

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, March 15, 2020



St. Thomas Aquinas - Thomas, West Virginia



Our Lady of Mercy - Parsons, West Virginia

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH

Mission: OUR LADY OF MERCY

Pastor: Rev. Timothy J. Grassi, P.O. Box 300, Thomas, WV 26292 Tel: (304) 463-4488 www.sttsite.com

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please contact the priest to make arrangements. Instructions for both parents are required. Sponsors from outside the Parish need a letter of eligibility from their Pastors.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Arrangements should be made with the Pastor at least six months in advance of the intended date of marriage. Preparation classes with the Pastor are required.



SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

If you know of anyone who is seriously ill, hospitalized, shut-in, or about to undergo surgery, please contact the Pastor or the Parish office to let us know.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Saturday 4:00 - 4:50 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, and 30 minutes before all Masses and anytime upon request.

HOLY COMMUNION: *We welcome to the Holy Mass all who share our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. While all are welcome here, we cannot extend to all an invitation to receive Holy Communion. This is not for lack of Christian hospitality. Rather, it is the recognition by the Catholic Church that real divisions of faith and practice do sadly exist among Christians. Practicing Catholics who go to Confession whenever needed are invited to receive Holy Communion. Non-Catholic Christians and those Catholics who should not receive Holy Communion (including those married outside the church and those in need of the sacrament of Penance) are asked to pray for a spiritual communion with the Lord Jesus and for the unity of His Church. Those who are not receiving Holy Communion but who would like to receive a blessing are invited to indicate this desire by crossing their arms across their chests as they approach the priest in the Communion procession.*

LENTEN FISH FRY

Come join the Knights of Columbus for our Lenten Fish Fry's! Dinner includes an 8 oz fish fillet with tartar or cocktail sauce; dinner roll with butter; coleslaw; greenbeans; macaroni & cheese; fruit dessert; coffee or punch.
Cost: Adults \$8.00 - Kids 12 & under \$4.00

DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

Bishop Brennan is in the process of establishing a DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL. Every parish/mission in a Vicariate is being asked to elect TWO parishioners to serve on the Vicariate Council. Three representatives will then be selected from each Vicariate council to serve on the DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL which will meet with the Bishop in Charleston twice a year. The purpose of this Council will be to give the laity a significant, consultative voice in developing pastoral priorities, initiatives and plans to further the mission of Christ within the light of existing social, economic, demographic and cultural circumstances.

****WE NEED AT LEAST 2 PEOPLE TO STEP FORWARD TO REPRESENT OUR PARISHES.** Please give your name to Fr. Grassi or call the Parish office at 304-463-4488.

ANNUAL MEN'S DAY OF REFLECTION

All men are invited to a Lenten day of reflection on Saturday, April 4th. Coffee and light refreshments at 8:30am and spiritual talks begin at 9:15am until Mass at 5pm. This will take place in the St. Thomas Center and in the St. Thomas Church. Lunch will be provided. (There will be time for prayer and confessions as well.)

EASTER PIES!!!

The Our Lady of Mercy Women's Guild will once again be making three different homemade pies to sell just in time for Easter: chocolate, coconut cream & lemon meringue! The cost is \$10. Please see one of the guild members to reserve a pie or simply add your name to the pie fundraiser form in the back of the church. You may also call Melinda at 478-3814.

ST. JOSEPH'S DAY!

Please join us for a talk on St. Joseph, presented by our very own Jonathan Mann, on Thursday, March 19 at 7pm in the St. Thomas Center in Thomas. Fr. Grassi will have his delicious pizza Fritta's to celebrate St. Joseph!

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON!!!

Mar 17 - Knights meeting CANCELLED

Apr 04 - Men's Day of Reflection "Mark your Calendars"

Jesus loves the little children

BORN
and
UNBORN

SECOND COLLECTION TODAY
for the DIOCESAN PRIEST
RETIREMENT FUND

QUILT & STAINED GLASS RAFFLE

Suggested donation of \$5 per ticket with two chances to win. The drawings will be held on Sunday, May 10th. Please see one of the ladies after Mass to get your tickets.

LENTEN SCHEDULE ~Stations of the Cross~

WEDNESDAYS: Immediately after 5:00pm Mass at Our Lady of Mercy Church . (Wednesday Mass during Lent will be at 5:00pm.)

FRIDAYS: Immediately after 5:00pm Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR March 08, 2020

St. Thomas: \$1,999.06

Our Lady of Mercy: \$810.00

FOOD PANTRY

BLACKWATER MINISTERIAL FOOD PANTRY: The Food Pantry is in need of "valued" food items. This month we are seeking cereal. In subsequent months we will let you know what items are needed and ask your assistance in this need for our community.

THE POWER OF SILENCE IN PRAYER

STEPHEN WALTERS

Cardinal Robert Sarah has some extremely powerful insights into the value of silence as it relates to our spiritual life and our relationship with God, which he has emphasized with the recent publication of his book *The Power of Silence*. I've tried to condense the most important of these insights into three key points. (Continued this week with key point #3.)

3. SILENCE IN PRAYER LEADS TO INTIMACY WITH GOD

Scripture offers us a clue as to what our prayer, or conversation with God, should look like: Jesus instructs us to pray with the words, "Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:6) and we hear in the Psalms, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). From these passages we can see that private, silent prayer has a particular ability to open us up to a real conversation with God. Cardinal Sarah echoes this when he says: "Solitude is the best state in which to hear God's silence" (paragraph 6).

Lesson 5 of CCO's Source faith study introduces the concept of docility to the Holy Spirit, which is defined there as "giving God permission to lead your life. It is an attitude of openness and receptivity to God who, by forming and correcting us, teaches us to be more like Him", and uses Mary as the supreme example. Cardinal Sarah reiterates the importance of docility when he says,

"When we are docile to the Holy Spirit, we are sure to be walking towards the truth because we are entirely subject to His inspirations" (paragraph 214).

From this, we know that in order to draw closer to God – to move from stage to stage of our relationship with Him – we must embrace the Holy Spirit and allow Him to direct our lives. Although it may seem counter-intuitive given a conventional understanding of silence, we will only be able to achieve this docility to the Holy Spirit in silence, as Mary did. Cardinal Sarah points out that

"The Holy Spirit has no face and no speech. He is silent by His divine nature. The Spirit asks in silence from all eternity. God speaks, Christ speaks, but the Holy Spirit is always expressed through the prophets, saints and men of God" (paragraph 211).

Personally, I've come to appreciate the power of silent prayer over the past few years, especially in the form of adoration before the Eucharist. I used to not particularly care for adoration; I've always found unscripted prayer to be difficult and found it hard to come up with something to say in front of that monstrance. However, over the last little while, I've realized that sometimes it's not necessary to have anything to say. I'm guilty of defaulting to saying "Listen Lord, your servant is speaking", rather than "Speak Lord, your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10) as Samuel did in the Old Testament. Yes, prayer is a two-way street, but it is often better to let God speak first, and silent, private prayer is especially conducive to allowing Him to do that. There is no better way to echo Samuel's words than to be silent and listen for God's voice.

PARISH ROSARIES PRAYED

Total Rosaries for 2 weeks: 195
Total Rosaries since May 2016: 26,095

St. Joseph, Splendor of Patriarchs

By: Jonathan Mann

“Go to Joseph.”

With these words, recorded in the Book of Genesis (41:55), Pharaoh sent the Egyptians to Joseph, to whom he had given charge of his household and his kingdom, when in time of famine they “cried to Pharaoh for bread” (41:55). We read on in Genesis, “So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses” (41:56). In fact, “all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth” (41:57).

The patriarch Joseph played a key role in saving Egypt and “all the earth” when its peoples were in danger of death on account of famine. God’s providence had chosen him as a link in His divine plan to provide food that would save many in distress. For this purpose, God had allowed the most unlikely events to befall Joseph. In adolescence he had been sold by his own brothers into slavery in a foreign land, and there he had further suffered false accusation and imprisonment. Yet in all Joseph’s trials, God had been present to him and worked through him. In St. Stephen the Martyr’s words: “God was with him, and rescued him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh” (Acts 7:9-10). After interpreting Pharaoh’s dreams, Joseph had risen to the highest rank in Egypt after that of Pharaoh himself. In accord with the revelations God had made through Pharaoh’s dreams, Joseph had spent the seven years of plenty storing up food for the subsequent seven years of famine. During these later years, he proved to be God’s chosen instrument for saving his father and the very brothers who had sold him into slavery. He saved from death God’s Chosen People and the entire world. Additionally, with regard to Joseph’s personal character, we know from Pharaoh’s words that he must have been both wise and upright in God’s eyes: “Can we find such a man as this, in whom is the Spirit of God?” (Gen. 41:38).

Christian tradition from its early centuries has seen in the patriarch Joseph a type, or prefigurement, of St. Joseph, chaste husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and adoptive father of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Pharaoh’s words to Joseph of old, “You shall be over my house” (Gen. 41:40), are truly words by which God could have conferred on the humble St. Joseph the exalted office that he held as head of the Holy Family. We have very little historical information about St. Joseph’s life. What we do know is the role he played in the Mystery of the Incarnation as protector of Mary’s virginity and of the Child Jesus. During the earthly lives of Jesus and Mary, he faithfully served and provided for them both. Like the patriarch Joseph, St. Joseph was “a just man” (Matt. 1:19), and he too was a chosen instrument in God’s plan for saving the Chosen People and the entire world. Like the patriarch, St. Joseph journeyed to Egypt under dire circumstances, and again like the patriarch, he was entrusted with charge over the royal household. Yet the second Joseph’s role far surpasses that of the first. In St. Joseph’s care was placed the household of the King of kings and the Queen of angels and men. Moreover, he was instrumental in God’s plan for saving the world, not from physical death, but from sin. Indeed, while the patriarch provided the world with natural bread, Christ’s adoptive father kept in his diligent care the Bread of Life.

St. Joseph had a great privilege in the intimacy which he enjoyed with Jesus Christ. It was Joseph’s great honor and joy that he could daily converse with his God closely and affectionately in his own home. We infer, too, from his silence that he must have listened to Christ as reverently and attentively as he would speak to Him. What a privilege was his! Yet is not this privilege ours as well? Each time we worthily and devoutly receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we have with Him an intimacy for which prophets have longed and martyrs have given their lives. We are called to welcome Christ, not merely into our homes, but into our very selves, into both body and soul in a union of divine love. May St. Joseph, through whom God has provided this Eucharistic Bread for the whole world, obtain for us the grace to receive Jesus as worthily, as frequently, and as fervently as we can. May we look forward with the longing of the patriarchs and the prophets to each Eucharistic encounter with Jesus. During the precious moments in which He dwells within us sacramentally, may we listen to Him as attentively as St. Joseph listened to his Son. And with St. Joseph, may we honor and cherish Jesus and Mary with our entire hearts.

Dear Parishioners,

I know that there is an abundance of information about the Coronavirus so I do not want to belabor the issue, but I would like to say some things about Mass attendance. It is the constant teaching of the Church that all Catholics are automatically dispensed from attending Mass if they are sick or infirmed in any way. Further, if you are older, or have a weakened immune system, or you are just uncomfortable in large gatherings at this time of the Coronavirus, IT IS NOT A SIN TO MISS MASS. There will be no Sign of Peace at Mass and we should limit all contact as much as possible. I am, personally, being especially careful to wash my hands before starting Mass so as to minimize any germs. I see no reason to cancel public Masses at this point in time. Please use common sense and good judgment and we MUST PRAY WITHOUT CEASING for a speedy conclusion to this pandemic. Thank You.

In Corde Jesu et Mariae,
Fr. Grassi

SOME POINTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:

onSubject: Stanford Notes on Coronavirus

The new Coronavirus may not show sign of infection for many days. How can you know if you are infected? By the time you have fever and/or cough and go to the hospital, the lung is usually 50% fibrosis.

Taiwan experts provide a simple self-check that we can do every morning: *Take a deep breath and hold it for more than 10 seconds. If you do this successfully without coughing, without discomfort, stiffness or tightness, there is no fibrosis in the lungs; it basically indicates no infection. In critical times, please self-check every morning in an environment with clean air.*

Serious excellent advice by Japanese doctors treating COVID-19 cases: *Everyone should ensure your mouth & throat are moist, never dry. Take a few sips of water every 15 minutes at least. Why? Even if the virus gets into your mouth, drinking water or other liquids will wash them down through your throat and into the stomach. Once there, your stomach acid will kill all the virus. If you don't drink enough water regularly, the virus can enter your windpipe and then the lungs. That's very dangerous.*

Also:

1. *If you have a runny nose and sputum, you have a common cold.*
2. *Coronavirus pneumonia is a dry cough with no runny nose.*
3. *This new virus is not heat-resistant and will be killed by a temperature of just 26/27 degrees C. (About 77 degrees F.) It hates the Sun.*
4. *If someone sneezes with it, it goes about 10 feet before it drops to the ground and is no longer airborne.*
5. *If it drops on a metal surface it will live for at least 12 hours - so if you come into contact with any metal surface, wash your hands as soon as you can with a bacterial soap.*
6. *On fabric it can survive for 6-12 hours. Normal laundry detergent will kill it.*
7. *Drinking warm water is effective for all viruses. Try not to drink liquids with ice.*
8. *Wash your hands frequently as the virus can only live on your hands for 5-10 minutes, but - a lot can happen during that time - you can rub your eyes, pick your nose unwittingly and so on.*
9. *You should also gargle as a prevention. A simple solution of salt in warm water will suffice.*
10. *Can't emphasize enough - drink plenty of water!*

THE SYMPTOMS:

1. *It will first infect the throat, so you'll have a sore throat lasting 3/4 days*
2. *The virus then blends into a nasal fluid that enters the trachea and then the lungs, causing pneumonia. This takes about 5/6 days further.*
3. *With the pneumonia comes high fever and difficulty in breathing.*
4. *The nasal congestion is not like the normal kind. You feel like you're drowning. It's imperative you then seek immediate attention.*

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

Third Sunday of Lent

Mar. 16 Monday		*Patty Hoffner	7:15am Thomas
Mar. 17 Tuesday	God's Blessing on Pope Francis, the Church & CUF		5:00pm Thomas
Mar. 18 Wednesday	Poor Souls in Purgatory & Healing in our Church		5:00pm Parsons
Mar. 19 Thursday		Karen Renzelli	9:00am Parsons
Mar. 19 Thursday		Joseph & Mary Deegan	6:00pm Thomas
Mar. 20 Friday		*Mary Milkint	5:00pm Thomas
Mar. 21 Saturday		Edwin Kaczmarek	9:00am Parsons
Mar. 21 SATURDAY VIGIL		John Lawrence	5:00pm Thomas
Mar. 22 SUNDAY		Diane Ulch & Imelda Stevenson	9:00am Thomas
Mar. 22 SUNDAY		People of the Parish	11:00am Parsons

THOMAS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
03/21	Betty Woods	Beth Spencer	Any available!
03/22	Katlyn Simmons	Diane Rader	Isaac Quattro

PARSONS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
03/22	Dee Oldaker & Ariona Plumley	Joanne Sikarskie	Any available
<u>Cleaning:</u> 03/15 - 03/21: Joanne Sikarskie & Terry Silk			

**THE
TRADITIONAL
LATIN MASS**

During the month of March, the Tridentine Mass will be offered at the following times and church:

St. Thomas - 7:30am
(Low Mass) 03/08/20
Our Lady of Mercy - 12:30pm,
03/15/20 only when requested in advance

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is committed to the protection of its children and young people. The Diocese complies with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People by maintaining an Office of Safe Environment. To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families/Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact one of the Bishop's designees at 888.434.6237 (toll free) or 304.233.0880: Sister Ellen Dunn, ext. 264; Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; or Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, ext. 270 or call the Office of Safe Environment at 304-230-1504. For more information on the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment, please go to www.dwc.org, then click the "Diocese" tab, then click "Office of Safe Environment" under the "Offices" menu. To learn more about the Catholic Church's efforts in preventing sexual abuse of children in the United States, please visit <http://www.usccb.org>. Under "Issues and Action," click "Child and Youth Protection" from the drop down menu.

If you would like to place someone on our prayer line call:
Susie Gutshall (304) 478-3217
Or Cindy Long (304) 478-4833

Let us remember in prayer all
of our sick and shut-ins:

Champ Sedmock, Pat Ricottilli, "Sob"
Gennantonio, Mary Johnson, Jean
Sagace, Joyce Arnold, Donna Mason,
Elaine Watson, Paula Siler, Anne
McVicker, Jerry & Madonna DiBacco,
& Paul Wojtkowski.

We offer a hearty welcome to all of our visitors! If you would like to make a contribution to our parish, please use the visitor's envelope in the pew.