor, the imprisoned, the elderly, the sick, the outcast, the enemy and those who do not believe as we do. Every time we bicker against someone, we are not being loving. Remember, moral actions are life-giving

actions. Are we giving life or taking it away? Have a great week.

Fr. Rick

Around Our Parish

July Family Faith Day

theme: Seeking God

For our July Family Faith Day, we will venture outdoors for fun and formation! Let's gather at Krossroads Park 5600 Cardinal Square Blvd. Monday, July 18th at 6:30 p.m. RSVP with the number of participants by July 14th to Chris at 989-799-2334 ext. 12

or cplatko@stdomincsaginaw.org If the weather is not favorable we will move to the Faith Formation Center at the St. Stephen campus. This day of formation is



designed for children from Kindergarten-5th grade. However, all ages are welcome. This is an opportunity not only for parents and children, but for grandparents, other relatives, or caregivers to come together to strengthen family bonds and draw closer to God.

Christ the Good Shepherd • Saturday • 5:30 PM Mass

All are welcome to attend Mass a littler later on Saturday due to summer activities at Christ the Good Shepherd (St. Helen Church) 2415 N. Charles.



The Good Samaritan was also a good steward, giving his time and his treasure to meet his neighbor's need. At the end of this familiar story, Jesus urges his hearers, and us, to go and do the same!

July 3, 2022

Envelopes	\$13,534.00
Loose	\$1,352.00
Electronic (ACH)	\$4,069.00
Priest Retirement	\$235.00
Brown Bag	\$110.00
Total	\$19,300.00

Please remember St. Thomas Aquinas in your estate planning.

Sponsor of the Week

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St. Thomas Aquinas Church

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(989) 799-2460
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 Bokinski
rickb@stasaginaw.org

Deacon Deacon Gary Patelski
gapatelski@aol.com

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

Parish Secretary Dawn Drago
dawnd@stasaginaw.org

Bookkeeper Pat Messing
patm@stasaginaw.org

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

Music Accompanist Deborah Kraklow
debk@stasaginaw.org



Eucharistic Liturgies

Saturday 4:00 PM
Sunday..... *Summer Hours* 9:30 AM
Memorial Day thru Labor Day
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.

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High School 989.791.4330
Elementary 989.792.2361

Catholic Diocese of Saginaw



Roe v. Wade Overturned - We join in thanksgiving and praise to God for hearing and answering our prayers to overturn Roe v. Wade. Since 1973, we have fought to save lives. We have been steadfast in prayer and now, nearly 50 years later, we can rejoice! However, our work has just begun. The Diocese of Saginaw offers many opportunities for support. We partner with Pregnancy Resources Centers that offer parenting education, counseling, basic baby items and more which is vital in providing for moms and their children. Women experiencing a crisis pregnancy receive love and support through the Walking with Moms in Need Ministry. We want to emphasize that caring for mothers, fathers, and their children is not a political issue but one of extending the love of Christ by our actions and words. We are called to be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus, and it is only in loving the mother that we can save the baby. For those who have experienced an abortion, healing and forgiveness is offered through Rachel's Vineyard and Project Rachel Ministries in a safe and confidential environment. Your help is needed by participating in these ministries through prayer, joining a Walking with Moms ministry or establishing one in your parish, educating yourself and others on the laws of our state and encourage those in need to reach out for the support available. For more information on Walking with Moms, contact Beth Bauer at 989.797.6655 or bbauer@dioceseofsaginaw.org. A Rachel's Vineyard Retreat is scheduled in November. Please call or email Lori Becker for more details and support at 989.797.6652 or lbecker@dioceseofsaginaw.org. As we celebrate this victory, let us keep in mind the millions of children lost to abortion in the last 49 plus years and pray for all those whose lives have been impacted by this tragedy. May God continue to bless all who fight for the legal protection of unborn children until abortion becomes unthinkable, whether or not it is legal.

DO NOT SIGN: Reproductive Freedom Abortion Petition - Individuals are currently collecting signatures across the state to change the Michigan Constitution to allow for unregulated abortions. This "Reproductive Freedom" petition is opposed by the Catholic bishops in Michigan. This would legalize abortion at any time of pregnancy, for any reason, and prevent health and safety requirements for abortion facilities. It would also allow schools to help teens obtain abortions without their parents knowing. If approached for your signature, first review the text of the proposal. Look for the words; "Constitutional Amendment to: establish new individual right to reproductive freedom..." and do not sign. To learn more visit www.supportmiwomenandchildren.org or contact Lori Becker, Coordinator of Diocesan Outreach at 989.797.6652.

As requested from Fr. Rick's Column July 3, 2022

Have you noticed our parish's mission statement in the bulletin? If not, here it is: *"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."* All sorts of communities have created *"Mission Statements"* to keep forward what they are about. Today, Luke presents the early church's *"mission statement"* and a practical handbook for its implementation. Our society is different – travel, communication, economics, multi-culturalism, and multi-faith contacts have changed greatly from a generation ago, let alone almost two millennia. So, how is this gospel relevant today? How can we distill the essence of its truth so it can inform our current mission?

First, the world needs the mission of Christians because there is a plentiful harvest waiting to be reaped. Second, prayer to *"the master of the harvest"* is essential for the empowering of the harvesters. Third, because it is Jesus who sends us on mission, we can go in confident of his active protection. This is not to discount the fourth missionary principle – the reminder that there are *"wolves"* to be confronted on the way-personal, communal, and structural realities that will try to hunt down and consume those who proclaim the gospel. Every generation of Christians needs the gift of discernment so we can name and recognize these *"wolves."*

Fifth, in our mobile society, we know that to travel well is to travel lightly. When the goal of our journey is the reign of God, then money, possessions (or possessiveness?), or concern with status can be hindering baggage. *"Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals"* is again a device of exaggeration that would have been understood by Luke's communities as emphasizing the urgency of the mission. The same is true for the sixth warning to *"greet no one,"* not a recommendation for brash impoliteness, but a condemnation of social idleness and time-consuming gossip.

Whether accepted or rejected, the precious gift of Christ's healing peace, not a false or conventional greeting, is to be offered to the household that the missionaries visit. This seventh instruction put into the disciples' mouths Jesus' own resurrection greeting of Easter eve, *"Peace be with you,"* to be freely accepted or rejected.

Hospitality that is graciously accepted and allows the host to dictate the *"menu"* not only at meals but also in the broader cultural context of the table of life, is the eighth principle. Good missionaries do not impose their own cultural expectations on others but are nourished by whatever the host offers, both personal and social. This does not deny efforts to dismantle social barriers, and the mention of the curing of the sick reminds us that this is a work of loving service that speaks a universal language of care and respect for suffering humanity, no matter what a person's culture or social status. Accepted or rejected, the message is the same: *"The kingdom of God is at hand."* And so, the ninth missionary principle is the realistic expectation of failure, of being resisted and rejected as Jesus was.

The tenth and last principle of the missionary charter is that no matter what, we persevere in our proclamation of the reign of God by our words, our relationships, and our rituals. The closing mention of Sodom is not in reference to any sexual immorality, but to the great sin of denying hospitality to God's messengers. That is what disciples of Jesus are. Those who deny them a welcome will be judged by what they reject – the reign of God.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS FIRST FRIDAY MEMORIAL

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 Learman—Koratic Families
 The Klownowski Family
 Susan Webber
 Edward & Virginia Hoewe Family
 Bob & Vi Bloniarczyk
 M. James Robinson Family
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 Sitarski Family
 Chris Gunther Family

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 Floyd Maday Family
 Ed Meyer & Family
 Al Luplow Family
 LaVern Fox Family
 Blair R. Loessel
 The Webster Family

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 ILM of Edilberto S. Navarra
 Health of Remy
 For the Souls in Purgatory
 Tom Stankiewicz Family
 Lopez Family

Ernie & Nickie Jones Family
 For Those in Need in Our Parish
 Groll & Slasinski Families
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 The Carter Family
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