St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Staff

Office Hours: M-F 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

904 East Lake Avenue, Peoria Heights, IL 61616 stthomaspeoria.org; 309-688-3446 parishoffice@stthomas-church.net

Pastor: Msgr. Jason A. Gray.....(x3) msgrgray@stthomas-church.net Parochial Vicar: Fr. Achilleus Tegamaisho... frachilleus@stthomas-church.net Fr. John Twinomujuni......In Residence

Sacristan: Mother Vaclava Ballon, FSJB

(688-3500); fsjbpeoria@yahoo.com

Deacon: Dcn. John Nelson......981-2716

Dcn. Ed Mallow......360-7735 Dcn. Mark Kelsch (Senior Status)

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Music Coordinator: Ann Horst....... 682-5507 Annulment Consultant:

John Mackoway......699-5213 Parish Nurse: Mary Clare Geraghty....(x1350) parishnurse@stthomas-church.net

Stay in Touch

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



December 24, 2023 Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 31, 2023 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph





From Our Pastor

Christ is born! Alleluia!

As we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord, I express my gratitude to each of you for your generosity throughout the year. Thank you for your donations to St. Thomas, and your individual gifts to Fr. Marc and myself. It is a joy to see the support of so many parishioners for our parish and our school. May God bless each of us in the new year.

Our Progressive Dinner is coming up soon on January 20, so I encourage you to sign up if you are interested in taking part. The proceeds from the dinner will go to replacing old classroom light fixtures in our St. Thomas School. This project will not only make the appearance of the building more up to date, but will also result in greater energy efficiency. The deadline for the Progressive Dinner will come quickly in the new year, so please mark your calendars.

The Progressive Dinner is always a beneficial social event as we draw together older and younger parish families, connecting our school and parish families. In addition to supporting the lighting project in the school, please take advantage of this time to spend time together and to meet other families you may not know.

-Msgr. Gray





Readings for the Week of December 24, 2023

Sunday Fourth Sunday of Advent

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

Luke 1: 26-38

Sunday Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord

Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25 During the Night: Isaiah 9:1-6; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14

Monday Nativity of the Lord

Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20

During the Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18

Tuesday St. Stephen

Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59; Matthew 10: 17-22

Wednesday St. John

1 John 1: 1-4; John 20: 1a, 2-8

Thursday The Holy Innocents

1 John 1: 5—2: 2; Matthew 2: 13-18

Friday St. Thomas Becket

1 John 2: 3-11; Luke 2: 22-35

Saturday 1 John 2; 12-17; Luke 2: 36-40

Sunday The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph

Genesis 15: 1-6; 21:1-3; Hebrews 11: 8, 11-12, 17-19;

Luke 2: 22-40

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 25, 2023

8:00 a.m. Dolores Oppe/Warren Oppe

10:00 a.m. Len Kuchan/Family

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

8:00 a.m. Len Kuchan

Wednesday, December 27, 2023

7:00 a.m. Judy Campbell/Lisa Sanders-Hallberg

8:00 a.m. Intentions of Rachel Davis/Ed & Cathy Mallow

Thursday, December 28, 2023

7:00 a.m. Rose & Bill Chase/Dave & Rose Chase

8:00 a.m. Patrick Ryan/Kathleen Ray

Friday, December 29, 2023

7:00 a.m. Joseph & Florence Whalen/Jeanne Whalen

8:00 a.m. Sue Connor/Steve & Nan Powers

Saturday, December 30, 2023

8:00 a.m. Dorothy Paesani/Dorothy Bertschy 5:00 p.m. Betty Pegg/the Calabro Family

Sunday, December 31, 2023

8:00 a.m. For the People 10:00 a.m. Tho Dang/Linh Luong

5:00 p.m. Dorothy Paesani/Paul & Laura Kelley



Readings for the Week of December 31, 2023

Sunday The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph

Genesis 15: 1-6; 21:1-3; Hebrews 11: 8, 11-12, 17-19;

Luke 2: 22-40

Monday Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21

Tuesday St. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors

of the Church

1 John 2: 29-3: 6; John 1: 29-34

Wednesday The Most Holy Name of Jesus

1 John 2:29-3:6; John 1: 29-34

Thursday St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

1 John 3: 7-10; John 1: 35-42

Friday St. John Neuman,

1 John 3: 11-21; John 1: 43-51

Saturday St. André Bessette, Religious

1 John 5: 5-13; Luke 3: 23-38 OR Luke 3: 23, 31-34, 36, 38

Sunday The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2: 1-12

Mass Intentions

Monday, January 1, 2024

7:00 a.m. Fr. Paul Stark, S.J.

8:00 a.m. Rita Willems/The Willems Family

Tuesday, January 2, 2024

7:00 a.m. Mark Brewer/Family

8:00 a.m. Dec. Members of Noe & Eisele Families/Mary Ann Noe

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

7:00 a.m. Ralph Barnett/John, Kay, & Rick Rossi 8:00 a.m. Robert Maushard/Robert J. Peters & Family

Thursday, January 4, 2024

7:00 a.m. Donna Abdnour/The Williams Family 8:00 a.m. Ron Richardson/The Richardson Family

Friday, January 5, 2024

7:00 a.m. Bob Denton/Kathleen & Scott Crank

8:00 a.m. Richard Flores/Angela Kenny

Saturday, January 6, 2024

8:00 a.m. Mary Helen Runkle/The Runkle Family 5:00 p.m. Jim Becker/Ron & Jackie Gilles

Sunday, January 7, 2024

8:00 a.m. Betty Kane/Norman Kane

10:00 a.m. John Pusey/St. Vincent de Paul Society

5:00 p.m. For the People

Our Sympathy

Please pray for those who have died this week

Holiday Schedules

PARISH OFFICES will be open on Friday, December 22 from 9:00 a.m. until noon. The offices will then be closed through January 1. We will resume office hours on Tuesday, January 2.

FOOD PANTRY will be closed December 25th and 28th and Monday, January 1st. Regular hours resume January 4th.

Thank You for Your Generosity!

If you would like a statement of your 2023 giving for your records or for tax purposes, please contact the parish office, terrimoon@stthomas-church.net, after January 15, so we can make arrangements. To get that to you. The parish and school offices will close during the week between Christmas and New

OCIA/RCIA Schedule

DATE TOPIC

Dec. 27: No Class Jan. 3: No Class

Year's Day.

Jan. 10: Liturgical year, Church tour, Mass

practice

Jan. 17: Orders, Religious Life

Jan. 24: Individual aspects of the Moral Life Jan. 31: Prayer, Universal Call to Holiness

Sponsor of the Week



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JIM ROCHFORD & ASSOCIATES
309.637.5322 PARISHIONER
101 South West Adams, #700

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SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE PROGRESSIVE DINNER! JANUARY 20TH. 2024

And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

Genesis 1:3

Get excited for a bright night of friends, food, and festivities! Funds will be raised to replace the lighting in the classrooms at St. Thomas so let your light shine!!

The night will begin at 5:00 p.m. with cocktails and appetizers at the homes of Laurie and Dave Williams and Julia Adams and Robert Beach.

You will enjoy a small group dinner in a parish home at 6:45 P.M.

At 8:45 p.m., everyone will make their way to Santa Rosa Cafe for dessert, entertainment, and a short live auction.

Click on the QR code to register for the Progressive Dinner



Tickets \$50 per person

Reservations due no later than January 3, 2024

Tickets may be purchased on our website:

stthomaspeoria.org or

send or drop off a check to the parish office:

904 East Lake Avenue 61616

Make checks out to St. Thomas and place in an

envelope marked "Progressive Dinner"

You will receive an email letting you know your appetizer and dinner hosts and their addresses within the week of the event.

****If you are unable to attend, please consider a donation to help fund new lighting for our classrooms. Be sure to note on your check or online that your donation goes toward The Progressive Dinner fund. Thank you in advance for your consideration! ****

Contact Kim Kellock 630-880-9619 kimkellock@gmail.com or Christine Wigginton 952-200-5188 christinewigginton@gmail.com with questions.



January Ultrea

You Are Invited!
Cursillo Community January 2024
Virtual Ultreya

Sign-up to participate on Zoom Theme: God is with us and is working miracles

Speaker: Jeff Birkel Spiritual Homily: Dcn. Tom Mueller Guests are welcome!

Breakout Room Discussions! Social

Saturday, January 6 at 7:00pm
Contact the Cursillo Office at 309-676
-5587; cursillopeoria@gmail.com for more information.

ADA

As of 11/30/2023

Goal \$153,016 Pledges to date \$112,400

Paid \$102,302.50

Corrected



Masses and Confessions for Christmas

Advent Confessions

Before Christmas confession times include:

Saturday, Dec. 23, 3:00—4:45 and 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 24, 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

There is no Penance Service

Christmas Masses will be offered Dec. 24, Christmas Eve at 5:00, 7:00, and 10:00 p.m. and Dec 25, Christmas Day at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

Seating is available in the church and in the narthex and chapel.



Week of December 24

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED December 25 through January 1

ROSARY Tuesday, December 26, 10:00 a.m., Daily Mass Chapel



Week of December 31

SIGN-UP FOR FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION This Weekend after all Masses, Narthex

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES 7:00 a.m. & 8:00 a.m., *Not* a Holy Day of Obligation

ROSARY Tuesday, January 2, 10:00 a.m., Daily Mass Chapel

ADORATION Friday, January 5, after 8:00 Mass until Benediction at 7:00 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parish Holy Hour January 18
Progressive Dinner January 20

St. Thomas - Food Pantry

Items most needed at this time are: pasta sauce, hamburger helper, peanut butter, pancake mix, syrup, and canned vegetables.

Thank you for your generous support!

Pray with the Pope

December 2023
For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Pray with the Pope January 2024

For The Gift Of Diversity In The Church

Let us pray that the Holy Spirit helps us recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

Thank You

In this season of giving, the St. Thomas Food Pantry extends a most sincere thank you to the St. Thomas parishioners for unfailing support over the past year. From donations of backpacks, school supplies and coats, as well as the unending donations of funds and the food that fills our parish collection box each week, your generosity truly humbles us. We thank Sr. Elizabeth and the St. Thomas fourth grade class for sponsoring the annual Halloween candy and food drives, and thank you to the school families for your plentiful donations. Thanks to Mrs. Ward and her 8th graders for their help on Thursday mornings and on Midwest Food Bank delivery days; your contribution is invaluable! We are also grateful for the food we received from the Peoria Notre Dame food drive, the Peoria Heights Library, St. Philomena Church, St. Jude Church, Heart of Illinois Harvest and Brad Guidi, as well as monetary donations from the Village of Peoria Heights, Richwoods Township and Helping Hands Thrift Store.

~ Continue next column



When you go to the poor, you encounter Jesus

St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Thomas the Apostle Church Annual Report

The St. Vincent de Paul Society Conference at St. Thomas Church is comprised of 41 members, Vincentians, who answer and respond to our clients/friends in need (FINs) calls for assistance. requests. There are also several volunteers who work in the food pantry. Within that group of volunteers, we have a spiritual advisor, a finance coordinator, a scheduling coordinator and four call assignment coordinators. Our group volunteers their time to keep this complex program running. We receive calls from the St. Vincent de Paul Helpline which serves several other Peoria Area conferences as well. The calls that we receive are from those in distress who need help with utility payments, bus passes, rent, and food. Many times, we receive these calls when evictions are imminent and utility disconnections are pending. Two Vincentians work in teams on each call. We continue to deliver food in emergencies. Each call takes 1-1.5 hours and each Vincentian takes 1-2 calls per week. There are times we are not able to help a FIN because they are too far in debt or when they have called for help too frequently. We try to assist as many people as possible while being prudent stewards of the monies provided by your donations.

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2023 we made 284 calls and helped 638 people.

The Coming Together to Get Ahead program is a 16-week program for our FINs within the Peoria Diocese. The program is being resurrected and will be held in 2024 or 2025. This program provides education to improve life skills and better decision making.

If you know someone in need, the St. Vincent de Paul helpline number is 309 677 7696.

The St. Vincent de Paul, St. Thomas financials for the year October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023 are:

Balance 10/01/2022	\$3,823
Income	
Church Collections	\$55, 956
Other Donations	\$14,627
Expenses	
Miscellaneous	\$7,928
For Those We Serve	\$84,535
Balance 9/30/2023	\$9,068

We are deeply grateful for your continued support. May God bless you. Please consider joining our group of Vincentians. For more information please call:

Don Smith at 309 693 8062; Deacon Mark Kelsch at 309 692 4908; or Nancy Medendorp at 309 688 5996.

Continued ~

Because of your prayers and donations of food and funds, you have helped us to provide 1,773 carts of food thus far in 2023, serving 5,353 individuals. Thank you for spreading the love of our Savior to so many of our neighbors in need. We wish you all a beautiful Christmas and health and happiness in the New Year!

~ Diana





Peoria Heights High School Blood Drive

Grand View Lodge #1112

3819 N Prospect Rd Peoria Heights, IL 61616

Tuesday, January 2, 2024 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For an appointment call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org.

You can save up to 15 minutes when you donate blood by using RapidPass! Visit RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass for more information.

Bring a photo ID or your blood donor card, or two other forms of ID.



Make a Legendary Impact! Come give Dec. 18 thru Jan. 5 for NEW long-sleeved Red Cross Tee, Itd qty!

Schedule your blood donation appointment today!

1-800-RED CROSS | RedCrossBlood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

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	







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. Please, DO NOT send PDFs.

Sacrament of Baptism

Parents participate in a 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 p.m.-until last confession heard.

Parish Office Hours

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
- 0 Terri- Administrative Assist.

1340 - Julie-Accounting

1341 - Pat-Tuition

If you have items to deliver for the Parish Office, you are welcome to put them through the mail slot 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 4:00 p.m. every day.



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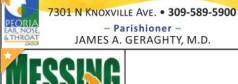




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