## 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. Leopold Mushobozi.. (x4)

Fr\_Leo@stthomas-church.net

Priest in Residence: Fr. Patrick

DeMeulemeester OSF Chaplain

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

Music Coordinator: Steven Harms.....steveharms@stthomas-church.net

**Annulment Consultant:** 

John Mackoway......699-5213

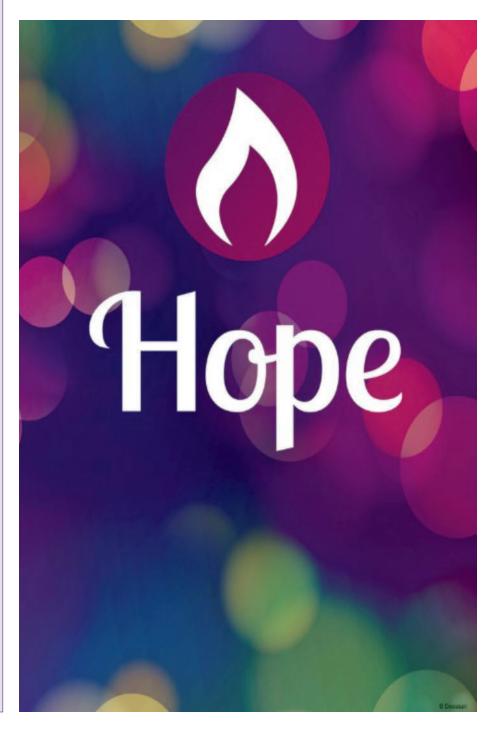
St. Vincent de Paul Society HelpLine.....(309) 264-5815

### Stay in Touch

- Join Msgr. Gray for OCIA Class. Link can be found on the parish website, stthomaspeoria.org or the My Parish App
- 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).



### November 30, 2025 First Sunday of Advent





### From Our Pastor

I hope every one of you had a Happy Thanksgiving and a blessed time with family and friends. We give thanks for the gifts we have received from Our Lord. I am particularly thankful for the blessings we have received at St. Thomas.

This weekend begins a new Church year with the First Sunday of Advent. This season is a time of preparation for the birth of Christ. While there are four Sundays in the Advent season, Christmas is only three and a half weeks away and time is short. As the Advent wreath is lit, the light will grow stronger as we approach the birth of our Savior. Let us keep our attention fixed on the light of Christ.

December is filled with so much activity that our preparations for Christmas can get lost among presents and celebrations that fill this month. I urge each of us to make time for prayer and Mass during this time. Let us remember the reason for our celebration.

We will have extra confessions throughout Advent, in addition to our regular confession times on Saturday. Confessions will be heard after all weekend Masses. Take advantage of this time to prepare your heart to make a home for the Messiah to be born.

- -Msgr. Gray



### Readings for the Week of November 30, 2025

Sunday First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:37-44

Monday Isaiah 4:2-6; Matthew 8:5-11

**Tuesday** Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday St. Francis Xavier, Priest

Isaiah 25:6-10a; Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday St. John Samascene, Priest, Doctor of the Church

Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21, 24-27

**Friday** Isaiah 29:17-24; Matthew 9:27-31

Saturday St. Nicholas, Bishop

Isaiah 30:19-21,23-26; Matthew 9:35—10:1,5a,6-8

Sunday Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12

### Mass Intentions

### Monday, December 1, 2025

7:00 a.m. Patricia McCauley/David McCauley 8:00 a.m. Mary Ambrosch/Tom Ambrosch

### Tuesday, December 2, 2025

7:00 a.m. Bob & Betty Kauffman/David McCauley 8:00 a.m. Albert & Jospehine Zogby/Sharon Zogby

### Wednesday, December 3, 2025

7:00 a.m. Truyen Nguyen/Tan Tran

8:00 a.m. Msgr. Charles Beebe/Joe & Sandy Whalen

### Thursday, December 4, 2025

7:00 a.m. Patti Saum/Gerald Poplette

8:00 a.m. Peggy Hessling / Chris & Dianna Russick

### Friday, December 5, 2025

7:00 a.m. Frisca Flores/Marianita Cabucos 8:00 a.m. Caryl Lane/The Clary Family

### Saturday, December 6, 2025

8:00 a.m. Linus Langenfeld/Jim & Deb Rochford 5:00 p.m. Thomas Penn/David & Laurie Williams

### Sunday, December 7, 2025

8:00 a.m. For the People

10:00 a.m. Jeffrey Greenhalgh/The Sarmiento & Greenhalgh Families

5:00 p.m. Peoria Seminarians & Priestly Vocations

### **Week of November 30**

SIGN UP FOR FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION in the Narthex

ROSARY Tuesday, December 2, 10:00 a.m., Chapel

CCD Wednesday, December 3, 6:00 p.m., School

OCIA Wednesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

WOMEN OF THE WORD Thursday, December 4, 6:30 p.m., Parish Hall

**THAT MAN IS YOU** Friday, December 5, doors open 6:00, program 6:30 a.m., ends by 7:30 a.m., Parish Hall

**ADORATION** Friday, December 5 beginning after 8:00 a.m. Mass, closing with Benediction at 7:00 p.m.

CHURCH CLEANING Saturday following 8:00 a.m. Mass, Church

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

The Immaculate Conception Dec 8
Parish Open House Dec 13 & 14



**Advent Confessions** Before Christmas confession times include:

Saturday, Nov. 29; Dec. 6, 13, & 21, 4:00 – 4:45 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 23 & 30; Dec. 7, 14, & 20, 9:00 & 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 pm



"God walks into your soul with silent step. God comes to you more than you go to Him. Never will his coming be what you expect, and yet never will it disappoint. The more you respond to his gentle pressure, the greater will be your freedom". Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

### **Weekly Collection**

November 16, 2025

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Collections needed	\$20,400	\$408,000
Sunday Collections	\$11398	\$260,411
Electronic Collections	\$17,037	\$112,988
Total Collected	\$28,435	\$373,399
Over/(Short)	\$8,035	\$(34,601)

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**

for those who have died this week.

### **Giving Tree**



The Giving Tree is an important tradition at St. Thomas. The gift tags can be found in the baskets in the narthex. 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 8<sup>TH</sup>.** Thank you for your kindness and generosity!

### Pray with the Pope

December 2025 For Christians in Areas of Conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, expecially in the Middle East, might be seeds ofpeace, reconciliation, and hope.



Sponsor of the Week



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### **OCIA Schedule**

**Dec 3:** Blessed Virgin Mary, Rosary **Dec 10:** Orders, Religious Life

Dec 17: Marriage Dec 24: No Class Dec 31: No Class

Jan 7: Liturgical year, Church tour, Mass practice

# Food Pantry Family Advent Calendar of Giving

In the spirit of the preparation of our hearts for the coming of our Savior, here is a meaningful way to share our treasures with neighbors who are struggling with food insufficiency. Place one food item in a box each day from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 24<sup>th</sup>. When the box is complete, bring it to the church as a donation to the food pantry. The items below are representative of the canned goods each food pantry family receives each month.

Merry Christmas to you and yours from the Food Pantry!

12/1 Mac and Cheese
12/2 Mac and Cheese
12/3 Bag of Rice
12/4 Boxed Side Dish
12/5 Box of Cereal
12/6 Box of Saltines
12/7 Can of Meat
12/8 Pasta Sauce
12/9 Can of Fruit
12/10 Can of Fruit
12/11 Peanut Butter
12/12 Skillet Dinner Kit



12/13 Dry Pasta
12/14 Can of Soup
12/15 Can of Soup
12/16 Can of Veggies
12/17 Can of Veggies
12/18 Can of Veggies
12/19 Can of Veggies
12/20 Can of Veggies
12/21 Bag of Dried Beans
12/22 Jelly

12/23 Can of Chili or Stew

12/24 Box of Cereal Bars

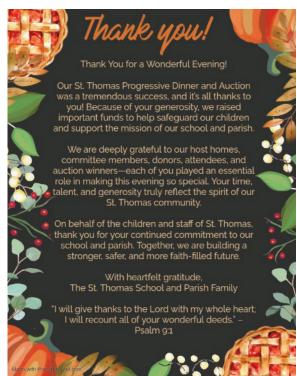


Our December bulletin article is dedicated to you, our St. Thomas parishioners. We thank you so

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. Again, we thank you. God bless you.

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.





Most Reverend Louis Tylka

Diocese of Peoria Office of the Bishop

November 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In February, we began celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our diocese, with the theme, "Proclaiming Christ: Yesterday, Today, Forever." I have spent much of this year reflecting and preaching about our providential and courageous history as it inspires how we continue our commitment to carry out the same mission in our present day. Today, however, I want to set our sights on a particular aspect of our future. After ordaining three men to the priesthood in May, and accepting seven new seminarians, we now have 20 men who are currently being formed to become future priests in our diocese!

These men generously embrace a challenging path, but it is a path filled with joy, camaraderie, and a deep commitment to giving their lives in imitation of Jesus Christ and in service of his Church. Your prayers and financial support make this possible. The cost of forming each seminarian exceeds \$60,000 annually, covering seven years (on average) of education, spiritual growth, and pastoral training. By investing in our future priests, you are ensuring they are equipped to serve the faithful of the Diocese of Peoria!

On Sunday November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Sunday after Thanksgiving, I invite 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. There will be a second collection at each Mass that weekend. 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

+ Louis Tall

Phone 309 671-1550

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3:30 CLOSING

**PRAYER** 

RSVP BY December 5

Clip & Mail Check to: CWL PO Box 9674 Peoria IL 61612 with your name, phone, and number of guests and guests names.

Adults \$35 Teens \$20 (13-18) Child \$10 (5-12) Table of 6 \$200

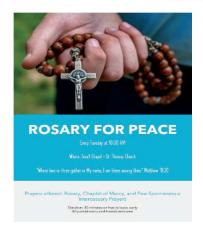
Questions: Call or Text Ann Gerardo 630-464-8474

### Volunteers Needed

A few good women, or men, are needed to fill Usher positions at the 8:00 a.m. Sunday Mass.

You can sign up for one, or more, Sundays each month. Go to: <u>Login</u> for the Ministry Scheduler Pro (link is also on the Parish website) and register if you are a new user, or sign-in, and choose your dates.

If you have any questions about Ushering please see any of our current Ushers.





### Holy Hour Knights of Columbus 4th Degree

Tuesday, December 9, 2025 7:00 pm Chapel

Fr. Leo will lead the Holy Hour



## 

### Holy Hour for the Unborn and their Mothers!

Let's honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the unborn, whose feast we celebrate in December, and pray for every child at risk of abortion. Join Pro-life Prayer Warriors and Knights of Columbus at a Holy Hour for the Rights of the Unborn on Monday, Dec. 1, from 7:00-8:00 pm at St. Mark's Church, 1113 W. Bradley Ave., Peoria.

For more information, contact John Wikoff, Knights LifeDirector, at jpw61552@gmail.com.



### 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

CASH AND CAR RAFFLE



Peoria Notre Dame High School is teaming up with Scherer Mazda of Peoria for the 8th annual 12 Days of Christmas Cash and Car Raffle! Cash prizes will be drawn daily, beginning Monday, December 1 through Thursday, December 11. The Grand Prize of a 2025 Mazda CX-50 (MSRP S31,990) will be drawn at 11:45 am on Friday, December 12, 2025.

Tickets may be purchased online at www.pndhs.org/12days, or from a staff member or student of PND.



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Signature	
OR check payable to	o:
Peoria Notre Dame,	5105 N. Sheridan Rd. Peoria, IL 61614



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 - Tracey - Administrative Assist.

1341 - Sheris-Finance & Tuition

1310 - Kate-Faith Formation

1301 - Peggy-Bulletin

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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