



From Our Pastor

It is a tradition beginning with the Fifth Sunday of Lent to cover statutes in the church through Holy Week. This tradition reminds us of the penance of the Lenten season and helps us to focus on the essential elements of our faith. The removing of the coverings also invites us to experience greater joy when we celebrate the Lord's resurrection at Easter.

As more and more people continue to return to Mass, we will begin offering an overflow option by broadcasting the Mass live in the Parish Hall on the lower level of the church. For those who would like to spread out with greater distance, the Parish Hall will allow an additional space with stricter mask requirements. Communion will be brought downstairs.

Mass will be broadcast in the Parish Hall at 11 AM beginning on Palm Sunday and at all Masses for Easter. As we begin to offer this extra space for attending Mass, we will discontinue the Sunday distribution of Communion outside of Mass from 12:00 to 12:30 PM.

Please join us for Stations of the Cross and a solemn blessing of the new Stations on Friday evening, March 26, at 7 PM.

As more people return to Mass, we will soon need to recruit new volunteers. Our Martha Group offers meals for families after the funeral of their loved ones. It will be good to have some additional helpers to bring in food or serve the food at these funeral luncheons. It will also be helpful to have some additional Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to bring Communion to the homebound and also to nursing homes when we are able to resume this service. Please contact the parish office if you want to volunteer.

-Msgr. Gray



Pray with the Pope

March 2021 Catholics in China

We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.



Readings for the Week of March 21, 2021

Sunday Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Hebrews 5: 7-9; John 12: 20-33

Monday Daniel 13: 1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11

Tuesday St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, Bishop

Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30

Wednesday Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; John 8:31-42

Thursday The Annunciation of the Lord

Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38

Friday Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42

Saturday Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56

Sunday Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1—15:47

Mass Intentions

Monday, March 22, 2021

7:00 a.m. Dr. James N. Kenny, Sr./Family

8:00 a.m. Glen Morton/Warren & Bonnie Brietbarth 5:30 p.m. Elizabeth Lehnhausen/The Mike Phelan Family

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

7:00 a.m. Mary Nelson/John & Sonia Nelson 8:00 a.m. Sharon Farwell/Joe & Sandy Whalen

5:30 p.m. Jan Alt/Arun & Mary Jo Pinto

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

7:00 a.m. Mickey Kelly/John & Amy Kelly

8:00 a.m. Mary Tesar/Sheldon & Mary Ann Schafer

5:30 p.m. Msgr. Rank Mass

Thursday, March 25, 2021

7:00 a.m. Thomas S. & Winnifred A. Farraher/Frances Farraher

8:00 a.m. Mike Faley/Eileen McDonough

9:15 a.m. Elizabeth & Robert Lehnhausen/J. P. Harvey 5:30 p.m. Special Intention for The Zarley Family

Friday, March 26, 2021

7:00 a.m. Ric & Joe Olson/John Szentes 8:00 a.m. Jerry McDonough 10th Anniv./Family

5:30 p.m. Mary Jo Brien/Marie Brien

Saturday, March 27, 2021

8:00 a.m. Susan McPheeters/Linda Osika

5:00 p.m. Jeanette Holland/Anne & Kevin Morrissey

Sunday, March 28, 2021

7:00 a.m. Kathleen McNally/Family

9:00 a.m. Intentions of Joe Russick/Ed & Cathy Mallow 11:00 a.m. Liz Powers 1st Anniv./Mike & Danny Phelan

5:00 p.m. For the People

Week of March 21

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

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

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY Tuesday, March 23, 6:30 p.m., Parish Hall

MSGR. RANK MASS Wednesday, March 24, 5:30 p.m., Church

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

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

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

CONFESSIONS & ADORATION Friday, 6:00 p.m., Church

STATIONS & SOLEMN BLESSING Friday, 7:00 p.m., Church

UPCOMING EVENTS

Donut Sunday April 18

Lenten Devotions

Monday ~ Friday Extra Daily Mass 5:30 p.m.

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

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.











Weekly Collection

	March 14, 2021	Fiscal YTD
Collections needed	\$20,000	\$740,000
Sunday Collections	\$14,065	\$645,731
Electronic Collections	\$3,399	\$125,763
Total Collected	\$17,464	\$771,494
Over/(Short)	\$(2,536)	\$31,494

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

Mary Frances Cunningham, mother of Anne Lucas & grandmother of Kevin Lucas, Kelly Scarpino, and Fr. Kyle Lucas

Stations with Solemn Blessing

Friday, March 26, 7:00 p.m.

We will have a solemn blessing of our new Stations of the Cross, followed by praying the Stations

Msgr. Rank Mass

Rescheduled to

Wednesday, March 24, 5:30 p.m.

We celebrate the lives, and pray for, Parishioners and friends who have died in the past year.

While all are invited to attend all those who have lost a loved one in the past year are encouraged to participate.

Live Stream of the Mass in the Parish Hall

For those who have been hesitant to return to Mass in person, because of COVID, we will begin live broadcast of the 11:00 a.m. Mass every Sunday in the Parish Hall. Live stream will begin March 28, Palm Sunday.

All those attending in the Parish Hall will be required to wear a mask and maintain social distance. Communion will be distributed in the Parish Hall.

Beginning Palm Sunday we will suspend Communion outside of Mass from 12-12:30 p.m.

Little Black Book



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

Sponsor of the Week



Holy Week Schedule

Confessions March 29-31, Monday-Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.

Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper April 1, 7:30 p.m. only, NO morning Masses

The Church will remain open for Adoration, 8:30-10:30 p.m.

Good Friday April 2, no Mass

Stations of the Cross, 12:00 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy of the Passion, 3:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross, 7:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday April 3, Easter Vigil Mass, 8:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday April 4, Mass 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., NO 5:00 p.m. Mass

All Easter Masses will be broadcast live to the Parish Hall for overflow and for those who wish to maintain more distance.

Covering of Statues

In the Roman Missal we find the instruction; In the Dioceses of the United States, the practice of covering crosses and images throughout the church from [the fifth] Sunday [of Lent] may be observed. Crosses remain covered until the end of the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, but images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

The Church recommends this practice to heighten our senses and build within us a longing for Easter Sunday.

As we veil statues, and even the crucifix in Church, families are encouraged to follow the practice and veil prominent religious images in the home.

We use the veils to alert us to this special time. As we enter the Church, and see everything covered we know something is different. The last two weeks of Lent are meant to be a time of immediate preparation for the Sacred Triduum, and the veils remind us to get ready. The veils focus our attention on the words of the Mass. As we listen, and focus on the Passion narrative, we can truly enter into the scene. Finally, the veils help produce a heightened sense of anticipation for Easter Sunday, increased when you attend daily Mass and see the veils each day. You don't want the veils there, because they are cover the beautiful images they represent.

The veils are not meant to be forever. The images need to be unveiled; it is unnatural for them to be covered.

Unveiling before the Easter Vigil is a great reminder of our own life on earth. We live in a veiled world, in exile from our true home. Only through our own death that the veil is lifted, and we are finally able to see the beauty of everything in our lives.

From: Why Do We Cover Crucifixes and Statues During Lent? (catholiceducation.org)

Our New Stations of the Cross

IV. Jesus meets His mother

Holy Week

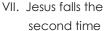


V. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry His cross



VI. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus







Please come pray The Stations of the Cross every Friday in Lent at 6:00 p.m.

Thank you to our generous donors who made these possible.

Food Pantry Spring Clean Up

It's almost spring, and that means it's almost time for **SPRING CLEANING!**

During the months of March and April, the food pantry is asking for donations of cleaning supplies so our clients can get a jump on the grit and grime. Suggestions include window cleaner, dish soap, laundry detergent, fabric softener, bowl cleaner, all purpose cleaners, mops, brooms/dustpans and rags.

Donations can be left in the food pantry donation box in the narthex.



Thank you for brightening lives by helping our clients freshen up their homes!

Volunteers Needed

As COVID restrictions begin to lift, we need volunteers.

Our **Martha Group** needs helpers to bring in food, or to assist, for luncheons following funerals at St. Thomas.

In anticipation of resuming taking Communion to homebound parishioners, we also will need additional Extraordinary Ministers.

If you are able to participate in either ministry, please call the Parish Office to let us know.

Playground Fundraiser

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

Our students' excitement about the playground is contagious. Through our families' generosity, we are very close to our goal. St. Thomas's new playground is going to be AWESOME. If you haven't already, please consider making a donation. The easiest way to donate is directly via check, payable to St. Thomas School.



Invitation to the Permanent Diaconate

A new class of Permanent Deacon candidates will form in June, 2022. However, now is the time to begin discerning if you are called to serve as a deacon.

Candidates must be between 35 and 60 years of age when beginning formation.

Candidates are invited to speak with Msgr. Gray or with Msgr. Tim Nolan in the Office of the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Peoria. The Diocese will provide candidates with other deacons to meet with to discern and grow in the spiritual life.

Candidates should begin their active discernment now, to prepare for application and acceptance into the formation program next year.

Illinois State Tax Scholarship Credit News

The opportunity to support students at St. Thomas School is again available in 2021 through the State of Illinois' *Invest in Kids Act*. Illinois taxpayers can receive a state income tax credit of 75% of their total donation. Donations can be made throughout the year and will be awarded to our students on the *Empower Illinois* waiting list who are eligible to receive a *State Tax Credit Scholarship*. Last year we received donations to support 25 of our students through this program. We are hoping to be able to help even more students during the upcoming school year.

We have recently learned that Caterpillar will match donations made through the *Invest in Kids Act*. This is a great way to maximize your donation.

If you are interested in learning about the Illinois Tax Credit Scholarship program, please contact Pat or Julie in the Parish Office at 309-688-3446.

We are so grateful for all the ways that our parishioners support St. Thomas.

Tuition Assistance, Scholarship Grants Now Available

To be considered for tuition assistance parents must apply online at: **online.factsmgt.com/aid**. Families of students currently receiving grants are reminded that all grants are for one year only, and anyone seeking to renew a grant for the 2021-2022 school year must reapply.

Completing the FACTS application makes you eligible to receive financial assistance from our St. Thomas Sponsor a Student Fund and the Lancaster Spalding Endowment Fund.

Deadline date for the completed application is **April 30, 2021**. Notification of grant awards will be made by the end of June 2021.

If you need assistance completing the FACTS application please contact Pat in the Parish Office at 309-688-3446, ext. 1341.

Yard Clean-Up for Veterans and Widows of Veterans

The Illinois Valley Fuller Center for Housing is offering FREE spring yard cleanups for Veterans and widows of Veterans. Volunteers will provide a maximum of 2 hours of service, weather permitting.

To sign up for this service, or to volunteer to help, call Debbie Gaught at the Illinois Valley Fuller Center For Housing at 309-363-3737.

Parish Prayers for the PND Class of 2021

This year has been challenging for all of our students no matter what their grade; trying to find a sense of normal hasn't been easy. This hasn't been the year our Peoria Notre Dame seniors had hoped it would be. The PND family has created a prayer wall at the school. We are asking our parish families to send a note or card addressed to our seniors letting them know they are in our thoughts and prayers. Those notes will be displayed until our students leave our school for the final time.

Notes can be mailed to: Peoria Notre Dame Attn: Parish Prayer for PND 2021 5105 N Sheridan Road Peoria, Illinois 61614

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	
About open the New Parist form.	nioner Registration, complete and sub

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.

St. Thomas Food Pantry

Current needs are: cereal, canned fruit, pasta sauce, pancake syrup and meal helper, cleaning supplies

Thank you for your generosity



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).
- 3. **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).



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SacristanMother Vaclava Ballon, FSJB(688-3500)	patwombacher@stthomas-school.net	
fsjbpeoria@yahoo.com	CCD CoordinatorAngie Robenstein(x1200)	
	angierobenstein@stthomas-school.net	
Deacon	Music Coordinator	
Den. Ed Mallow(360-7735)	Choir Director Erin Craig	
School Principal	erincraig@stthomas-school.net	
maureenbentley@stthomas-school.net	Annulment ConsultantJohn Mackoway(699-5213)	
Sacrament of Rantism Confessions How to Submit Bulletin Information		

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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