

From Our Pastor



Beginning on Thursday, December 17, we enter our final novena on our journey to Christmas. Our readings at daily Mass will turn to the Scripture passages that lead directly up to the birth of Christ. This is a joyful time, as the lights of the Advent Wreath grow brighter as the light of Christ is about to enter the world.

A special thank you to the Franciscan Sisters of St. John the Baptist for their hard work and care of our church and sanctuary. We look forward to the beautiful Christmas decorations which will draw us more into the mystery of Jesus' birth.

Please join us for our monthly Holy Hour on Thursday, December 17 from 7 to 8 PM. This is an excellent time for us to prepare to spiritually welcome our Lord in our hearts as he is born for us in the manger.

Thank you for your very gracious and abundant gifts for the Giving Tree. This is the last chance to add any gifts that you have yet to turn in. We will be giving these gifts to needy families during this next week.

Please take advantage of our additional confession times. Rather than gathering as a large group for a penance service, we will have lots of additional individual confession times. Please see the bulletin for the complete list, beginning on Saturday December 19, leading up to Wednesday, December 23.

For Christmas, we will be adding an additional Mass at 3 PM on Christmas Eve. See the bulletin for the full schedule of Masses. This additional Mass as well as overflow seating will allow us to spread out even more to keep distancing.

- Msgr. Gray



Pray with the Pope

December 2020 For a Life of Prayer

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.



Readings for the Week of December 13, 2020

Sunday Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61: 1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24;

John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Monday St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church

Numbers 24: 2-7, 15-17a; Matthew 21: 23-27

Tuesday Zephaniah 3: 1-2, 9-13; Matthew 21: 28-32

Wednesday Isaiah 45: 6c-8, 18, 21c-25; Luke 7: 18b-23

Thursday Genesis 49: 2, 8-10; Matthew 1: 1-17

Friday Jeremiah 23: 5-8; Matthew 1: 18-25

Saturday Judges 13: 2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1: 5-25

Sunday Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7: 1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Romans 16: 25-27;

Luke 1: 26-38

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 14, 2020

7:00 a.m. Ron Hardgrove/The Phelan Family 8:00 a.m. Elizabeth Mathers/The McGee Family

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

7:00 a.m. Mary Ann Knell/Terry & Marty Best 8:00 a.m. Walter Arnold/Dave & Kelly LaHood

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

7:00 a.m. Ric & Joe Olson/Sam Joseph 8:00 a.m. Thelma Antonacci/Diane Bussman

Thursday, December 17, 2020

7:00 a.m. Mary Rose Kelly/Family

8:00 a.m. Intentions of Paula Joseph/Ed Mallow

Friday, December 18, 2020

7:00 a.m. Dr. James N. Kenny/Family 8:00 a.m. Rose Maloney/Paul & Ann Horst

Saturday, December 19, 2020

8:00 a.m. Honor Jacquin/Family

5:00 p.m. Jeanne Quigley/Rockey Family

Sunday, December 20, 2020

7:00 a.m. Dr. Richard O'Brien/Rich & Colleen Lavin

9:00 a.m. Don Faulkner/Family

11:00 a.m. Benefactors of Franciscan Sisters of John the Baptist

5:00 p.m. For the People

Week of December 13

CENTERING PRAYER Monday, December 14, 8:30 a.m., Church

ROSARY Tuesday, December 15, 10:00 a.m., Church

RCIA Wednesday, December 16, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

HOLY HOUR Thursday, December 17, 7:00 p.m., Church

Our Sympathy

Mike Barra

Jeannette Holland



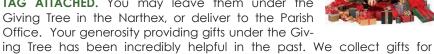
PARISH HOLY HOUR

Thursday, December 17 7:00 p.m. — 8:00 p.m.

Giving Tree

The Giving Tree is an important tradition at St. Thomas. We have gift tags in baskets as you leave Mass. We ask you to take one or more of the tags and purchase the requested gift. Please give new gifts only.

RETURN YOUR GIFTS IN GIFT BAGS WITH THE ORIGINAL TAG ATTACHED. You may leave them under the



Catholic Charities and others in our parish and community who are in need of some help.

MONETARY DONATIONS This year a monetary donation might work best for many people. You can make your donation on our website: stthomaspeoria.org. Go to GIVING, then DONATE NOW. complete the form please Apply your Donation to The Giving Tree.

Please make your monetary donation as soon as possible so our elves have time to shop before the deadline.

PLEASE RETURN GIFTS BY DECEMBER 15TH Thank you for your kindness and generosity!



RCIA Topics

December 16: Baptism, Confirmation

December 23: No Class

January 6: Penance, Anointing, Funerals January 13: Penance, Anointing, Funerals January 20: Marriage, Religious life January 27: Moral life: free will, desire for happiness, passions, good and evil

Daily Mass in the Main Church

For all parishioners who wish to attend and maintain social distance, our daily morning Masses are in the main Church.



| | | Fiscal YTD |
|------------------------|----------|------------|
| Collections needed | \$20,000 | \$460,000 |
| Sunday Collections | \$30,372 | \$337,965 |
| Electronic Collections | \$3,399 | \$78,177 |
| Total Collected | \$33,771 | \$416,142 |
| Over/(Short) | \$13,771 | \$(43,858) |

Your support of St. Thomas Parish is important to sustain our contribute mission. Please remember to regularly your envelopes or checks in our regular Sunday collection. Electronic contributions can be made through direct debit, or by using the Giving tab on our parish website: stthomaspeoria.org. Thank you for your support.



Sponsor of the Week



Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Masses for Christmas Eve & Christmas Day



Christmas Eve: 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., 10:00 p.m. Christmas Day: 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Please join us as you are able. In order to maintain social distancing, seating for Masses is available in the main Church, the narthex, the Daily Mass Chapel. Special for Christmas will be the broadcast of the Mass in the Parish Hall at 3:00 and 5:00 on Christmas Eve. Communion will be distributed wherever you are.



Reconciliation

Since we do not want to encourage large groups of people to gather if it is not necessary, we have cancelled our usual Penance Service. In its place we will offer expanded opportunities for individual Reconciliation.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: expanded hours on both Saturday 3:00-4:45 p.m. and 6:00-6:30 p.m. and Sunday, 10:00-10:45 a.m.

Weeknights: December 21—23, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Please come if you can ~ it is a great way to enter into the season of Christmas.

The O Antiphons of Advent

There are seven short verses sung before the Magnificat during Evening Prayer of the Church on the seven days before the vigil of Christmas. They each begin with the exclamation O, each ends with a plea for the Messiah to come. As Christmas approaches the cry becomes more urgent.

The antiphons were composed in the seventh or eighth century when monks compiled texts from the Old Testament which looked forward to the coming of our salvation. They form a rich mosaic of scriptural images. These seven antiphons appear to be the originals, although from time to time other texts were used. They became very popular in the Middle Ages. While the monastic choirs sang the antiphons the great bells of the church were rung.

A curious feature of these antiphons is that the first letter of each invocation may be taken from the Latin to form an acrostic in reverse. So the first letters of Sapientia, Adonai, Radix, Clavis, Oriens, Rex, and Emmanuel, form the Latin words: ERO CRAS. This is the response of Christ Himself to the heartfelt prayer of His people: Tomorrow I will be there.

We pray the antiphons from December 17—December 23. The antiphons will be in next week's bulletin.

- From Catholic Online



December 17

O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!



December 18

O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!



December 19

O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!



December 20
O Key of David O Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!



December 21

O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.



December 22

O King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and CING save man, whom you formed from the dust!



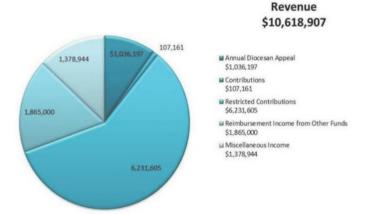
December 23

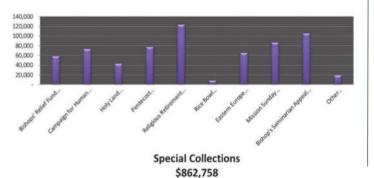
O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord

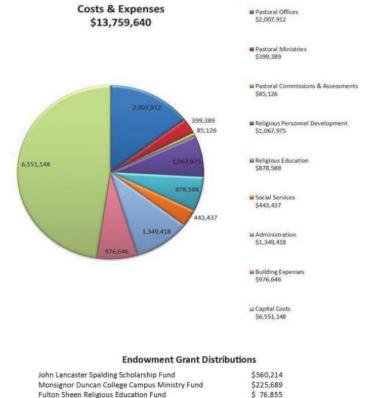
—From Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers/USCCB



Catholic Diocese of Peoria Summary of Diocesan Financial Activities Year Ended June 30, 2020







A Gift that Lives Forever

As Catholic stewards we are asked to make our Church a vibrant source of service and hope to the larger community. Often a financial gift given directly to the Diocese can forever perpetuate our Catholic Faith right here close to home. It may be a gift in your will, a gift of real estate, live insurance or even your required minimum distribution from your IRA.



Stay in Touch

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

Shop using COMET CASH gift cards for the Holidays

Many people do not wish to go out and shop during these unsettling times. You can still buy all your Holiday gift cards and shop with your Comet Cash cards, all while supporting St. Thomas Church, with over +750 brands available. Shop the gift guide at ShopWithScrip.com

View online tutorial app on how to get and use the RaiseRight mobile app: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18ClQVbGvvc

What better time to set up your Scrip account and start saving on tuition and helping STS?

We work through a company called Great Lakes Scrip. I encourage you to take a look at their website to find out more about Scrip. You can create an account, see what vendors are available, start shopping, and start SAVING. Even better, you can receive email updates directly from them about special bonus rebates and offers during the Holidays. Our school code is **BA38E9AD7759**.

I am keeping on hand several cards, along with great stocking stuffers, for instance Panera Bread \$5.00 and Starbucks \$5.00. You may go to Ren-Web under Resource Documents to see what is available. In addition, anything listed on the www.shopwithscrip.com website can be ordered. Special orders need to be placed by 7am Monday. Your order will be available by Friday. You may contact me at angierobenstein@stthomasschool.net, to arrange for card orders and pick-ups. I will be working in the school office until December 18th.

Thank you for caring and supporting your school, Angie Robenstein



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Parish Registration

Complete this form and drop it in the collection basket, **or** mail to the Parish Office **or** Register on our website at stthomaspeoria.org. Under About open the New Parishioner Registration, complete and submit the form

| ast Name | |
|----------|--|
| | |

First Name(s) _____

Email _____

Phone

Address

City______ ZIP_____

Phone

New Parishioner _____ Change of address/phone ____

RANDY SIMMONS TUITION ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIP for PEORIA NOTRE DAME

The Simmons Family and Peoria Notre Dame announce the Randy Simmons Tuition Assistance Scholarship application is now available for the 2021-2022 school year.

Current 8th graders who will be freshmen next school year are encouraged to apply. The application is available on Peoria Notre Dame's website, https://www.pndhs.org/randy-simmons-tuition-assistance-scholarship/

The deadline to apply is February 12, 2021.

Any questions, contact Mrs. Cindy Dermody, Peoria Notre Dame's Director of Development at c.dermody@pndhs.org or 309-691-8741.

Parish Office Hours

9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

The Parish Office is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Staff are also available by email or voicemail. 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 deliver for the Parish Office, you are welcome to put them under the door of the Office downstairs in the Church, or under the door of the main Sacristy upstairs. The Church is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day.



Food Pantry

Current needs are: Cereal, Crackers, Canned Fruit, Meal Helper, Pancake Mix, & Syrup

Thank you for your generosity



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| parishoffice@stthomas-church.net | | |
| Pastor | | |
| Parochial VicarRev. Paul Stark S.J(x4) | | |
| paulstarksj@stthomas-church.net | | |
| Sacristan Mother Vaclava Ballon, FSJB(688-3500) <u>fsjbpeoria@yahoo.com</u> | | |
| Deacon Dcn. Mark Kelsch (692-4908) Dcn. John Nelson (981-2716) Dcn. Ed Mallow (360-7735) | | |
| School Principal Maureen Bentley(x1210) maureenbentley@stthomas-school.net | | |

| porters at www.biscoveriviass.com | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
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| patwombacher@stthomas-school.net | | |
| CCD Coordinato | r (x1200) | |
| | angierobenstein@stthomas-school.net | |
| Music Coordinat | or | |
| Choir Director | Erin Craig | |
| erincraig@stthomas-school.net | | |
| Annulment ConsultantJohn Mackoway(699-5213) | | |

Sacrament of Baptism

Parents participate in a Baptism class before the Baptism of their first child. Contact the Parish Office 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 lenath.





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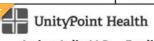


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