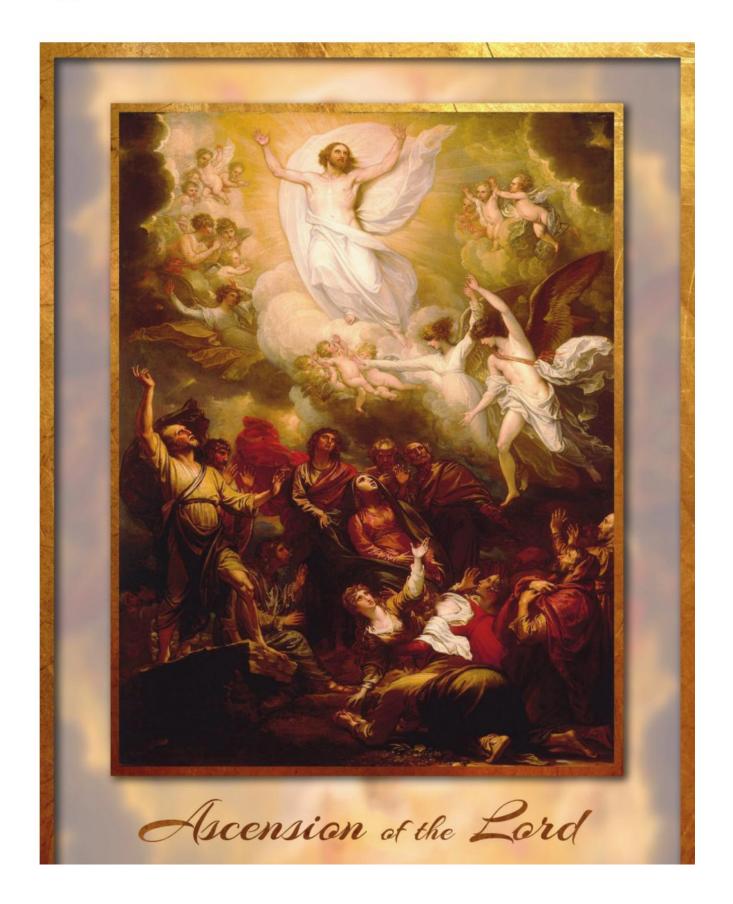


St. Thomas the Apostle 904 East Lake Avenue Peoria Heights, Illinois 309-688-3446 stthomaspeoria.org





Happy Memorial Day weekend! Let us remember all of those who have served our country in military service, and especially those who have given their lives while in the line of duty. May they rest in peace.

Although we've all been in lockdown to one degree or another, much has been happening at St. Thomas. For those who have followed the school's Facebook page, the students have been as active as ever from their homes as they finished the school year. Our eighth grade graduates were greeted by our faculty from a distance as they drove through our parking lot.

The sanctuary project continues to move forward. I will continue to post updates on our YouTube channel to show the progress. The carpet in the sanctuary has been removed and the marble flooring is being installed. This short project will run through July before it is completed.

We are thankful for the opportunity to receive Communion again. While we cannot yet return to public Mass, many were able to come to receive Communion last Sunday. Times will be expanded as Communion will be distributed on Saturday evening from 5:30 to 6:00 pm and Sunday morning from 9:30 to 11:00 am. I will be in the narthex to distribute the Eucharist. Those who do not wish to leave their vehicles can pull up in the crescent drive. Wait patiently and Communion will be brought to you.

In connection with the Archdiocese of Chicago and the other dioceses in Illinois, our bishops are rolling out a plan to safely reopen our churches. More information will be posted on our diocesan website. We will be looking for volunteers to help with the safe reopening of our churches as we return, hopefully soon, to public Mass.

-Msgr. Gray

Pray with the Pope

May 2020 FOR DEACONS

We pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.



Readings for the Week of May 24, 2020

Sunday Feast of the Ascension

Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23;

Matthew 28:16-20

Monday St. Bede the Venerable

Acts of the Apostles 19:1-8; John 16:29-33

Tuesday St. Philip Neri

Acts of the Apostles 20:17-27; John 17:1-11a

Wednesday St. Augustine of Canterbury

Acts of the Apostles 20:28-38; John 17:11b-19

Thursday Easter Weekday

Acts of the Apostles 22:30;23:6-11; John 17:20-26

Friday Easter Weekday

Acts of the Apostles 25:13b-21; John 21:15-19

Saturday Easter Weekday

Act of the Apostles 28:16-20; John 21:20-25

Sunday Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-11; 1st Corinthians 12:3b-7,12-13;p John 20:19-23

Mass Intentions

Monday, May 25, 2020

9:00 a.m. Deceased Member of Bennet, Bautista and Mejia

Families and the Intentions of Greg Bennett

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

7:00 a.m. Jerry Smith/Colleen Kenny

8:00 a.m. Deb Tranel/Ed and Cathy Mallow

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

7:00 a.m. Joseph Nham Vu/Phan and Tam Vu

8:00 a.m. Nancy Fifield/Doris Kling

Thursday, May 28, 2020

7:00 a.m. Jack McGinn/Mary and Aral Eaton

8:00 a.m. John Ambrosch/Family

Friday, May 29, 2020

7:00 a.m. Jeanne and Joe Broussard/Mike and Mary Lou Bartley

8:00 a.m. Gordon Jockisch/Nancy and Stephen Powers

Saturday, May 30, 2020

8:00 a.m. Annie Joseph/Jim and Vicki Trebor

5:00 p.m. Jean Hubert/Family

Sunday, May 31, 2020

7:00 a.m. Charlie Hessling 1st Anniv/Betty Arnold 9:00 a.m. Sr. Madeline Marie Brophy/Frances Farraher

11:00 a.m. Florence and Jim Ryan/Family

5:00 p.m. For the People

ORDINATION DATE ANNOUNCED FOR COADJUTOR BISHOP OF PEORIA



The Diocese of Peoria joyfully announces the ordination of Coadjutor Bishop-Elect Louis Tylka will take place on Thursday, July 23, 2020 in the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, in Peoria. Coadjutor Bishop-Elect Tylka will one day succeed Bishop Daniel Jenky as the ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Peoria. Cardinal Blase Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, will be the principal consecrator. Bishop Daniel Jenky will serve as co-consecrator.

Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, has confirmed that he will participate in the ordination liturgy. Archbishop Pierre, who serves as the representative of Pope Francis to the United States, will read the papal bull or letter from Pope Francis appointing Coadjutor Bishop-Elect Tylka to Peoria.

Bishop Jenky, who is in his 19th year as Bishop of Peoria, said, "I look forward to working with Bishop Lou as we preach the Gospel in central Illinois. His energy and his rich pastoral experience will be a great asset for our local church." Bishop Jenky continued, "I ask all the faithful of the Diocese of Peoria to join with me in praying for Bishop Lou as he prepares for his ordination as bishop. May the Lord help him to be a servant in the model of Christ the Good Shepherd as he prepares to undertake this great responsibility."

In anticipation of his ordination to serve as Coadjutor Bishop of Peoria, Bishop-Elect Tylka asks for your prayers for himself and the Church of Peoria, "I am most grateful for the warm and supportive welcome I have already received by Bishop Jenky, the priests, the Religious and faithful of the Diocese of Peoria. I ask that we all continue to pray for one another and for God's grace to bring healing to our world. I am very eager to come to Peoria to begin my ministry among this wonderful local Church."

Due to concern for the health and safety of the public in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, attendance at the ordination liturgy will be limited. The Diocese of Peoria is exploring options for broadcasting the liturgy so that people can participate in the ordination while at home. The Liturgy of Ordination will begin at 2:00 pm CDT on Thursday, July 23, 2020.

May Crowning

We were fortunate to have a non-traditional, May Crowning earlier this month. Frida Bronfield and Tommy Graham represented our 8th grade class coming to honor Our Lady with song, prayer and the placing of the crown. While we wish this could have been done as in previous years and included all of our students, we are grateful to those who participated, and their families, for being here to carry on this tradition. Video is available at: youtube.com/watch?v=gwwxRasPtWg





Wedding Congratulations

Alexa Burek ~ Trevor Parr

Receiving Communion

While we are not able to come together for Mass yet, you are able to receive Communion. Communion will be distributed on Saturday evening from 5:30 to 6:00 pm and Sunday morning from 9:30 to 11:00 am. Msgr. Gray will be in the narthex to distribute the Eucharist. Those who do not wish to leave their vehicles can pull up in the crescent drive. Wait patiently and Communion will be brought to you.

Parish Office

Beginning Tuesday, May 26, the Parish Office will be open Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm. If you are coming to the office we ask that you respect the protocols that have been set for reopening businesses including social distancing.

During other normal office hours we will continue the procedures we have been following during the shutdown. You are welcome to email (parishoffice@stthomaschurch.net), or call and leave a message and it will be forwarded to office staff.

To leave a message call 309-688-3446 and at the prompt press:

- 3 Msgr. Gray
- 4 Fr. Stark
- 0 Terri-Administrative Assistant
- 1340 Julie-Accounting
- 1341 Pat-Tuition

If you have items to drop for the Parish Office you are welcome to put them under the door of the Office downstairs or the main Sacristy upstairs. The church building is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays.



2020/2021 School Year

St. Thomas School provides a wealth of opportunities to our students at all levels. We are committed to providing the best quality Catholic education we can at St. Thomas, including our music, band, art, and Spanish programs and other extra-curricular subjects. We have openings in all grades, Pre 3 through 8th grade. If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning more about all that is waiting for them at St. Thomas School please call our school office at 685-2533.

A virtual tour of our school is on our website at school.stthomaspeoria.org

Job Openings

St. Thomas School is seeking to fill two teacher job openings:

- Fifth Grade Classroom Teacher
- 6-8th Grade Enalish Teacher

Please send letter of interest and resume to our principal, Maureen Bentleyat:

maureenbentley@stthomas-school.com

Stay in Touch

- 1. **Join Msgr. Gray for Mass each day**. Link can be found on the parish website, stthomaspeoria.org or the Parish App
- 2. **Bookmark the Parish Blog** which will feature regular updates (jgray.org/st_thomas).
- 3. **Download My Parish App** to receive push notifications (Visit myparishapp.com/download).
- 4. **Receive the Bulletin** and announcements in weekly emails from the parish. (Email parishoffice@stthomas-church.net to sign up).
- 5. **Bookmark the parish webpage** (stthomaspeoria.org).

Financial Assistance for 2020/2021 School Year

While we have just completed our very unusual Covid-19 affected school year, please keep in mind our deadline to apply for financial assistance for 2020/2021 is Sunday, May 31st. Completion of a FACTS application for financial assistance by May 31st insures that you are considered for financial assistance from the Diocese of Peoria through the John Lancaster Spalding Fund, and from the St. Thomas Sponsor a Student Program.

If you have not completed your 2019 Federal Income Tax return by May 31st, you may still complete the FACTS application. Upload your 2019 W-2s and 2018 Federal Income Tax return to complete your application.

We know some families personal situations may have been negatively affected by the stay at home order. If your family has been affected please indicate this on your FACTS application, in communication with Msgr. Gray or Pat in the Parish Office. We expect to finish Financial aid decisions by the end of June. If you have any questions or need assistance in completing the FACTS application, please contact Pat in the Parish Office at 688-3446.

Thank You to Our Donors, our generous parishioners who continue to support St. Thomas during this time. Your contributions to our Sponsor a Student Fund provide financial assistance without which many of our students would not be able to attend STS. Your contributions to Empower Illinois have provided awards to 10 students for the 2020/2021 school year. Contributions to the Invest in Kids Program through Empower Illinois allow you to receive a 75% Illinois State Income tax credit for your donation. Donations made through November 30, will be awarded to students for the 2020/2021 school year. Currently 55 of our students are on the waiting list to receive awards from Empower Illinois. If you are interested in learning more about the Invest in Kids Program please contact Pat or Julie in the parish office.

Food Pantry

THANK YOU to all who contributed to the Pantry during this challenging time. Many of our neighbors were able to come to the pantry, and provide for their families as they adjusted to the stay at home order. We, and they, sincerely appreciate your donations of food and financial support.

Current needs are: rice, jelly, syrup and meal helper.

Students interested in earning service hours at the pantry this summer, please contact Rob Berg to schedule your hours. orioberg@mediacombb.net or 815-954-0297.

The Schmidt family used their creativity and desire to help to bless our pantry patrons with Blessing Bags. These bags contain basic First Aid items.



THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

So, after praying and preparing for 40 days in Lent, and for 50 days in the Easter Season, we see Pentecost in our sights...just another week and the Holy Spirit will come to **us**, and we see Jesus doing what He has said He was going to do: return to the Father. And He prepares His disciples for the gift of the Spirit.

Today, **we** receive instructions about what **we** need to do, & what **we** need to know, now that Jesus is with us, **differently**. Our first reading walks us through the Ascension, as Jesus, instructing His apostles, was lifted up, & a cloud took him from their sight. **We** praise God as He raises Jesus from the dead, as He seats Jesus at His right hand. Now, amazing as this must have been for the Apostles--Jesus was speaking, teaching them, as He often had, and suddenly, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, & a cloud took him from their sight.

Now, as amazing as **that** might have been, as they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them and said Men of Galilee, **why are you standing there looking at the sky?** This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will **return** the same way as you have seen him going into heaven. Quit gaping at the sky; get on with what Jesus told you. Why **are** you standing there?

Jesus, going to Heaven, gave **us** the responsibility to take over, to take up where He left off, to receive the Holy Spirit and to evangelize the world. The responsibility is **ours**; the opportunity to receive the power of the Holy Spirit is **ours**; the chance to make disciples of all the nations is **ours**. Jesus has gone **up** to Heaven, and now **we** must go **out** to the world-**-now**. Here on the mountain with the Apostles, we see Jesus ascend to His father. But why are you standing there looking at the sky? Go, therefore, and make **disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you.

And he gives them real hope, true comfort & consolation: And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. We're told to live differently, because life is now different; we're told to to teach others, all nations—even the Gentiles, and to bring more members into His body through baptism. He promises to be with us, forever. What we do, we do in His name...in His power...as His disciples. Why are you standing there looking at the sky? It is our job to teach, to baptize, to go to all the nations, to increase and to enrich the body of Christ...our job.

Next Sunday we celebrate Pentecost, & the Ascension takes us from Jesus on earth, physically, to the Church born in the gift of the Holy Spirit. The apostles had their moment on the mountaintop with Jesus, hearing and watching Him, before His Ascension. But we're no longer on a mountaintop. This Ascension is about **us** in the Church, about **us**, as well, about **our** salvation history, about **us** taking responsibility for the Mission of Jesus, about **us**, going to all nations, preaching Jesus, always and also with **Jesus**, fully risen, with us.

When Jesus ascended to the Father, to Heaven, He left His disciples physically, but not completely, not always; He remains with **us**, in a different, new and more complete way... not in one place in Judea, but **here**, in every space and time, **close** to each of us, promising us He will be **with** us, until the end of time--a very, very long time. When Jesus left His Apostles physically, they may have been gaping at Heaven, looking as He ascended, but they weren't alone: He was still with them, and he filled them with anticipation for the Spirit He would send them. **We** can have the **same** anticipation, because Jesus will send **us** the same Spirit, as well. So, no more gaping at the sky. Let's get on with it. Jesus who left us is **still** with us; Jesus who ascended, will send us His Holy Spirit. Let's get on with it.

The Feast of the Ascension



The Feast commemorates the bodily Ascension of Jesus into heaven. It is celebrated on the 40th day of Easter. This year, that day is Thursday, May 21, 2020. In the United States the celebration of this Feast is transferred to the Sunday following that day.

Sanctuary Construction

We're on the way!





St. Thomas School parents, teachers, and students excelled at e-learning the past two months. Second grader, Eli, got a little extra help with his Religion reading.





















View Our Parish Sup			
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Pastor			
Parochial Vicar Rev. Paul Stark S.J. (x1430) paulstarksj@stthomas-church.net			
Deacon Dcn. Mark Kelsch (692-4908) Dcn. John Nelson (981-2716) Dcn. Ed Mallow (360-7735)			
School Principal			

periore at 1111112 1000 to 1111 according				
	Administrative AssistantTerri Moon(x1300)			
		terrimoon@stthomas-ch		
	Bulletin Editor	Peggy Sullivan	(x1301)	
		peggysullivan@stthomas-church		
	Accountant	Julie Streid	(x1340)	
		juliestreid@stthomas-church		
	Tuition Coordinator	Pat Wombacher	(x1341)	
		<u>patwombacher@s</u>	tthomas-school.net	
	CCD Coordinator	Angie Robenstein	(x1200)	
		<u>angierobenstein@s</u>	tthomas-school.net	
	Music Coordinator	Ann Horst	(682-5507)	
	Choir Director	Erin Craig		
		<u>erincraig@s</u>	tthomas-school.net	
	Annulment Consultant	John Mackoway	(699-5213)	

Sacrament of Baptism

Parents participate Baptism class before the Baptism of their first child. Contact the parish office to schedule the class

Confessions

Saturday 4:00-4:45pm & 6:00-6:30 p.m.

How to Submit Bulletin Information

Send information for the bulletin to parishoffice@stthomas-church.net with subject "Bulletin". Submissions are due by Friday noon one full week prior. Send images or logos separately as attachments. Submissions may be edited for content and length.





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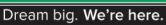
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