

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, March 22, 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.*

PRAYER IN TIMES OF PESTILENCE

The town of Coimbra (Portugal) having been visited by a violent pestilence, the nuns of St. Clare offered their prayers in the following form, whereupon the contagion instantly ceased. This holy prayer, left to the above named monastery, has preserved many places from contagion where it is recited daily with confidence in God and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It has arrested this scourge in many places.

STELLA COELI

The Star of Heaven that nourished the Lord drove away the plague of death which the first parents of man brought into the world. May this bright Star now vouchsafe to extinguish that foul constellation whose battles have slain the people with the wound of death.

O most pious Star of the Sea, preserve us from pestilence; hear us, O Lady, for Thy Son honours Thee by denying Thee nothing. Save us, O Jesus, for whom Thy Virgin Mother supplicates Thee.

V: Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

O God of mercy, God of pity, God of benign clemency, Thou Who hast had compassion on the affliction of Thy people, and hast said to the angel striking them, "Stop thy hand;" for the love of this glorious Star, whose breasts Thou didst sweetly drink as antidote for our crimes, grant the assistance of Thy grace, that we may be safely freed from all pestilence, and from unprovided death; and mercifully save us from the gulf of eternal perdition: through Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON!!!

Apr 04 - Men's Day of Reflection "CANCELLED"

Apr 05 - Ask Father "PENDING"

Apr 07 - Society of St. Thomas Women's meeting "PENDING"

Apr 12 - Our Lady of Mercy Women's Guild meeting "PENDING"

Apr 21 - Knights meeting "PENDING"

PRAYER

FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

At Thy feet, O my Jesus, I prostrate myself and I offer Thee the repentance of my contrite heart, which is humbled in its nothingness and in Thy holy presence. I adore Thee in the Sacrament of Thy love, the ineffable Eucharist. I desire to receive Thee into the poor dwelling that my heart offers Thee. While waiting for the happiness of sacramental Communion, I wish to possess Thee in spirit. Come to me, O my Jesus, since I, for my part, am coming to Thee! The love embrace my whole being in life and in death. I believe in Thee, I hope in Thee, I love Thee. Amen.

EASTER PIES!!!

The Our Lady of Mercy Women's Guild are once again making their homemade pies to sell just in time for Easter. The cost is \$10. Simply add your name to the pie fundraiser form in the back of the church or call Melinda at 478-3814.

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 stop by the Church to get your tickets.

LENTEN SCHEDULE

~Stations of the Cross~

Please pray the stations of the cross privately in your home especially on Fridays.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR March 15, 2020

St. Thomas: \$ N/A
Our Lady of Mercy: \$ N/A

“Behold, I make all things new.” (Rev. 21:5)

By: Jonathan Mann

When God, Divine Architect of the Universe, created the Garden of Eden, He spared no expense. No materials were too precious, no artistic touches too lavish. We read that God filled the Garden with fruit trees that were “pleasant to the sight and good for food” (Gen. 2:9). Additionally, such valuable materials as gold, onyx, and bdellium abounded. These grand adornments were quite appropriate, for Eden was to be the family home in which God would dwell with us, His beloved children. We were His treasure, and He would come daily to walk with us in the Garden in the cool of the day. By giving Adam and Eve to each other in the intimate union of marriage, moreover, God revealed to them a sign of the intimate communion with Himself to which He invited them. This communion with God is His invitation to every one of us. In St. Augustine’s words, “You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless till it rests in You” (Confessions, 1:1).

Indeed, how tragic was the day on which our First Parents stretched out their hands to take and eat the forbidden fruit! By so doing, they turned away from God. They rejected the Divine Lover Who was their life and true joy, and they forfeited their home. Now when God came to walk with them in the Garden, He did not find them waiting for Him. “The LORD God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” (Gen. 3:9). Where had His beloved gone? No human words can capture just how terrible sin is, how greatly it has offended God. Anyone who has suffered loss of or separation from a loved one has only the faintest sense of what it meant that God had lost us, and we Him. This was a terrible day, and no merely human power could restore the loss. Yet this is not the end of the story. As St. Paul writes, “Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more” (Rom. 5:20). Immediately God promised a Savior, the Seed of the woman, Who would crush the serpent’s head and restore to God His human family. Each year on the Solemnity of the Annunciation, we celebrate the fulfillment of God’s promise. The Annunciation is the mystery of the dawning of our salvation, a key event in the restoration of paradise.

“Hail, Full of Grace,” or, better rendered from the Greek, “Hail, Thou in whom the working of grace was long ago made perfect. The Lord is with thee!” (Lk. 1:28). In the Blessed Virgin Mary, we see Adam and Eve’s sinfulness reversed. When our First Parents had thrown God’s life out of their souls, they hid from Him in fear and shame. In fact, so sinful did the whole world become, we read shortly before the account of the Flood that “the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him to His heart” (Gen. 6:6). Yet throughout the Blessed Virgin’s life, from conception onward, when God looked down upon her from heaven, He knew only the delight of seeing her holiness, her beautiful likeness to Himself. In her soul, paradise untarnished could again be found on earth. When God’s messenger Gabriel declares that “the Lord is with thee,” he announces that, in her, humanity again walks with God in the cool of the day.

To this humble woman Gabriel goes on to announce her great mission. God has chosen her as the vessel through whom He will fulfill His promise of salvation. Through her chaste womb He intends to give our fallen world its Savior. She is to bear a Son, Jesus Christ, Who will restore to all mankind the closeness to God that brightens her own soul. As we know, Mary wholeheartedly embraces this mission. Unlike Adam and Eve, who by their disobedience said to God, not Thy will by mine be done, Mary says, Thy will be done: “Behold, I am the slave girl of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word” (Lk. 1:38). Through their humility, the New Eve and her Seed, the New Adam, reverse the pride of the devil and of fallen humanity. They crush the serpent’s head, and the light of our salvation breaks upon this darkened world.

The Annunciation is truly an event to ponder and to celebrate. Our God has come to save us, to restore the intimate union with Himself that He intended for us from the beginning. He has come to plant Eden anew, to walk with us in the Garden again. Let us imitate the Blessed Virgin Mary in eagerly welcoming Him. Let us by our lives of holiness grow daily in God’s grace, thereby offering ourselves to God as gifts in reciprocation of His love for us. Let us exultantly rejoice in Him, Who has come to rejoice in us, His beloved children, His Bride the Church.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK
Fourth Sunday of Lent

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Mar. 23 Monday | Daniel Moran Jr. | Private Mass |
| Mar. 24 Tuesday | Selma Cox | Private Mass |
| Mar. 25 Wednesday | Jordan & Lauren Mann & Family | Private Mass |
| Mar. 26 Thursday | Patti Sagace Helmick | Private Mass |
| Mar. 27 Friday | Joe DePollo | Private Mass |
| Mar. 28 SATURDAY VIGIL | Fr. Lino Ebejer | Private Mass |
| Mar. 29 SUNDAY | People of the Parish | Private Mass |
| Mar. 29 SUNDAY | Veronica Nichols Vilardi | Private Mass |

THOMAS

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|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS</u> | <u>READERS</u> | <u>ALTAR SERVERS</u> |
| 03/28 | | | |
| 03/29 | | | |

PARSONS

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|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS</u> | <u>READERS</u> | <u>ALTAR SERVERS</u> |
| 03/22 | | | |

Cleaning: 03/22 - 03/28: Lois Matlick & Susie Gutshall

THE TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS
During the month of April, the Tridentine Mass will be offered at the following times and church:
St. Thomas - "PENDING"
(Low Mass) 04/12/20
Our Lady of Mercy - "PENDING"
04/19/20 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.