



## From Our Pastor

It was about one year ago that we began Lent normally enough. Before we had finished our forty-day journey, we had suspended public Mass and we finished Holy Week with the first of our online Masses. We were not able to celebrate the Last Supper, Passion or Resurrection together as a parish. Those who were received into the Church through RCIA had to do so during the summer and many of our regular practices, such as making a Lenten confession, were put aside.

For this reason, I think we should be all the more mindful about making Lent count this year. The experience of the past months reminds us not to take anything about our Faith for granted.

During the Season of Lent, remember the customary practices of fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and abstinence from meat on the Fridays of Lent. To these practices, many people regularly add additional voluntary penances or spiritual practices. Among these, the Church always calls us to embrace prayer and almsgiving, as well as fasting.

We have added our regular Lenten devotions for your spiritual enrichment. We will add an evening daily Mass at 5:30 pm. On Fridays, we offer an additional hour of Confessions and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament beginning at 6 pm. This hour is followed by the Stations of the Cross and Benediction at 7 pm. It may not be popular in our culture to engage in spiritual activities on a Friday night. Yet, this is an important day of penance, since we recall on Fridays the sacrifice that Jesus made on Good Friday in his death on the Cross.

This year I hope to finish Lent stronger than ever. You might mark on your calendar now the special Masses that we could not celebrate last year: the Mass of the Lord's Supper, April 1, 7:30 pm; the Liturgy of the Passion, April 2, 3:00 pm; the Easter Vigil, April 3, 8:00 pm. We look forward to welcoming a record number of new Catholics from our RCIA class on April 3.

May the Lord grant us the grace to make a holy Lent.

-Msgr. Gray



### Pray with the Pope

#### February 2021 Violence Against Women

We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded.

## Readings for the Week of February 21, 2021

Sunday First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9: 8-15; 1 Peter 3: 18-22; Mark 1: 12-15

Monday The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle

1 Peter 5:1-4; Matthew 16:13-19

Tuesday St. Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr

Isaiah 55:10-11; Matthew 6:7-15

**Wednesday** Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 11:29-32

**Thursday** Esther C: 12, 14-16, 23-25; Matthew 7:7-12

Friday Ezekiel 18:21-28; Matthew 5:20-26

**Saturday** Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Matthew 5:43-48

Sunday Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Romans 8:31b-34;

Mark 9:2-10

### **Mass Intentions**

#### Monday, February 22, 2021

7:00 a.m. Dr. James N. Kenny, Sr./Family 8:00 a.m. Patty Resutko/Larry Resutko 5:30 p.m. Fran McShane/Katherine Bartolo

#### Tuesday, February 23, 2021

7:00 a.m. Bob Pendergrass/The Maushard Family 8:00 a.m. Jerry McDonough/Eileen McDonough

5:30 p.m. Lois Tascher/Friends

#### Wednesday, February 24, 2021

7:00 a.m. Deceased members of Broussard & Bartley Families/Mike

& Mary Lou Bartley

8:00 a.m. Brooke Crawmer Joseph/Dick & Sandy Smith

5:30 p.m. Mike Foster/Pat O'Brien

#### Thursday, February 25, 2021

7:00 a.m. Dr. Bill Marshall/Linda Osika

8:00 a.m. Carnelia Schneider/Mary Jane Glass 9:15 a.m. Glen Morton/Ed & Cathy Mallow

5:30 p.m. Ann Ribando/Mai Dang

#### Friday, February 26, 2021

7:00 a.m. Sandra Roberson/Anne & Warren Boley

8:00 a.m. Bernadean May/Jan Coogan

5:30 p.m. Jean & George Best/Terry & Marty Best

#### Saturday, February 27, 2021

8:00 a.m. Mary Lou & Pete Spitzer

5:00 p.m. Barbara Marcus/Terry & Marty Best

#### Sunday, February 28, 2021

7:00 a.m. Benefactors of Franciscan Sisters of St. John the Baptist

9:00 a.m. James Geraghty, Sr./Tim & Julie Streid

11:00 a.m. Elizabeth Lehnhausen/The Mike Phelan Family

5:00 p.m. For the People

## Week of February 21

CENTERING PRAYER Monday, February 22, 8:30 a.m., Church

ROSARY Tuesday, February 23, 10:00 a.m., Church

CCD Wednesday, February 24, 6:00 p.m., School

RCIA Wednesday, February 24, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

THAT MAN IS YOU Thursday, February 25, 6:30 a.m., Parish Hall

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Financial Peace University March 2

## **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.

### **Lenten Devotions**

Monday ~ Friday Extra Daily Mass

**Friday** 6:00-7:00 p.m. Confessions/Adoration Stations of the Cross

**Saturday** 4:00-4:45 p.m. Confessions 6:00-6:30 p.m. Confessions











## **Weekly Collection**

	February 7, 2021	Fiscal YTD
Collections needed	\$20,000	\$640,000
Sunday Collections	\$27,231	\$547,273
Electronic Collections	\$3,399	\$108,768
Total Collected	\$30,630	\$656,041
Over/(Short)	\$10,630	\$16,041

Your support of St. Thomas Parish is important to sustain our mission. Please remember to contribute regularly with 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.

## **Our Sympathy**

Joseph P. Kelly

Chuck Gavin

## Little Black Book

This book of meditations for the Season of Lent is available in the narthex. Please help yourself.



## **RCIA Topics**

Feb. 24: Ten & Great Commandments, #1-3; Divine/Natural Law

March 3: Commandments 4, 5, 7, 8 March 10: Commandments 6, 9, 10

March 17: Precepts of the Church, Examination of Conscience, Preparation for Confession

March 24: Review

March 31: Penance Service, Practice

## Stay in Touch

- 1. **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).
- 4. Receive the Bulletin and announcements in weekly emails from the parish. (Email parishoffice@stthomaschurch.net to sign up).
- Bookmark the parish webpage (stthomaspeoria.org).

Sponsor of the Week





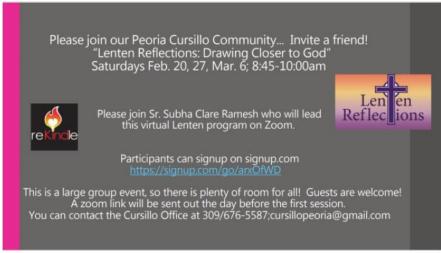
Never worry about money again with Financial Peace University! It's the proven plan to help you master budgeting, beat debt, and live the life of your dreams. Through nine lessons rooted in biblical wisdom, you'll learn from Dave Ramsey and his team of financial experts.

Class starts Tuesday, March 2, 2021 in the St. Thomas Parish Hall.

We have a limited number of memberships at the discounted rate of only \$80. Call the Parish Office @ 309-688-3446 to register.







## Lent 2021

Holy Triduum - April 1-3, 2021 Easter Sunday - April 4, 2021

Lent, a 40 day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. It is a period of preparation to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus at Easter.

#### Prayer

During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to seek the Lord in prayer and reading Scripture, to service by giving alms, and to practice self-control through fasting. Dive into God's word in Scripture this Lent or pray the rosary with your family.

#### Fastina

**Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday** are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.

For members of the Roman Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59.

If possible, the **Good Friday** fast is continued until the **Easter Vigil** (on Holy Saturday night) as the *Paschal Fast* to honor the suffering and death of Jesus, and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily His Resurrection.

## **Almsgiving**

The foundational call of Christians to charity is a frequent Gospel theme. During Lent, we are asked to focus more intently on *almsgiving*, donating money or goods to the poor, and performing other acts of charity.

More information is available from the United States Conference of Catholic bishops [USCCB] https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/lent

## **Annual Diocesan Appeal**

Thank you to everyone who contributed on behalf of St. Thomas Parish to the Annual Diocesan Appeal of the Diocese of Peoria. We have reached almost 95% of our goal of \$117,000. A few more pledges would bring us to our goal. Every dollar contributed above our goal comes back to support our parish. Thank you for your generosity!

Information about the Annual Diocesan Appeal can be found online.

You can contribute on this page: <a href="https://cdop.org/offices/development-stewardship/ada2020/">https://cdop.org/offices/development-stewardship/ada2020/</a> or by making a gift through our Parish Office.

# St. Michael the Archangel

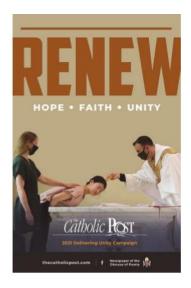
A generous parishioner donated this statue of St. Michael the Archangel in the narthex.



Did you know you can place a message atop a page of our diocesan newspaper, **The Catholic Post?** Your message will be seen in 10,000 Catholic households. With a page sponsorship, you may memorialize a deceased loved one, give thanks for blessings such as a new grandchild, or a marriage anniversary.

A page sponsorship of \$100 is one suggested level of giving in *The Catholic Post* subscription drive, *RENEW*: Hope...Faith...Unity.

Contribute instantly via credit or debit card anytime online at *the-catholicpost.com* or by calling (309)671-1550 during business hours. You may also mail a check to *The Catholic Post*, PO Box 1722, Peoria, IL 61656. The regular subscription rate remains at \$30.



# Play for Comets Fundraising Campaign

#### **Donor Recognition**

We are incredibly grateful for generous donors from our parish and school families who will make this project a reality.

We will place a permanent fixture at the playground to recognize all donations above \$500 in the following tiers:

Comet Level: \$10,000+ Platinum: \$7,500 - \$9,999 Gold: \$5,000 - \$7,499 Silver: \$2,500 - \$4,999 Bronze: \$1,000 - \$2,499 Maroon: \$500 - \$999

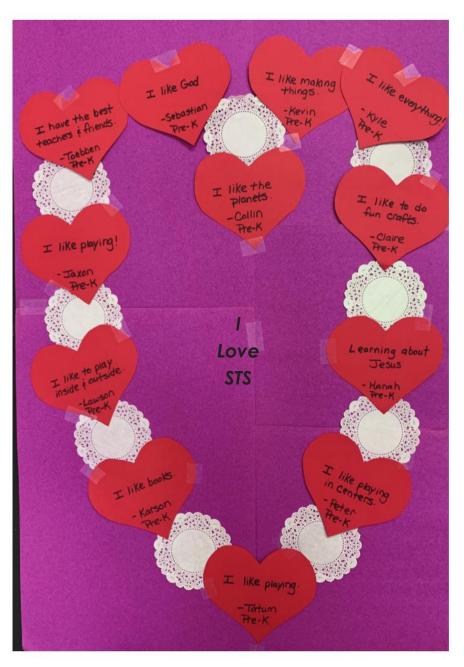
Donors will be given additional recognition in different areas of our outdoor design at the Gold, Platinum and Comet levels.

As a reminder, the easiest way to donate is directly via check to St Thomas School and deliver it to the school office. Online donations are also possible at the parish website.

From Our Students
If you haven't seen it already, check out this great video from our kids. https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=5T5yIHQcRKc&feature=youtu.be

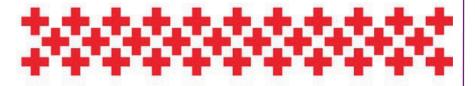
Their excitement about this new playground is contagious! They are working hard at their penny wars to raise money in their own way. Each class is collecting coins and many classes have already had to get bigger buckets.

Check social media for our weekly update on our overall progress.



### **American Red Cross**

Give blood. Help save lives.



## Blood Drive Peoria Heights High School

Gym 508 E. Glen Peoria Heights, IL 61616

Friday, March 19, 2021 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

For an appointment call 686-8803 or sign up at school.

Sponsored by the Key Club

Students need to bring either a driver's license or two forms of other ID (with one that has proof of age). Eat a healthy meal and drink an extra 16 oz. of water and fluids before the donation. You can save up to 15 minutes when you donate blood by using RapidPass! Visit redcrossblood.org/RapidPass for more information.

All donations tested for COVID-19 antibodies. Results in 1-2 wks.

RedCrossBlood.org/AntibodyTesting



Your donation is essential. We'd like to show our gratitude for being a vital part of our American Red Cross community with a special gift. Get an exclusive Red Cross T-shirt when you come to give March 15-26, while supplies last.

## **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.

New Parishioner	Change of address/phone
Phone	
City	ZIP
Address	
Phone	
Email	
First Name(s)	
Last Name	

## **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.

# Holy Hour for the Rights of the Unborn

Saint Mark's Church 1113 W. Bradley Avenue, Peoria, IL

March 1, 7:00 p.m.

Face masks and social distancing requested.



"May the Lord grant us the grace to watch our tongues and be careful of what we say of others, because through our weakness and sin, we often find it easier to insult and denigrate than say or do good".

+Pope Francis

## **Food Pantry**

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

Thank you for your generosity



St. Vincent de Paul Helpline: 677-7696

view Our Parish Supp			
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904 East Lake Avenue, Peoria Heights, IL 61616			
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Parochial Vicar Rev. Paul Stark S.J(x4)			
paulstarksj@stthomas-church.net			
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School Principal Maureen Bentley(x1210) maureenbentley@stthomas-school.net			

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Choir Director	Erin Craig			
<u>erincraig@stthomas-school.net</u>				
Annulment Consultant	John 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 length.





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