

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

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msgrgray@stthomas-church.net

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Leopold Mushobozi.. (x4)
Fr_Leo@stthomas-church.net

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Dcn. Ed Mallow.....360-7735
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Music Coordinator: Ann Horst...(309)208-4862

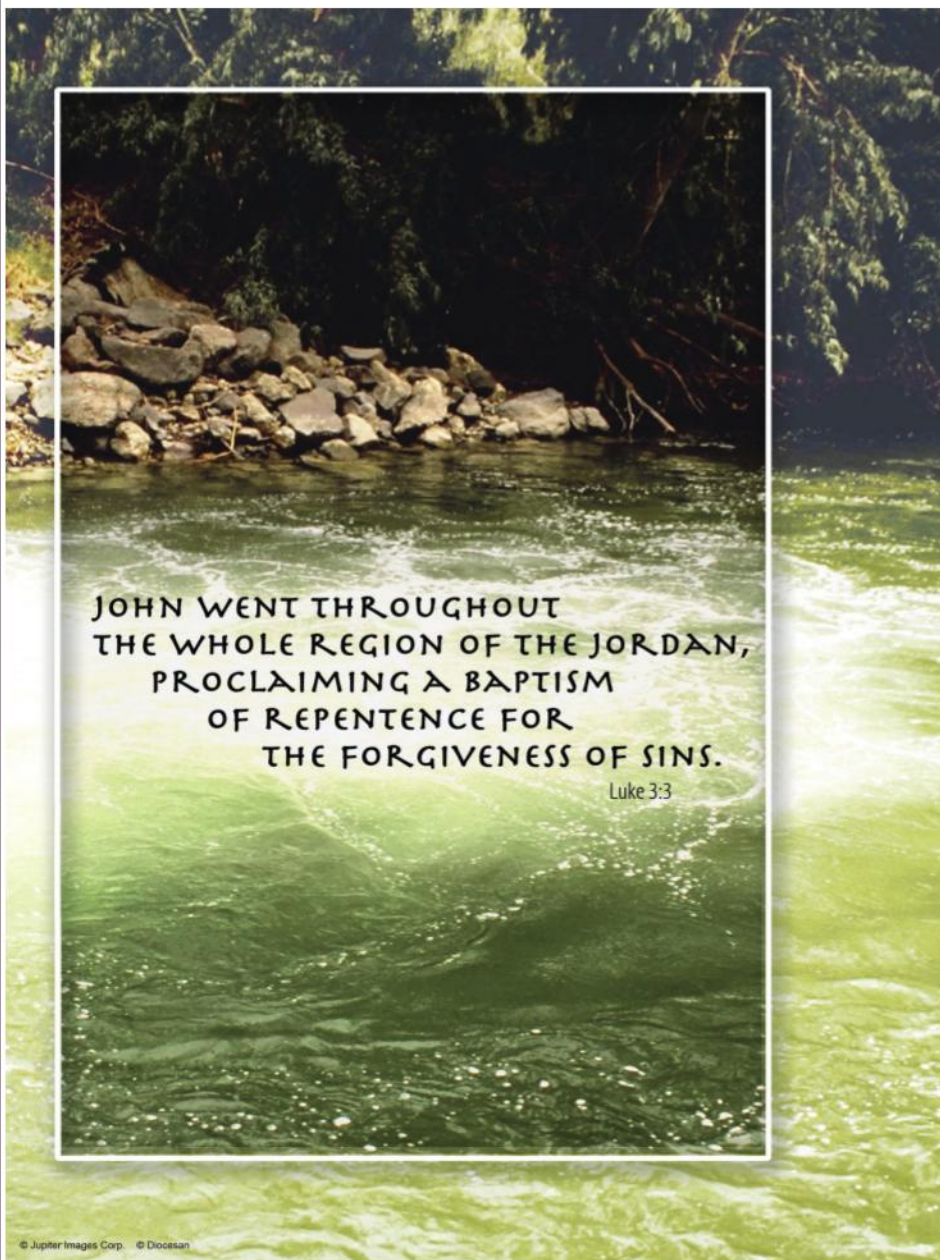
Annulment Consultant:
John Mackoway.....699-5213

Stay in Touch

1. Join Msgr. Gray for OCIA Class. 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 8, 2024
Second Sunday of Advent - Peace



JOHN WENT THROUGHOUT
THE WHOLE REGION OF THE JORDAN,
PROCLAIMING A BAPTISM
OF REPENTANCE FOR
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

Luke 3:3



From Our Pastor

We welcome you to our Open House this Sunday with refreshments after all our Masses this weekend. This Open House has traditionally been a time to thank all our parishioners for your volunteer efforts throughout the year. Thank you for your support of St. Thomas, not just monetarily, but through your time and talent.

The celebration of Immaculate Conception moves to Monday, December 9th, since December 8th is the Second Sunday of Advent. The celebration of Immaculate Conception is not obligatory this year, but I welcome and encourage you to celebrate this Marian feast day by attending Mass.

In addition to our 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. Masses on Monday, we will also have a 5:30 p.m. Mass. This Immaculate Conception Mass will add an additional opportunity to celebrate this feast day. It is traditional for us to pray for our country, our state, and our local community. At this Monday, 5:30 p.m. Mass, I will consecrate the Village of Peoria Heights to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May the Blessed Mother watch over our local community and keep us under her maternal protection.

Monday, December 9th is also the 45th anniversary of the death of Archbishop Fulton Sheen. Bishop Tylka will have a Holy Hour at the Cathedral that evening at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend as we give thanks to God for the example of prayer and devotion of the Venerable Servant of God.

If you haven't returned your gifts for the Giving Tree, please do so as soon as possible. The gifts you have given will be distributed to families in need in our area December 14th. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

- Msgr. Gray



Pray with the Pope

December 2024
For pilgrims of hope

We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.



Readings for the Week of December 8, 2024

- Sunday** **Second Sunday of Advent**
Baruch 5: 1-9; Philippians 1: 4-6, 8-11; Luke 3: 1-6
- Monday** **The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
Genesis 3: 9-15, 20; Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12; Luke 1: 26-38
- Tuesday** **Our Lady of Loreto**
Isaiah 40: 1-11; Matthew 18: 12-14
- Wednesday** **St. Damasus I, Pope**
Isaiah 40: 25-31; Mathew 11: 28-30
- Thursday** **Our Lady of Guadalupe**
Zechariah 2: 14-17; Luke 1: 26-38
- Friday** **St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr**
Isaiah 48: 17-19; Matthew 11: 16-19
- Saturday** **St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church**
Sirach 48: 1-4, 9-11; Matthew 17: 9a, 10-13
- Sunday** **Third Sunday of Advent**
Zephaniah 3: 14-18a; Philippians 4: 4-7; Luke 3: 10-18

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 9, 2024

- 7:00 a.m. Rita Williams/Jeff & Jennifer Shields
8:00 a.m. Robert Newton/Friends & Family
5:30 p.m. For the People of Peoria Heights

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

- 7:00 a.m. Dr. James N. Kenny Sr./Family
8:00 a.m. Michael Haughney/Mike & Theresa Haughney

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

- 7:00 a.m. Lois Frasco/Linda Osika
8:00 a.m. Ron Rishardson/The Richardson Family

Thursday, December 12, 2024

- 7:00 a.m. Tom Burek/George & Connie Burek
2:30 p.m. Jim Hagemann/Lisa & Kedric Curtis

Friday, December 13, 2024

- 7:00 a.m. Fr. Paul Stark, S.J./The Barkley Family
8:00 a.m. Fr. Paul Stark, S.J./Linh Luong

Saturday, December 14, 2024

- 8:00 a.m. Remedios Tolentino/The Sarmiento Family
5:00 p.m. Marsha Temple/Lesley & Matt Vonachen

Sunday, December 15, 2024

- 8:00 a.m. Paul Hop Nguyen/Mai Dang
10:00 a.m. Bob Sullivan/Family
5:00 p.m. For the People

Week of December 8

- PARISH OPEN HOUSE** this Weekend after all Masses, Parish Hall
- MEN'S BASKETBALL** Sunday, December 8, 7:00 p.m., School Gym
- MASS FOR THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION** Monday, December 9, 7:00 & 8:00 a.m., and 5:30 p.m., Church
- ROSARY** Tuesday, December 10, 10:00 a.m., Daily Mass Chapel
- CHOIR PRACTICE** Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 p.m., Music Room
- ST. VINCENT DE PAUL** Tuesday, December 10, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall
- CCD** Wednesday, December 11, 6:00 p.m. School
- OCIA** Wednesday, December 11, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall
- WOMEN OF THE WORD** Thursday, December 12, 6:30 p.m., Parish Hall
- CHRISTMAS SING** Thursday, December 12, 6:30 p.m., School
- TMIY** Friday, December 13, doors open 6:00, program 6:30 a.m., ends by 7:30 a.m., Parish Hall
- CHURCH CLEANING** Saturday, December 14, following 8:00 a.m. Mass Church

UPCOMING EVENTS

Simbang Gabi at St. Thomas December 19
St. Thomas Holy Hour December 19



Masses and Confessions for Christmas

Advent Confessions Before Christmas confession times include:

Saturday, Dec. 14, 16 & 21, 4:00 – 4:45 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
 Sunday, Dec. 15 & 22, 9:00 & 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 pm

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.

Weekly Collection

December 1, 2024

		Fiscal YTD
Collections needed.....	\$20,000.....	\$440,000
Sunday Collections.....	\$15,615.....	\$319,653
Electronic Collections.....	\$605.....	\$70,798
Total Collected.....	\$16,220.....	\$390,451
Over/(Short).....	\$(3,780).....	\$(49,549)

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 Ann Lankton
 Chuck Grawey
 Ellen Bonacarti

Baptism Congratulations

Ethan Michael Stewart
 Son of Jacob and Jamie Stewart

Giving Tree



The Giving Tree is an important tradition at St. Thomas. The gift tags will be available soon. 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 Giving Tree in the Narthex, or deliver to the Parish Office. Your generosity providing gifts under the Giving Tree has been incredibly helpful in the past. Last year we were able to distribute gifts to almost 300 individuals. This includes St. Thomas Families, Foster Children, Catholic Charities, and neighbors in our community.

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. As you 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 12th. Thank you for your kindness and generosity!

Sponsor of the Week



*We help the accused by listening,
 preparing, protecting, and caring.*

309.999.1177

Maureen Williams, Owner/Parishioner

When you go to the poor, you encounter Jesus



Our December bulletin article is dedicated to you, our St. Thomas parishioners. We thank you so much for your prayers and your generous contributions to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Your prayers and financial support are what enable us to help the poor. You are the foundation of our mission. We couldn't do this without you.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Thomas helps approximately 40 to 45 families per month. Their needs are many, generally due to a situational change in their lives such as a job loss, a reduction in work hours, costly car repairs, an illness, an accident, or sometimes simply due to the circumstances of their birth. Your donations are spent helping the needy get their situational setback resolved. Your generosity prevents evictions, water or Ameren shut-offs, helps buy furniture for the homeless who are finally able to rent an apartment, and the list goes on. We tell those whom we serve that you are their source of help. They pray for you and are most grateful to you.

Those of us involved in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul say the following prayer at the end of every meeting. We want to share this prayer with you, as it reflects the spirit of our Vincentian Family.

Lord Jesus, you who willed to become poor, give us eyes and a heart directed toward the poor; help us recognize you in them, in their thirst, their hunger, their loneliness, and their misfortune. Enkindle within our Vincentian Family, unity, simplicity, humility, and the fire of love that burned in St. Vincent de Paul. Strengthen us, so that faithful to the practice of these virtues, we may contemplate you and serve you in the person of the poor, and may one day be united with you in your Kingdom. Amen

Again, we thank you. God bless you.
Al Barhorst, Bettsey Barhorst, Brian Barkley, Edie Brereton, Mary Brennan, Cissy Carlson, Chris Clemons, Jim Clemons, John Galbreath, Cynthia Hall, Mike Hallar, Loretta Hardgrove, Mary Heller, Nancy Higgins, Mike Hinchman, Kim Jaegle, Diana Janda, Mark Kelsch, Marlynn Kelsch, Brian Kemp, Colleen Matarelli, Jim Matarelli, Brian Medendorp, Nancy Medendorp, Jill Meints, Mary Jennifer Meister, Mark Milford, Rosemary Muchow, Mike Phelan, Mary Kay Pilat, Tom Pilat, Pat Pusey, Clarissa Rhode, Dave Schlicksup, Terri Schlicksup, Cindy Smith, Dan Smith, Don Smith, Jan Smith, Joan Utley, Linda Waible, Nanette Westerhold, and Walter Wilkins.

If you are interested in joining the St. Vincent de Paul Society, please call the church office at 688-3446, and a member who can answer your questions will contact you. Those of us who serve the needy through the Society know that we receive much more than we give.

~ Edie Brereton

Advent Sunday Vespers

The Heart of Peoria Catholic Community invites you to Advent Sunday Vespers with guest preacher Fr Daniel Dionesotes.

4:00pm— Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament followed by silent adoration.
4:35pm— Evening Prayer closing with

Benediction.
Dec. 8th Sacred Heart Church
Dec. 15th St Joseph's Church
Dec. 22nd St. Mary's Cathedral

Come sing and pray with us as we prepare to celebrate our Savior's birthday.

Job Opening

St. Thomas the Apostle is looking for a full time Administrative Assistant for our Parish Office. Applicants should be detail oriented and have experience with Microsoft Office and data entry. Confidentiality is required.

If interested, send your resume to parishoffice@stthomas-church.net

OCIA Schedule

Dec 11: Penance, Anointing, Funerals

Dec 18: Marriage

Dec 25: NO Class

Jan 1: NO Class

Jan 8: Orders, Religious Life

Jan 15: Liturgical year, Church tour, Mass Practice

Jan 22: Individual aspects of the Moral Life



St. Thomas - Food Pantry

Items needed at this time are: Rice, Boxed pasta, stuffing & potato side dishes, Mac and Cheese, Crackers, Pasta Sauce & Dry Pasta Canned Meat, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Canned Fruit and Vegetables, Pancake Mix, Syrup, Canned Soup, Canned or Dry Beans (Legumes), Hamburger/Chicken/Tuna Helper

Thank you for your generous support!



November 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the Diocese of Peoria, we are blessed with a healthy culture of vocations. This is evident as I travel throughout the diocese where I see pictures of young men and women who have embraced a sacred vocation proudly displayed on parish and school walls. I see posters of our seminarians and several religious communities conspicuously posted. I have also seen bulletins that celebrate newly married couples. In addition to all of that, I know many of our Catholic schools spiritually adopt seminarians and are teaching about sacred vocations. Many parishioners talk about their love of their pastors, and I am asked by many people about how our seminarians are doing. I have both seen and heard the desire of our diocese to generously support holy, healthy, and happy vocations; for that I am most grateful.

In a particularly vital way, this generous culture of vocations is evidenced by the continuous stream of young men entering seminary for our diocese, crediting the outpouring of formation and support they have received from our parishes, schools, and Newman Centers. This past May, we ordained four men to the priesthood, three to the transitional diaconate, and we accepted four new seminarians. Currently, we have eighteen seminarians and five more who are applying for next year. We have a good and growing need to support young men who are answering God's call to serve our parishes as priests. One seminarian's tuition, room and board, and formation costs during his philosophical and theological studies, comes to around \$350,000 over the course of his seven years of formation.

On Sunday December 1st, the Sunday after Thanksgiving, I invited you to give thanks to God for these men and continue your support by giving generously to aid in providing for their education and formation. Please make checks payable to the Catholic Diocese of Peoria Office of Priestly Vocations. Thank you for your prayers and generosity, and please know of my prayers for you and your families.

Peace and Prayers,


✦ Most Reverend Louis Tylka
Bishop of Peoria



Peace



Come Thrifting to Help St. Thomas Pantry

The week of **December 9th is St. Thomas Food Pantry week** at *Helping Hands Thrift Store!*

Proceeds from the week will be donated to our pantry. *Helping Hands* is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is located at 921 E. War Memorial Drive, Peoria Heights. Come see what treasures you can find and help our pantry at the same time!

Life Teen

A Life Night on the Promise of a Messiah
Sunday, January 12th, 2025: 6:00—8:00 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish Hall

Please bring your own Bible. If you don't have one, we will have some we would love to give you.



JOIN US FOR OUR PARISH

Christmas Open House

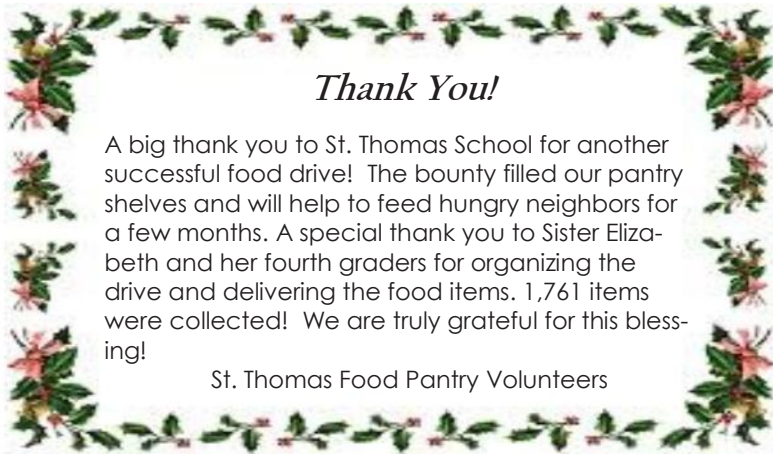
DEC. 7TH & 8TH

AFTER ALL MASSES

Enjoy food and drinks in the parish hall in appreciation of our parishioners who do so much to make St. Thomas a great community.



If you would like to help make this event a success, call the parish office or Denise at 309.693.8633



Thank You!

A big thank you to St. Thomas School for another successful food drive! The bounty filled our pantry shelves and will help to feed hungry neighbors for a few months. A special thank you to Sister Elizabeth and her fourth graders for organizing the drive and delivering the food items. 1,761 items were collected! We are truly grateful for this blessing!

St. Thomas Food Pantry Volunteers

Assistant Kitchen Manager

Sophia's Kitchen is seeking to hire a full time assistant manager. Work in a fast paced kitchen environment as you serve the poorest of Peoria. You'll oversee volunteers and work directly with guests. A *Food Manager license is required*. We will help you obtain it if you aren't certified yet. **Send resumes to soupkitchen2010@gmail.com.**

Claire Crone; Program Director

Sophia's Kitchen, a Mission of St. Joseph Church; (309) 655-1578

www.CatholicPeoria.org

Simbang Gabi

This novena of Masses before Christmas is one of the oldest Christmas traditions in the Philippines and had been practiced by Filipino Communities here in the US. 2024 Simbang Gabi Masss:

Sat. Dec. 14, 5pm: Cathedral of St. Mary; Sun. Dec. 15, 5 pm: St. Anthony, Bartonville; Mon. Dec. 16, 5 pm: St. Joseph, Peoria; Tues. Dec 17, 6 pm: St. Mark, Peoria; Wed. Dec. 18, 6 pm: Blessed Sacrament, Morton; Thur. Dec 19, 6 pm: St. Thomas, Peoria Heights; Fri. Dec. 20, 5 pm: St. Vincent de Paul, Peoria; Sat. Dec. 21, 6:30 pm: St. Philomena, Peoria; Sun. Dec. 22, 4 pm: Holy Family, Peoria.

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.

Last Name _____

First Name(s) _____ Mr ___ Mrs ___ Ms ___

Email _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

New Parishioner _____ Change of address/phone _____



Peoria Notre Dame's
12 Days of Christmas
CASH & CAR RAFFLE

Early Bird winner of \$500 will be drawn November 21. Daily cash prizes will be awarded from December 9 through December 19 with the Grand Prize drawing for a 2025 Mazda CX-5 (MSRP \$31,485) on December 20. Tickets can be purchased from PND students or employees, by calling 309-691-8741, or online at www.pndhs.org/12days. Ticket orders can be credited to PND students or staff for incentives.

Only 3,000 tickets will be sold. The cost is \$75 per ticket, 3 for \$200, 5 for \$300, 10 for \$550, and 12 for \$600. Official rules, details, and online purchasing can also be found at www.pndhs.org/12days.



CHESTERTON ACADEMY
OF THE SACRED HEART

Advent Choir Concert
"THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CAME DOWN"
Date: Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2024
Time: 7:00pm
Place: Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception,
607 NE Madison, Peoria, IL
Free Admission—Donations Appreciated

ADVENT HARP CONCERT

Join us for an evening of music to enter more deeply into the spirit of the Advent season. Monday, **December 9, 2024, 6:30-7:30pm**. St. Philomena Catholic Church, 1000 W Albany



Advent Evening Mass

During Advent, the priests of St. Philomena (1000 W Albany, Peoria) will offer an evening daily Mass at 5:30 pm each Monday through Friday from December 2-23. *All are welcome.*

Please gather with us this sacred season for

Advent Prayer Services

Hosted by Peoria Cursillo
at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Morton,
Illinois

**Beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Mondays
December 2, 9, & 16**

The Advent Services bring an opportunity for peace, stillness, and time to reflect on *Mary's Yes, Joseph's Yes, and Our Yes*, through prayer, Scripture, and music (including an Immaculate Conception Parish Mass on Dec. 9)



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.
- 1341 - Sheris—Finance & Tuition
- 1310 - Mary-Faith Formation

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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